

TUFTS UNIVERSITY



Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience

Final Report to the Tufts Community

May 2003

Executive Summary

The Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience has found that Tufts, already a world-class university with extraordinary strengths, is uniquely positioned to achieve the next level of academic excellence. It has a distinctive identity as a *university* that offers its students the world in a *college community* that gives them a home. Our faculty are exceptional teacher-scholars, and our students first-rate. Undergraduate education at Tufts is well poised to move forward with the rest of the university. This report documents what steps we might take to enhance our already excellent undergraduate program.

We feel that Tufts can best improve the educational experience we offer our undergraduates by looking at the intellectual *climate* in which our students learn, the nature of the campus and scholarly *community* in which they learn, and the *coherence* of the education in which they are engaged. While our recommendations are organized around these themes of climate, community, and coherence, we wish to stress that most of our recommendations speak to two and sometimes all three of these themes.

In essence, we seek to bring members of our community together both inside and outside of the classroom, and to do this in ways that foster the learning and development of the whole student. By making this our focus, we will raise teaching and research to new levels of excellence; catalyze new interdisciplinary initiatives among our faculty; provide innovative research opportunities for our students; and provide a multi-faceted and substantive educational experience.

Our recommendations include restructuring curricular requirements; providing additional support for undergraduate research; increasing programming that contributes to the intellectual climate on campus; creating closer links between the curriculum and co-curricular life; and providing facilities that create spaces for formal and informal intellectual interaction and discourse.

Larger, overarching recommendations include ensuring need-blind admissions; creating a "College System" that brings faculty, students and staff together in meaningful and sustained ways; making better use of our residential halls as instruments for education; creating intellectual coherence through an improved advising system; identifying and celebrating intellectual milestones in a Tufts education; and strengthening connections between our alumni and students, particularly in career services.

These recommendations have emerged after nearly two years of discussion and analysis within the Tufts community. We call upon the Tufts community—upon our students, faculty, staff, administrators, trustees, and alumni together—to help us to realize the vision articulated in this report, a vision that honors and builds on the distinctive strengths of the University.

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I. Introduction

After nearly two years of intensive study, the Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience can proudly affirm the distinction of Tufts as a *university* that offers its students the world in a *college community* that gives them a home. Joining students of superb promise with a faculty unsurpassed in its commitment to research and teaching both, Tufts, long known as the light on the hill, has the potential to shine brighter still and become, in the process, a beacon for other mid-sized universities. To do so, however, we must build on our strengths, be bold in our vision, and be candid about where we need to do more. Standing as we do at a moment of decision, knowing that the future of the University will be determined by the priorities we establish here, Tufts should aspire, the Task Force suggests, to become the very model of a close-knit academic community committed to promoting and producing knowledge in a context as large as the globe. We must invigorate the University by creating a climate in which students and faculty form a community of scholars intent on the joys of analysis, the creativity of thought, and the passion to pursue and to challenge the coherence of ideas across the disciplines.

Ambitious as such a prospect may be, it is well within our grasp. But if we would seize the opportunity, if we would realize such a mission, we must make a number of changes— not changes intended to transform the University into something unfamiliar but changes intended to allow Tufts more fully to become what, at its best, it already is. This is the goal of the proposals that follow, whether as large as the commitment to a four-year emphasis on undergraduate communication or as small as increasing the number of classrooms equipped with seminar tables, whether as far-reaching as the prospect of a college system or as pragmatic as establishing a clearing house for undergraduate research opportunities, whether as visually central as a café in the library to bring the community together or as centrifugal as dotting the campus with spaces for informal meetings of students and faculty. For just as we have identified what we take to be the distinctive profile of Tufts, so too have we identified those areas in which we must do more to live up to our potential. We have categorized those areas broadly as dealing with questions of climate, community, and coherence.

Climate: In the course of our interviews with various groups, we often heard the sentiment from faculty and students that Tufts does not construct an intellectual environment that matches the quality of our students or the reputation of the institution. Despite the excellence of students and faculty alike and the impressive work that goes on in the classroom, the institution itself, or the atmosphere that pervades it, seems to separate intellectual exploration and enthusiasm from students' shared experiences beyond the classroom. Tufts sometimes misses the opportunity to draw out the connection between those two worlds and so to communicate to our students the relationship between ideas and their application. The Task Force believes *we need to enhance the intellectual climate* at Tufts to enable our institution to achieve the next level of academic excellence.

Community: We found that although students identify themselves with various groups within the Tufts community— a co-curricular organization, an academic department, a sports team, a group of friends from a Tufts program abroad— they lack a

sense of identification with Tufts as a whole. Students, often initially excited by the opportunities Tufts offers for affiliation within such a diverse community, tend to conclude that the University has let them down in this regard. Tufts could do more to push students to venture outside of their comfort zones and draw them out of their various sub-groups in ways that contribute to their sense of belonging to the broader University community. The Task Force contends that truly to benefit from the wealth of cultural and intellectual diversity represented across the Tufts community, *we need to strengthen our community* and foster our sense of connection to one another as part of a larger whole.

Coherence: We discovered during our outreach work that students often feel that the various pieces of their Tufts experience- fulfilling requirements, choosing a major, pursuing research opportunities, studying abroad, living off-campus, completing a senior project- do not seem connected as integrated parts of a larger whole. In the face of so many requirements and so few visible markers to outline the “big picture,” students frequently adopt a “checklist mentality” with regard to their education. Tufts does not explicitly articulate this big picture for our students, and so students often view any growth experiences they have had here as something that they alone sought out and not something for which Tufts provided them the opportunity. The Task Force concludes that *we need to provide greater coherence to our overall educational plan* and thereby make more visible Tufts' contributions to the education of our undergraduates.

Climate, community, and coherence lie at the center of the work of the Task Force. These three themes emerged early on in our outreach work and have only become more powerful over time. These themes have helped us to clarify the fundamental issues at stake and in turn to organize our responses to those issues. Therefore, we have used these three themes to categorize the recommendations which follow.

While our recommendations speak to one or more of the themes of community, climate, and coherence, every one of the Task Force's proposals share a common goal:

to bring members of our community together both inside and outside of the classroom, and to do so in ways that foster the learning and development of the whole student.

As has often been said, a great university must have great students and a great faculty, and, we would add, a great staff to support the two. It is the aim of the Task Force to bring those groups more closely together, because it is the connections we make with one another that are the true mechanisms by which we realize our aspirations. Alumni looking back on their college experiences frequently conclude that they learned most from the mentoring relationships they had with a professor, advisor, coach, internship supervisor, or even a fellow classmate. When faculty members connect with one another, they may find an intellectual camaraderie in turn that can energize their scholarship and teaching. Similarly, when staff members engage with one another and with faculty, they may discover a satisfying sense of community that can generate new ways of thinking about ways to improve the University.

Ultimately, people and their relationships with one another are at the very heart of everything we do at Tufts. Those relationships and person-to-person connections are powerful educational tools. To this end, the Task Force's proposals aim to enable, facilitate, support, and enhance those connections and relationships— and an understanding of how to negotiate the differences involved in establishing them— that contribute to the multifaceted development of the undergraduate student.

In sum, we want nothing less than a community of superbly educated students appreciative of the life of the mind and the importance of ideas, invested in social justice and the responsibilities of global citizenship, and aware of the commitment that Tufts has made to promoting and producing their success. The proposals we put before you aim to articulate that commitment. They link our undergraduates more closely to members of the faculty, to their academic advisors, to their peers and classmates, to their various communities, and, finally, to a larger community: to Tufts itself and, through Tufts, to the world beyond.

II. A Tufts Education

Before we turned to the assignment of developing a number of initiatives for community discussion, the Task Force considered the educational outcomes we hope our students will achieve by the time they graduate from Tufts. The purpose of this exercise was to make explicit the goals that we are trying to attain with our proposals. The outcomes themselves are not unique to Tufts. Indeed, most of these outcomes are described in the AS&E mission statement. However, the Task Force has found it useful to distinguish between Tufts' educational goals for our students and the unique characteristics of the institution that help us reach those goals. As such, the articulation of our desired educational outcomes has provided the Task Force with a useful frame of reference as we evaluate the efficacy of various initiatives.

The following outcomes represent the Task Force's distillation of what a Tufts education should provide its students.

1. Intellectual Engagement

Ideas will matter to Tufts graduates. Our graduates will appreciate that ideas have intrinsic value beyond any practical or utilitarian application. They will be enthusiastic participants in the processes by which knowledge is produced, challenged, defended, and transmitted. They will feel responsible for protecting and encouraging intellectual investigation, and they will understand their own education as ongoing and lifelong.

2. Critical Thinking and Creativity

Tufts graduates will be able to think clearly, logically, and creatively. They will be able to analyze arguments and assess information judiciously. They will understand the different ways of constructing knowledge in different disciplines and will have the

ability to construct reasoned, persuasive, and well-structured arguments that make effective use of quantitative and qualitative evidence. They will be imaginative in their search for solutions to problems and in their application of knowledge.

3. Communication

Tufts graduates will be able to express themselves clearly and persuasively. They will understand and appreciate oral, written, and visual media and have the facility to employ them to disseminate their thoughts and feelings. They will be able to weigh the consequences of a statement or action and to express themselves with civility.

4. Appreciation of Complexities across Disciplinary Boundaries

Tufts graduates will have gained both depth and expertise in a specific discipline and an understanding of how that discipline relates to other areas of study. They will appreciate the various modes of producing and evaluating ideas across the various disciplines and they will be able to embrace the methodologies of each in response to social, political, and intellectual challenges. They will approach with enthusiasm the application of their knowledge to the problems of the world. They will be open to new and unfamiliar ideas and be able to incorporate into their understanding newly discovered facts, transformed circumstances, and superior arguments.

5. Personal, Ethical, and Social Development

Tufts graduates will possess the capacity for self-examination, moral discernment, and ethically based action. Our students will strive to develop their own personal identity and cultivate habits of body and mind that will enable them to lead happy and productive lives. Our graduates will be able to evaluate the consequences of their ideas and actions, and they will have the personal courage to defend them when necessary. They will be able to think about their own thinking, both its cultural commonalities and its uniqueness. Through their coursework, living-experiences, and citizen-based service opportunities at the University, our students will develop a compassionate social imagination (the capability to understand the lives, needs, and rights of others, whether next-door or on a different continent). They will recognize that their own culture is a lens through which they view the world and understand systems of power, and they will be able to consider their own place within these systems.

6. A Sense of Community and Culture

All Tufts students will feel that they are known in significant ways by members of the Tufts community during their years at the University. They will embrace affiliations as well as relate to a broader community that welcomes others from diverse backgrounds. Tufts students will develop an enduring and deepening sense of connection with our University, and this sense of belonging will serve as a base from which our students can experience interconnection with and a sense of responsibility for both the local and global communities of which they are a part. This broadened sense of connection, in turn, will

provide students with a heightened understanding of the role of the University and the educated citizen in the world at large.

In sum, a Tufts education provides our students with the opportunities, both inside and outside the classroom, to develop the critical and creative capacities that will enable them to go forth into the world and make a difference. We hope that this education instills in our students a lifelong pride in Tufts and the community of scholars and friends they have found here and abroad.

The Task Force has used these six outcomes as a working definition of a Tufts education. As we considered new initiatives for the community's consideration, we asked ourselves how each would contribute to one or more of these outcomes.

III. Findings and Recommendations

Our findings and recommendations come directly from the input we received from faculty, students, staff, alumni, overseers, and trustees in countless meetings over the past two years. Our work is also informed by survey data and analysis provided to us by the Office of Institutional Research as well as our own survey efforts, and by the numerous documents made available to us by various departments, programs, and administrative offices. For organizational purposes, we have grouped our recommendations around our three central themes: *climate*, *community*, and *coherence*. Most proposals address more than a single area, which is of course precisely what makes them so attractive, and so we have placed each initiative in the category to which it most contributes.

A. Enhancing the Intellectual Climate on Campus

While Tufts faces some problems that are common to universities of our size and standing, it also faces distinctive challenges. Tufts has made enormous strides in moving from a regional university to one of international prominence. However, we feel that further progress can be made. It is clear from our review of annual student surveys that although students identify many professors whom they admire for their passionate investment in the subjects they teach, that passion too rarely informs the overall climate of the Tufts community.

We note, for example, the strikingly small number of students who conduct senior honors theses at Tufts. Last year, there were 74 honors theses written among the 1015 graduating seniors in Arts and Sciences. Moreover, the data reveal that only 22 percent of students who graduated *summa cum laude* wrote an honors thesis, suggesting that we may not be challenging our best students intellectually as much as we might. While it may be that our best students are taking on other intellectually challenging experiences,

we feel that more of our best students can and should be encouraged to take on honors theses.

Students, we discovered, feel disconnected and atomized in their relation to other groups and to the university as a whole. We believe that in order to change the intellectual climate, it will be necessary to establish a stronger sense of community and shared experience. To some extent, this means thinking about large-scale curricular and co-curricular programs involving significant numbers of students; changing the nature of residential life to involve more opportunities for exchanges of ideas; encouraging more visibility outside of the classroom for the sorts of projects and ideas being generated within it; redefining campus space so that students, faculty, and staff can congregate at a central location symbolically associated with the intellectual heart of the university in order to meet, talk, and debate.

Central to each of these proposals is our intention to bring students together through a common intellectual purpose, not to the exclusion of involvement with sports or performance groups or campus publications, nor to the exclusion of involvement with religious organizations or groups organized around racial, ethnic, sexual, or gender identities. Tufts students are well-served by the numerous organizations that support the expression of such interests and identities. What they lack, however, is any overarching structure within which to have, outside their heterogeneous collections of activities, a shared experience of Tufts as a crucible for intellectual transformation. This transformation can best occur if the experience of students in a community dedicated to nurturing the values of curiosity, free inquiry, and scholarly research contributes to an atmosphere of shared intellectual commitment.

Recommendations

Emphasize communication skills across the curriculum over all four undergraduate years.

Strong communication skills are integral to success in all arenas of life and therefore essential to a good education. During our outreach work last year, we heard such sentiments echoed repeatedly in the comments of members of the Tufts community. Yet, overwhelming numbers of students and faculty alike reported to us that they believe that Tufts must do a better job of imparting both written and oral communication skills to our students. For whatever discoveries our students make will be useless unless they are able to communicate those discoveries to others effectively and creatively.

Oral Communications: The development of effective public speaking and oral communication skills requires significant practice. We therefore encourage faculty across Arts, Sciences, and Engineering to consider how to create more frequent and more regular opportunities for students to develop their oral communication skills both inside and outside of the classroom.

Writing: Writing is a process. To learn to write well, one must sustain the practice of writing over time as well as receive substantive feedback on one's writing with some regularity. It is for these reasons that the Task Force proposes that Tufts institute a four-year writing program. Such a program would have benefits beyond improving writing skills. As writing and critical thinking are inextricably intertwined, there is no surer way to improve our students' capacity to think clearly than by improving their ability to write with power and precision. We suggest that Tufts carry out a comprehensive review of all our current writing programs, examining our overall writing pedagogy to determine how best to build upon and integrate our various efforts into a coherent four-year writing program. We strongly urge all departments to consider how to offer their students more opportunities to practice discipline-specific writing throughout the major.

We fully recognize that the faculty must discuss and carefully consider how to implement these ideas. We encourage their full discussion rather than their rapid implementation. While seemingly straightforward, these initiatives involve a change in our teaching culture at Tufts and will require significant new resources and support for our faculty. A four-year writing program, as well as any oral communication initiatives, should receive adequate resources from the University in terms of funding, staff, and faculty support.

Construct a cafe in Tisch Library to symbolize the library's role as an intellectual center on campus.

We propose the creation of a café in Tisch Library, a place that would bring together the intellectual and the social arenas of student life. Tufts needs informal gathering spaces for students and faculty, and the library needs a place where thinking, reading, and discussion can take place in a convivial atmosphere. A library café would also provide a fitting space in which to display faculty books, student art, and other intellectual products of our community. As an intellectual meeting place, a library café would serve as a powerful architectural symbol of the kind of university Tufts is. Thus it will be important to design the space carefully to ensure the café's centrality in the library experience. Properly conceived, this could be an architectural gem on top of the hill, perhaps even a literal light. This initiative, which received broad support from all constituencies of the Tufts community during our outreach, is wholly consistent with the Master Plan for the Medford/Somerville campus which envisions the adjacent library and campus center as centers of intellectual and social life, respectively, on campus.

Restructure the curricular requirements to reflect the educational outcomes that define a Tufts education.

We urge the faculty and the designated faculty committees to examine our current curricular requirements and consider restructuring them to reflect more closely our educational outcomes as outlined in Section II. We feel it may be beneficial to reformulate our requirements such that they emphasize the development of core competencies and modes of inquiry as opposed to simply exposing students to a list of

disciplines. We heard much dissatisfaction with regard to curricular requirements during our outreach to students; specifically, students have complained that many courses are ineffective in fulfilling their intended purpose as a requirement, resulting in students' resentful treatment of requirements as things to "get out of the way." In order to renew our enthusiasm for breadth, depth, and personal development as parts of a Tufts education, we might consider providing incentives to encourage departments and faculty to infuse more courses with substantial writing, speaking, critical thinking, and other core competencies outlined in our educational outcomes. We should direct students toward courses that encourage them to grapple with complex problems and diverse ideas, viewpoints, and methodologies. In so doing, we will enable students to cultivate a language for understanding, articulating, and negotiating the differences and diversity inherent not only in intellectual life but also in the communities and cultures in which we live. In this way, we can fulfill our mission to educate our students as citizens of the world.

Additionally, the Task Force encourages the Educational Policy Committee and the Honors Committee to take up the question of the relationship between Latin Honors and Honors Theses. As noted earlier, fewer than one in four *summa* graduates in Arts and Sciences write an honors thesis. More broadly, roughly one in ten Latin Honors candidates in Arts and Sciences writes an honors thesis. The Task Force does not mean to suggest that every student at Tufts should write an honors thesis. But our students are among the best in the world, and the best of those students certainly have the capacity to do extraordinary work if given sufficient preparation and encouragement. We might, for example, require the completion of an honors thesis as a requirement to graduate *summa cum laude*. Clearly, more will need to be done to encourage undergraduate research than simply linking Latin and Thesis Honors: appropriate training, in which the four-year writing program would play an integral role, will be required, as will additional resources for our students to engage in research and additional support for faculty who supervise them. We turn to the issue of undergraduate research next.

Provide additional support for undergraduate research.

Emphasizing research opportunities for undergraduates has become increasingly important since the Boyer Report (1998) identified the need to "reinvent undergraduate education" by paying more attention to undergraduate research.¹ Tufts is uniquely situated to offer our students the best of both worlds in this regard. As a liberal arts college embedded in a research university, Tufts employs faculty who are both world-class scholars and first-rate teachers, making us particularly well suited to provide undergraduates a wealth of research opportunities. Moreover, because the undergraduate college is surrounded by a number of excellent graduate departments and professional schools, Tufts undergraduates enjoy access not only to excellent faculty across the University but also to opportunities to collaborate with and learn from our graduate and professional students as well. Undergraduates would benefit from more opportunities to interact with graduate students through joint research and scholarship, just as graduate students would benefit from the opportunities to develop mentoring relationships with undergraduates. The Task Force therefore sets as a high priority the knitting together of

Tufts undergraduate, graduate, and professional schools as well as affiliated hospitals and clinics for continued excellence across the University, and we see the proliferation of and enhanced support for undergraduate research opportunities as a vehicle for doing so.

In our January Interim Report, we proposed a number of initiatives to support undergraduate research. In particular we included the following ideas:

- An Augmented Undergraduate Research Fund
- A Summer Scholars Program
- Research Funding for Students at the Professional Schools
- A Research Clearinghouse
- An Expanded Undergraduate Research Symposium

In response to our Interim Report, the Provost announced several new initiatives: an enhancement of the Undergraduate Research Fund; the creation of a Summer Scholars Program that includes research opportunities with Arts, Sciences, and Engineering faculty, at our professional schools, and at affiliated hospitals and clinics; and the creation of a Research Clearinghouse. In addition, Tufts has received a number of gifts to support undergraduate research in particular departments or schools. We are pleased to see that the University has moved forward on our proposals and encourage continued progress along these lines.

Furthermore, we encourage the faculty to give continued thought to how the curriculum could be changed to promote undergraduate research more strongly. It is not enough to provide funding for senior research opportunities. We must also construct a curriculum over the four years that makes it possible for our students to take advantage of these opportunities when they arise. This may require individual departments and programs to rethink their curriculum and requirements to provide students with the skills to take on sophisticated research projects as culminating academic experiences. We also note that Tufts can encourage and support undergraduate research outside of the curriculum. Currently, Tufts has a number of events that highlight undergraduate research, many of which are department or program specific while others cut across programmatic or disciplinary lines, such as the Undergraduate Research Symposium. Bringing together many of these events would lend greater prominence to undergraduate research and make it more central to the undergraduate experience: for example, we might benefit from expanding our Undergraduate Research Symposium and moving it to a weekday to underscore for faculty and students alike the central importance of undergraduate research.

Encourage initiatives that knit together the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering.

As previously noted, Tufts' unique structure as an undergraduate college embedded in a research university represents an environment ripe with potential opportunities for undergraduates to benefit from the resources surrounding them. The close connection between the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering

is a particularly important source of strength at Tufts that should be built upon. Specifically, the Task Force encourages Tufts to develop initiatives to deepen the connection between the School of Arts and Sciences and the School of Engineering to enable students in each school to benefit from the resources of the other. For example, we would encourage jointly-taught courses, research opportunities that span the two schools, and continued coordination of curricular requirements.

Increase programming that contributes to an enhanced intellectual climate.

The Task Force proposes that additional efforts be made to create programming that contributes to the intellectual life of the campus. A Distinguished Lecture Series, perhaps hosted by the president or provost, bringing world-renowned intellectual, social, and political figures to campus to speak to faculty and students is one possible initiative. In addition, we should provide more opportunities for our own faculty here on campus. We might, for example, establish a Deans' Luncheon Series in which members of the AS&E faculty give general interest lectures on their areas of research to students and faculty in brown-bag luncheon talks in the Coolidge Room or the Campus Center, thereby contributing to the establishment of traditions of intellectual discourse on campus.

Programming need not be limited to the campus, however. Tufts is located in a vibrant intellectual and cultural community, and we should view the city of Boston as a setting for intellectual and cultural engagement. In our interviews, we heard many positive statements about the benefits Tufts can derive from its location near the center of Boston while enjoying the relative tranquility of a suburban campus. Participation in an internship or community service program in Boston allows students to create links between their academic and extracurricular interests. However, there are few resources to help students find such opportunities, and as culturally rich as Boston is, many students are often unable to cover the cost of enjoying the cultural activities it boasts.

We therefore recommend that Tufts take advantage of Boston as a setting for intellectual and cultural engagement and seek ways to make its offerings more readily available to students: for example, a Cultural Ticket to Boston program that provides students with discounted passes to plays, museums, symphonies, and other events; a centralized Internship Clearinghouse; and encouragement of independent or group projects which integrate community service into existing coursework. These opportunities, though off-campus, would enhance the intellectual climate on campus by giving students experiences to infuse their life at Tufts with the value of engagement in the broader community.

Create attractive and convenient gathering spaces for faculty and students throughout the campus.

As campus construction and renovation projects occur over time, Tufts should have a systematic plan in place to develop a variety of spaces around campus both indoors and outdoors where students and faculty can gather for informal discussion.

Such a plan could be constructed by professional designers working together with the Campus Planning and Development Committee and include an assessment of current as well as future space use. Students should also be involved in this planning process, as they can readily identify some of the practical obstacles that particular designs might pose. Possibilities include small café-style tables and chairs dotted around campus and lounges for students and faculty in departments as well as in residence halls. As new residence halls are built or existing halls renovated, consideration should be given to creating spaces sufficiently flexible to be used as group study spaces and small seminar rooms for classes. Having small classrooms in the residence halls would send a statement that our residence halls are not simply a place for sleep but integral components of our educational program. This recommendation picks up a theme to be repeated in this report: that space can be a powerful and symbolic instrument for accomplishing our educational goals. The college system proposal and the campus center initiative in Section B continue this theme.

Support our continuing commitment to providing attractive and educationally appropriate classrooms.

Tufts has begun a substantial program of classroom renovation, and the Task Force wholeheartedly endorses this effort. We believe that classrooms – the way they are furnished, their size in relationship to the size of the class, and how they are technologically outfitted and supported – send students and faculty alike a powerful message about the value Tufts places on undergraduate education. As such, we strongly encourage Tufts to remain continuously committed to providing the most up-to-date classrooms possible and to outfitting them, as appropriate, with state-of-the-art audio-visual and computer technology. To move our classrooms successfully into the twenty-first century, Tufts must also commit to providing the support structures necessary to ensure the dependability and functionality of the technology so that our faculty may rely on it to add value to their teaching. Additionally, we urge Tufts to provide additional seminar rooms to enable more small classes to benefit from the enhanced intimacy such classrooms provide. Wherever possible, we encourage the provision of tables and chairs as opposed to individual desks in seminar classrooms to create an environment that fosters intellectual discourse among the group.

B. Strengthening the Tufts Community

As nations and cultures are becoming increasingly bound together in a global economy, continued hostilities throughout the world, as the events of September 11th, 2001 demonstrate, point to a crisis of understanding and cooperation. It is essential for its students to develop the social and intellectual tools in their undergraduate years that will prepare them to function in our increasingly complex world, and we view the Tufts community as playing an integral role in students' overall education. While Tufts' long-celebrated international focus provides students the opportunity to cultivate the cultural consciousness and global perspective they will require as active citizens of the world, it is the Tufts community which offer students a model of that larger world. The University's longstanding commitment to building a community that reflects the wealth of cultural and

intellectual diversity in the world provides students infinite opportunities to learn from one another and to engage with those who are different from as well as similar to themselves. Put differently, our diversity provides students with the opportunity to engage in dialogue with one another on sometimes difficult and sensitive topics. Thus the Tufts community helps students learn how to negotiate the differences and difficulties they will inevitably find in the world beyond.

Though the Tufts community is a powerful instrument for achieving our educational goals the Task Force believes that we must strengthen our community to realize these aspirations more fully. First, we need to create more frequent opportunities for the various members of our community to come together as a natural part of life at Tufts. We wish to enhance not only the all-important connection between faculty and students but also the connections between and among faculty, students, and staff. Second, we feel it is important to create programs, initiatives, and an infrastructure that foster a sense of belonging to the community *as a whole*. In the recommendations that follow, we utilize all of the tools at our disposal— residential life and planning, social activities and programming, and even admissions policies— to create a community that is integral to the Tufts education that we envision and to strengthen our sense of belonging to this community as a whole.

Recommendations

Create a Tufts College System that brings faculty, students, and staff together in meaningful and sustained ways.

We recommend that Tufts create a college system that would serve as a powerful vehicle for strengthening community and creating coherence across all four undergraduate years through an integration of academic, social, and cultural programming. In our December Report, we released a version of this proposal which enabled us to garner the critical feedback to sharpen and improve our vision. A college system, as envisioned below and elaborated upon more fully in the appendix, could vastly improve the overall experience for students. Colleges would provide students with many more opportunities to connect in meaningful ways with faculty outside the classroom as well as provide them with better access to campus services and systems. The colleges would offer students an intimate and intellectually vibrant home within the larger university, and each college center could inject life into our intellectual climate by hosting intellectual events and programs. In short, we see the college system as a mechanism for achieving all of the core goals of the Task Force in a bold and coherent manner.

Because the Task Force does not have the expertise nor the time to work out the fine details of an initiative as comprehensive as a college system, we propose that the idea be given serious consideration by the various constituencies of the Tufts community and developed further by the Committee on Residential Life and Learning, Physical Plant, and the Committee on Student Life, as well as by appropriate external consultants. In any case, the college system represents a profound shift in the culture of Tufts and, as

such, will likely require significant time, exploration, analysis, and community dialogue before any changes are initiated.

Implement need-blind admissions for the undergraduate program.

We propose that Tufts make a long-term commitment to providing need-blind admissions while continuing our current commitment to meet the full-need of all admitted students. Tufts currently has a "need-aware" admission policy, meaning that admissions decisions cannot be made without consideration of the applicant's financial need and that Tufts cannot offer admission to many well-qualified students solely because of their inability to afford a Tufts education. As a result, Tufts must currently turn away students who, by providing their unique perspective or background, would contribute to the educational experience of their peers and enrich the diversity of the Tufts community.

Need-blind admissions is a goal that is likely to be achieved only towards the end of a major capital campaign. As funds are raised and earmarked for financial aid, we can gradually move away from a need-aware to a need-blind policy. We strongly oppose any policy to move toward need-blind admission at the cost of our current commitment to meeting full-need. Some institutions advertise a need-blind admission policy while not committing to meeting full need for all four years, but we believe such a policy can only lead to discouragement and resentment on the part of students who depend on consistent and predictable funding. Moving over time to a system of need-blind admissions combined with our commitment to meeting full-need would allow us to focus our attention on constructing a community of exceptionally bright students from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. Such a community would enable Tufts to provide our students with the richest possible experience. As reflected in the recommendations below, however, we wish to emphasize that it is not enough to simply bring together a diverse student body— we must make a commitment to retain our students once they have matriculated.

Provide enhanced support for faculty and curricular development in the areas of diversity and pedagogy.

Addressing issues of diversity in intellectual as well as social arenas in ways that underscore the connections between the two will require the active engagement of the faculty as well as resources for faculty development. As has been stated before, attracting a diverse population of both students and faculty is essential, as it allows Tufts to create an environment in which students' encounters with difference educate and prepare them for the world in which they will live. However, Tufts needs to do more to institutionalize its welcome to students of diverse backgrounds. Our curriculum and co-curriculum need to provide students with both mirrors of their own experience and windows onto experiences and visions that are new to them.² Such efforts will benefit all students by providing opportunities to explore differences of culture and inequality, both on the campus and off.

Utilize residence halls as an instrument for undergraduate education.

Residential life is both an important contributor to the life of the community and an integral part of an undergraduate education. The Task Force recognizes the singular role residence halls play in the social and intellectual growth of students, and we recommend Tufts aim to make residential life a more intentional part of our overall educational program. Whether or not Tufts adopts a college system, there are a number of steps that Tufts could take that would enhance the role of residence halls in the educational life of students. One of the Task Force's earlier suggestions—to increase the opportunities for first-year students to live in all first-year residence halls—has already been implemented with the designation of Houston Hall as the second first-year residence hall for next year. Students have spoken with high regard of the bonding opportunities and programming that take place in Tilton Hall, currently the only first-year residence hall, and the positive impact it has had on their college experience. We are mindful that first-year halls are not for everyone and that many students obtain great benefit from living in close proximity with older students, but with two first-year residence halls we will now be able to closely meet demand. Additionally, the Task Force recommends that as renovations of residence halls occur over time, considerable attention be paid to creating more social and multi-use spaces equipped with appropriate furniture and features that will encourage greater utilization of the space. Such spaces could host social or cultural gatherings, small seminars, and other educational activities and in so doing make a powerful statement that a Tufts education occurs throughout the university and not simply in our classrooms and labs.

Create a planning group to design the optimal configuration of residential housing options for our undergraduate students.

The Task Force feels it would be valuable for the Tufts community to discuss the merits of housing all Tufts students studying on the Medford campus in Tufts-owned facilities. The excess demand for on-campus housing and the difficulty in finding adequate off-campus housing is a stress on students that detracts from their academic experience. Currently, only first and second-year students are required to live on campus, and roughly half of upperclassmen can live in Tufts housing. This coming year is instructive: after rising seniors went through room draw, there were 141 beds for juniors. The new residence hall, though it will add 150 beds, will bring the total available beds up to only an estimated 3,450.

The Task Force does not presume to know how to fix the housing crunch, but we wish to underscore the importance of the issue. We do not mean to suggest that we should simply build more residence halls on campus. Many students express great enthusiasm for the experience of living off-campus because of the privacy and sense of home that the apartments provide and Tufts could create a mix of housing opportunities, including more on-campus residence halls as well as off-campus houses and apartments owned by the University and rented to students. While such a policy would require discussion and consultation with local community groups and city governments, it is possible that the local community would welcome a thoughtfully constructed program.

Having the University as the landlord provides a measure of oversight that would help our students living in the local community be good neighbors. Meanwhile, residential property stays on the local tax rolls and student safety is ensured because housing quality is maintained through University maintenance and upkeep.

Complete the Campus Center to fully realize its potential as a "town commons," a vibrant locus of social activity on campus.

We encourage the completion of the Campus Center envisioned in the original design plans so that it may serve as a “town commons” on campus. A fully realized Campus Center would help Tufts achieve the goal set out in the Master Plan for the Medford-Somerville Campus of making the Campus Center the social anchor for the campus. Serious consideration should be given to a Campus Center addition plan to accomplish the following:

- Move the faculty dining room back to the center of the campus. Many faculty have noted the lack of a central gathering place for faculty central to offices and the library. The original Campus Center Phase III plans envisioned a 150-seat facility with adjacent reception room and cocktail lounge.
- Create a multifunction space with a built-in flexible furniture configuration. We do not have appropriate meeting space for large groups in the center of campus. The Campus Center Phase III plans projected a facility with capacity for 600 standing, 400 seated theater, 250 seated dinner. This type of space is already desperately needed for campus programs and groups, but would also be vital to the proposed college system.
- Consider expansion of the Campus Center Dining commons. Campus Center Phase III contemplated an expansion from 200 to 250 seats along with expansion of kitchen and storage space.
- Incorporate a central mailbox facility for students. Students identified having such a facility, particularly one in which students could receive packages as well as regular mail, as a high priority.

Develop programs that foster a greater sense of the Tufts community as a whole.

The programs of the University set the tone for the Tufts culture, and the Task Force proposes a series of programming initiatives be adopted which foster a greater sense of belonging to the community as a whole, promote a climate of intellectual engagement, and draw upon the wealth of cultural diversity in the Tufts community. Simply bringing students and faculty into the same space, whether in an expanded campus center or a residence hall, is not enough; to create community and help individuals function in a diverse environment requires active programming and widespread participation.

Possible events include:

- Campus-wide competitions such as a debate or project competitions that engage large numbers of students in a sustained intellectual activity outside of the classroom.
- Community-wide open forums, perhaps using the Ex College's popular "Opening Up the Classroom" as a model, which convene faculty, students, and staff to discuss difficult topics relevant to current events or issues on campus.
- Events that strengthen cross-class, student-faculty, and intra-faculty connections. The faculty high table dinners recently initiated at the president's request are an excellent example of one such event.
- Events that foster Tufts pride: students love Spring Fling because it is a social activity in which everyone participates in some way. The College System could be used to create more such events that will hopefully become Tufts traditions.

Additionally, the Task Force strongly recommends the immediate implementation of the on-line AS&E calendar now in progress. The calendar should facilitate and streamline the process of planning and scheduling of campus events. A common complaint we heard from students, faculty, and staff pertained to the lack of a centralized repository of information on up-coming lectures, seminars, social events, and other programming. Without such a resource, members of the community often unwittingly miss lectures, cultural events, social gatherings, or community forums which they otherwise would have wanted to attend. Moreover, scheduling conflicts often arise when one group unknowingly organizes an event at the same time as another important event resulting in poor attendance for one or both events. Perhaps most significantly, however, the lack of a university calendar contributes to a perception that the intellectual and social life on campus is less vibrant than it actually is. The Task Force sees the calendar as the emblem of the kind of community we aspire to be: better coordinated, our parts more coherently and intentionally connected to the whole, and thus more richly laden with opportunity for learning and growth for all.

C. Contributing to the Coherence of the Tufts Experience

The President charged the Task Force to "[e]valuate how each year of the undergraduate experience contributes to a distinctive, coherent, and thoughtfully designed transformation of intellect and character..." We began our evaluation by noting that the greatest strength of Tufts University is its combination of excellent teaching and superb research in a relatively small college environment that emphasizes the importance of liberal arts, both in Arts and Sciences and in Engineering. Our teacher-scholar model provides a particularly effective framework for providing a first-rate undergraduate education. It is a framework that incorporates the traditional emphasis on intellectual "breadth" and "depth."

Despite these clear strengths, we heard repeatedly in our meetings with the Tufts community concerns about a number of significant shortcomings in the undergraduate academic experience: in particular, a checklist mentality that exists among many freshmen and sophomores towards distribution requirements that is antithetical to their intended purposes; confusion and emotional discomfiture over the process of finding a major and pursuing research within it; considerable disconnection by students returning from study-abroad; and too few systematic efforts at intellectual integration and application among seniors.

To address these and other related problems, the Task Force adds a third catalytic element to our present emphasis on breadth and depth— explicit attention to developmental coherence in the undergraduate experience. We seek a clearly articulated vision of intellectual formation across the four years that is both dynamic in its flexibility across disciplines and clear in its expectations. Described fully in Appendix V, a series of milestone events and mechanisms are delineated that mark, celebrate, and support the pivotal junctures in a Tufts education from the pre-matriculation period to alumni status.

Our deliberations on a developmental approach incorporate two important principles. First, we recognize that there is tremendous variety in the methodologies across departments and programs and that any developmental perspective must be flexible enough to accommodate such variety. Second, students develop at different rates, and a developmental model must be sufficiently flexible to accommodate not only the student for whom Tufts is a formidable challenge but also the precocious student-scholar. The Task Force believes that adding a developmental perspective to the traditional focus on "breadth" and "depth" in our undergraduate education would powerfully enhance our ability to provide our students with an intellectually coherent educational experience, as well as prepare them for participation in faculty research or substantial scholarship of their own.

Recommendations

Articulate a developmentally coherent vision for each of the four years of a Tufts education through a series of "intellectual milestone" events, mechanisms, and supportive systems.

We propose a dynamic, explicitly articulated developmental model for intellectual formation at Tufts that is described in detail for every year in Appendix V. This model builds coherence across the four years of undergraduate experience, capitalizes on the key strengths of our faculty and university (e.g., teacher-scholar model), and highlights major intellectual tasks and challenges in relation to key social and emotional issues at critical junctures in the undergraduate experience. An outline of each year's tasks and a brief description of several suggested initiatives follows, with each initiative italicized and elaborated upon in the appendix.

Year One is characterized by consolidation of the student's academic and communication skills, intellectual exploration, and the laying of a foundation of

knowledge for the rest of their lives. Some of the suggested initiatives include a *letter from the President* upon acceptance; a *matriculation speech* by the President, and a pre-spring “*What’s Available at Tufts*” *speech* by the Provost— all of which help bring to life the six outcomes of a Tufts education, the major milestones during it, and an overview of the many research and service opportunities and support systems to help realize it. Other proposed initiatives include a prematriculation *book-gift from the Alumni Association*, an August *consolidation session* for students who require it; an *enhanced advising system*; a *four-year writing program*, and a second, *pre-spring department orientation* to encourage better exploration and to introduce new fields of study.

Year Two is marked by the often difficult transition from intellectual exploration to choice. A significant number of students feel unprepared, insufficiently supported, and unable to make significant life decisions (e.g., their major; whether to go abroad; how to pursue research/applied options) for personal as well as academic reasons. The challenges of year two are even less clearly articulated than in the first year, leaving students ill-prepared to recognize and face— and to support one another through— the challenges ahead. Beginning with a talk by the Dean of the Colleges “*On Becoming a Sophomore*,” our initiatives are aimed at providing academic and social structures and community-wide events that help students make the best-informed choice and feel well-supported and advised. These events and structures reinforce a sense of belonging that is often challenged during this year of study. Proposed initiatives for this year include a large, lively *Majors Day*, an enhanced event to provide students added support during the *selection of a major*; a *World Day*; a *Research Clearinghouse* at Tufts; and *Summer Scholars* program.

Year Three introduces students to opportunities for immersion within their field or chosen culture and also for learning how knowledge can be applied in the world. Strengthening students' connections to the larger community is of crucial importance during the third year when many students move off-campus or abroad. Our initiatives aim to make options for study, research, and applied service transparent, organized, and widely recognized in campus-wide events: e.g., the *Research Clearinghouse*; *Tufts Abroad*; and *Tufts-in-Boston* options; the *Undergraduate Research and Scholarship Symposium*; a *department-based writing course* (which hones general skills and prepares students for the discipline-based writing expected in their fourth year).

Year Four consolidates and integrates the previous years of work across multiple disciplines and three years of writing; emphasizes intellectual depth in a chosen field(s) of study through a senior project, thesis, or culminating experience; and helps reconnect students who have been abroad to their departments and to the Tufts community. Events to aid the latter transition include the *World Homecoming Day* in September and *department-based brown-bag lunches* or mini-seminars where students exchange descriptions of their cultural, research and/or service experiences in the junior year. A greatly enhanced *Undergraduate Research Symposium* is viewed as a forum for presenting and recognizing senior theses, and research projects. Facilitating the last transition from college to career and alumnae status is the focus of multiple recommendations: a continuously updated *internship and job clearinghouse*; *job fairs*

and alumnae-linked career nights; a Two-part Graduation Ceremony where the second phase of commencement takes place in a smaller setting. Students would receive their diplomas in ceremonies hosted by colleges, departments, or clusters of departments. This is the last official experience students have at Tufts. These final events should be designed to give students a sense of accomplishment and to mark and support their transition into the world in ways that will make them proud graduates and underscore their life-long membership in the Tufts community.

Restructure the advising system within Arts and Sciences to provide students with continuous advising support from matriculation to graduation and to provide faculty with additional advising support.

We propose that the current advising system composed of Class Deans and Class Teams be replaced by a system of advising which lends more continuity to the Tufts experience for students and provides faculty a single point person for each student. The Task Force recognizes the extraordinary success of the advising program in the School of Engineering, and we propose to fashion this new advising system on Engineering's model. Specifically, there would be five Deans of Advising, one for Engineering and four for Arts and Sciences, and each dean would be responsible for a segment of each class such that every student will have a continuous relationship with their Dean of Advising for their entire four years at Tufts.

The benefits of such a structure are not only that it provides greater continuity of contact and support for our students throughout their Tufts experience, but also greater support for our faculty. Often, a student's struggles in his or her coursework indicate troubles in other areas, whether personal or academic. Under our current system, faculty advisors have no single point person to call upon for a picture of the whole student, since relevant information may be broadly dispersed among the student's family or friends, other faculty members, health services, counseling, and previous advisors. Key to our reconceptualization of the advising system is the notion that the Deans of Advising would act as "case managers" and serve in this way as the connective bridge between students on the one hand and faculty and staff on the other. This connectivity will benefit not only students who are struggling but also those who are thriving and whom our Deans of Advising will be better equipped to single out for fellowships, certain job opportunities, or other honors. In order to strengthen the accountability of our advising system, we further propose that these deans report to an academic dean whose primary responsibility is the academic oversight of undergraduate education. We believe our Deans of Advising are rich reservoirs of wisdom gained from being on the "frontline," and the proposed revision to the accountability structure would better enable them to inform the process of academic policy-making.

Strengthen connections between our alumni and students, particularly in the area of career services.

Our alumni provide a rich resource for our students, as they are a gateway to and a window on "life after Tufts" for our students. Alumni can actively contribute to

undergraduate education, both by helping students identify jobs and internships and through alumni programming on campus. We applaud the on-going improvements to Tufts' Alumni Network and strongly support further efforts in this area. Career Services plays a vital role in the professional development of students and in the continuation of Tufts' relationships with new generations of alumni. Career Services, consistently praised by students for helping with resume writing and interviewing skills, can also make a significant impact by helping the university develop a strong network with employers and alumni. The Task Force recommends that a Career Services advisory board be established, consisting of students, faculty, and professionals, including both alumni and non-alumni participants. Such an advisory board could provide useful feedback and advice to the Career Services office to ensure that we provide the best possible service to our graduating students.

Create closer links between the curriculum and co-curricular life.

One thing that has become perfectly clear to us through our outreach is how dearly our students value Tufts for the richness of and the diversity of options within co-curricular life here. Much of the pride or school spirit students articulate emanates from their sense of how well-served they feel by the innumerable opportunities available to them outside of the classroom. However, faculty often describe these very same opportunities with frustration: many professors wish the excitement students clearly feel in and for many of their co-curricular activities would follow them back into the classroom. Likewise, many students wish there were more opportunities to build connections between life in and life out of the classroom, allowing, for instance, an editor of a campus publication to pursue a project in Communications and Media Studies in which each experience would be enhanced by the knowledge developed in the other. The Task Force sees great value in such linkages and strongly encourages Tufts to maximize the educational benefit to students through a closer, more intentional integration of the curriculum and co-curricular life. An example, which the Task Force fully endorses, of an initiative which integrates both realms is the Tufts Personalized Performance Program, a joint program of the Athletics Department, Health Services, Dining Services, and the School of Nutrition. The Task Force also recognizes existing efforts in this arena, such as the Omidyar Scholars program run through UCCPS, and encourages the University to continue to develop programs and initiatives which integrate life in and life out of the classroom in ways that lend intellectual excitement and coherence to the whole of the Tufts experience.

IV. Resources

The intellectual vitality of the university depends heavily upon the quality and energy of its faculty. In an institution where faculty are devoted to students as well as research and scholarship, it is not surprising that many should be wary of “unfunded mandates,” and of new demands and expectations. The one thing all members of the faculty would agree upon is that too many demands are being made upon their time. It takes time— time outside the classroom, and in many disciplines, away from campus— to pursue the research and scholarship that have made our faculty so impressive. It takes

time, as well, to prepare classes, to meet with advisees, to hold office hours, to attend departmental and university wide faculty meetings, to participate on committees, to supervise theses, to oversee graduate student exams and dissertations. As we devise strategies to strengthen the bonds between faculty members and undergraduates, the Task Force is mindful that many of its recommendations will require still more time, commitment, and effort from the faculty. The Task Force feels strongly that Tufts cannot simply expect faculty to absorb additional responsibilities and demands without the resources and support that they need. We must find ways to increase the time available for faculty to meet the numerous responsibilities that are being placed upon them.

We therefore urge the administration to monitor carefully how the Task Force recommendations affect the faculty and to find appropriate and imaginative responses to the increased expectations. Among the possibilities for reducing the demands upon faculty time are: finding ways to shift tasks currently done by faculty to members of the administration or staff; reducing the amount of faculty time given over to meetings (departmental meetings, chairs meetings, committee meetings); creating options for more frequent sabbaticals, or for course reductions for faculty supervising a certain number of theses or dissertations; hiring additional faculty. We recognize that there are real constraints— of money and space alike— to adding new faculty. Whether or not we increase faculty size, the University must find ways to assure that faculty members can devote themselves to their most important responsibilities. Creating a greater synergy between teaching and research is clearly part of what the Task Force envisions; but the burdens and opportunities posed by these recommendations must be distributed carefully. All of us share the goal of making Tufts University second to none; that the University has achieved the level of international recognition that it now enjoys is a tribute, in no small part, to the extraordinary devotion, hard work, and passion of its faculty. If we are to do still more, then the administration must provide the resources— in terms of salaries, staffing, and time— that we recognize as indispensable to making the vision of the Task Force a reality.

V. Next Steps

After nearly two years of data-collection, community outreach, collective deliberating, the Task Force will conclude its work upon submission of this report to the President. The above recommendations are intended to reflect the priorities of the Tufts Community and to provide the administration with an agenda as the University enters the next Capital Campaign.

The Task Force's recommendations are not the only demand on existing or future resources of the University however; a world-class University such as Tufts has many goals and aspirations, all of which require resources of time, money, space, and personnel. The Capital Campaign will surely open many new horizons for Tufts, and yet finite resources call for strategic decision-making. The Task Force has therefore attempted to design initiatives which serve multiple goals simultaneously— which work together as an integrated whole or can stand alone if necessary.

It should be noted that our recommendations are based on the snapshot of Tufts that we have developed over the past two years. But Tufts, of course, will evolve and change over time. Because each of the issues discussed in the report will require resources which take time to gather, the committee understands that the implementation process might, for some of our proposals, take several years. As a result, we have deliberately aimed to create a *dynamic* document whose relevance will outlast the shifting of specific circumstances over time. A recommendation put forward today to address a particular problem may not be the best solution as Tufts changes and moves forward. We encourage Tufts to be flexible in its approach to improving undergraduate education and, as time moves on, to give greater weight to the broad themes and enduring principles the Task Force has identified than to the specific details of particular proposals. In this way, we hope the Task Force's work will continue to be relevant over the next decade.

VI. Conclusion

The Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience has found that Tufts, already a world-class university, is poised to advance to a higher level of institutional excellence and recognition. We believe that the recommendations set forth in this document will help us realize that ambition. They will do so by building upon our enduring commitment to the ideal of the teacher-scholar while moving us forward to meet the new challenges presented by a new millennium. Our findings and recommendations, the product of nearly two years of discussion and debate within the community, reflect the particular history and distinctive strengths of Tufts University. We most honor that past, however, by not being fearful of change in the future. With all the virtues that Tufts possesses, with all the success it has had in providing a superb undergraduate education, much that is vital remains to be done. We have reason to be proud but not complacent, reason to note how far we have come, but not to ignore how much further we can go. “Good enough” must not be good enough for Tufts — not when we’re talking about our classrooms or dorms, the intensity of intellectual discourse and commitment, the quality of undergraduate social opportunities, or the enthusiasm of our students for their experience at Tufts.

The future of Tufts, as we see it, glows with the heat and the light of intellectual sparks ignited across our campuses, catching the eye of all who care about the training of the world’s best minds. We call upon the Tufts community— upon our students, faculty, staff, administrators, trustees, and alumni together— to help us to achieve that future and to push for the realization of the vision articulated in this report: a vision that proposes, at its very core, the *strengthening* of that community. For Tufts to become what we know it can be will demand more work, more time, and also, inevitably, more resources. More even than material resources, though, it will call for our confidence and imagination. Halfway through its second century, Tufts continues toward fulfilling the promise of its distinctive greatness. Despite the costs and labor entailed in securing that greatness for the future, we on the Task Force affirm our certainty that the end will make such efforts worthwhile.

Appendix I. Student Advisory Committee Report

We, the members of the Student Advisory Committee to the Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience, enthusiastically applaud the work of the Task Force. We support its vision of a Tufts education and hope that students, faculty, administrators, and staff will come together to discuss implementation of the Task Force's recommendations. In its attempt to create proposals to address broad students outcomes, the Task Force chose to offer recommendations that span the community and leave details up to those who would have responsibility for implementation. We agree that this approach was necessary, but we feel that there were many ideas suggested by students throughout the research and outreach process that should be brought to the community's attention. We would like to present these ideas with the hope that the proper bodies in the community will consider implementing them.

Using Space To Promote Community

The Task Force report identifies improvement of space and facilities as key to addressing the themes of community, climate, and coherence and offers suggestions for new facilities that will promote community. We would like to underscore the importance of this issue. To further the Task Force's goal of strengthening the intellectual atmosphere, we need spaces for students and faculty to interact and spaces for students to come together to share knowledge; to create community, we need to create places that will draw students out of their rooms and encourage them to interact. To create coherence of education and pride in Tufts, we need to create spaces that facilitate learning and make buildings desirable places in which to learn and live.

We make the following suggestions for creating spaces that will strengthen the sense of community on campus:

- Renovate dormitory common room space. Common rooms in dorms are presently underused because they do not contain study space, have nice furniture, or provide enough enticements for students to use the space, such as games or computers.
- Perform a comprehensive evaluation of athletic facilities and renovate them as needed. Noted weaknesses include a grossly inadequate amount of cardiovascular machines in the Fitness Center, a lack of spectator space at the pool, run-down squash courts, and run-down locker rooms in both Cousens Gym and the Baronian Field House.
- Create a student art gallery, possibly in the new wing of the campus center. This will encourage students to take pride in the accomplishments of others in the community and emphasize the value that Tufts places on student work.

Curriculum

The Task Force's recommendations for improving research at Tufts and creating a four-year writing program will strengthen the intellectual environment, but we feel there is a major curricular issue that is not sufficiently addressed in the Task Force report. There is currently a divide between academics and co-curricular activities at Tufts. To improve the coherence of student life, we suggest several new curricular initiatives that encourage students to explore their interests in an academic setting and learn skills that will be applicable to their community activities.

- Create opportunities for students to do interdisciplinary capstone projects or theses or innovative academic projects based on extracurricular interests.
- Offer a class on leadership, possibly through the Experimental College.
- Consider creating classes based around a speaker series, such as the Leadership for Active Citizenship class previously offered through UCCPS. Turning a series into a class ensures that there will be an audience for the lectures and gives students the opportunity for prolonged engagement with a topic. It also helps students to see how people have applied academic skills to their career pursuits in a way that a regular class cannot.

Programming

The Task Force report does an excellent job of stating the need to improve programming to bridge the disconnect between students and faculty and between students and each other. To achieve the Task Force's goal of strengthening the community and transforming the social atmosphere, we would like to see programs created that address the social and personal needs of each class, in addition to programs that bring the community together as a whole.

- Create events that foster Tufts pride: Almost every senior will list Spring Fling and the Naked Quad Run among their favorite memories of Tufts. But, these and the matriculation/graduation candle ceremonies are the only traditions that exist at Tufts. Many students have called for the creation of new events that will bring people together as a community just to have fun and enjoy being at Tufts. Such events connect students to the University because they see it as doing something to make them happy and because they make Tufts special in a way that other universities are not. Examples of events that could be implemented include a winter carnival, in which a snow day is called and students descend on the hill for winter activities, talent shows and dramatic spoofs organized by the colleges, an annual birthday party for Tufts that celebrates Tufts history, and semi-formal dances held in the Gantcher Center to celebrate holidays.
- Create programs that address the practical concerns of each class. One example would be a "block party" for sophomores at the end of the year. Such an event would be held in the Gantcher Center, and students could go to specific stations to meet people living on the same street as them the next year. They could also

receive information about living off campus, such as how to choose utility companies or what to do when something breaks.

Making Students Aware Of What Tufts Has To Offer

The Task Force report notes that students often do not attribute to Tufts the successes they have had at the University. A major reason for this is that Tufts has a marketing problem; students are not aware of the resources Tufts has to offer or the accomplishments of others in the community. When they stumble upon a program, they attribute their participation to their efforts in finding it, not Tufts' work to offer it. There are many simple ways in which Tufts can improve communication with students about how to discover and take advantage of opportunities at the University.

- Implement disciplinary-based peer leader programs: departments may want to examine how to use their upperclassmen to help younger students navigate the major. One way to accomplish this is by selecting upperclassmen to serve as peer leaders in the department. Their names and contact information would be posted in the department office and on the Internet, and students could be charged with organizing outreach efforts to help others select courses, choose advisors, and learn about opportunities in the department.
- Send regular newsletters to students studying abroad, whether they are on a Tufts program or not.
- Make students aware of the accomplishments of their peers and professors. Major awards, such as Fulbright Scholarships or teaching awards, should be announced in campus-wide e-mails. Events honoring students, such as academic awards ceremonies, should be opened to the public and marketed to students.
- Use the advising deans to distribute information to students about programs on campus and during the summer that they might be interested in.

Overall, we look forward to seeing the Tufts community grow and develop with the implementation of proposals from the Task Force report. But as various administrators, faculty, and others work to put ideas into place, we would like to emphasize the continuing need for a student voice in their dialogue. The Task Force's initiatives will not resonate with the Tufts community if students are not brought in to help shape them. Similarly, students share a responsibility in working toward implementation of the Task Force recommendations, and we hope that students will take an active role in lobbying for changes to take place.

Appendix II. President's Charge to the Task Force

The educational environment at Tufts University has changed substantially in the past three decades. Once an excellent regional university, we have now become a university of international prominence. By any measure, our students are stronger academically than ever before. Our students are also far more diverse, as are our faculty. Over the last decade, the number of international, Asian, and Hispanic students has doubled while the number of African American students has increased by one-third. The richness and cultural diversity of the student body creates both challenges and opportunities.

The environment outside of our university has also changed. Technology is evolving at breath-taking speed and has dramatically altered the way students communicate and learn. Advances in the life sciences are opening up whole new fields of discovery while also raising profound ethical and moral dilemmas. The increasing globalization of the world's economies emphasizes the importance of understanding other languages and cultures.

Given these and other changes, it is time for a comprehensive evaluation of undergraduate education and life at Tufts University. What is the overall educational experience that we wish a Tufts undergraduate to obtain? Do our curriculum and teaching methods effectively prepare students for the world they will encounter upon graduation? Are we meeting the intellectual expectations of our students? Can we anticipate how technology might further enhance the overall educational experience, in terms of curriculum, pedagogy, and student support? How does the co-curricular and residential experience of our students complement their classroom education?

Now is an ideal time to explore how the Tufts undergraduate experience might be enhanced for the 21st century. We are celebrating the 150th anniversary of the founding of the college. We are preparing for our reaccreditation review by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. In the not too distant future we will also begin a major new fundraising effort. The work of the Task Force will help to shape the priorities for undergraduate education and life in this new capital campaign.

The Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience therefore is charged with the following:

- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of our curriculum and pedagogy in the context of our educational mission and guiding principles. Describe how our curriculum and teaching methods might be strengthened to prepare students better for the world they will encounter upon graduation. Communicate these ideas to the established faculty committees charged with responsibility for the undergraduate curriculum.
- Assess the contribution of residential and co-curricular life to the overall Tufts undergraduate experience. How might a more intentional residential experience

strengthen undergraduate education? What role should faculty play in residential life?

- Evaluate how each year of the undergraduate experience contributes to a distinctive, coherent, and thoughtfully designed transformation of intellect and character, and to a significant on-going relationship between students and Tufts University.
- Identify the resources that are necessary to effect the changes recommended in the Task Force's report.

The Task Force should build on the work of the Higher Education Initiative. Through outreach, the Task Force should engage the community in evaluating and assessing different potential futures for undergraduate education. The work of the Task Force will not be complete until the Task Force has built a broad-based coalition in support of its recommendations. Members should work hard to achieve a consensus for change. Specific recommendations that involve changes to curriculum must respect the faculty governance process, and should be referred to the appropriate standing committee of the faculty for action.

The Task Force will report directly to the President. Its membership will draw from distinguished faculty of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering as well as leaders within the student life arena, and current Tufts students. A report and recommendations are expected within 18 months from appointment.

Appendix III. Background and Outreach

The work of this current Task Force reflects Tufts' long-standing commitment to self-assessment and improvement. During the course of Tufts' history, the institution has embarked upon a number of self-studies which have varied widely in scope and focus. Since 1955, when Tufts College officially became Tufts University, there have been three major self-assessment initiatives as comprehensive and ambitious as the Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience: the *Tufts-Carnegie Self-Study* (1956-1958), the *University Steering Committee's self-study* (1971-1973), and most recently, the *Higher Education Initiative* or HEI (1997-1999). Additionally, there have been several, more specifically focused committees whose work has had a significant impact on this current effort, including the *Ad Hoc Committee on Curriculum Review* and the resulting "Maxwell Report" (1982-1983), the *Task Force on Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Issues* (1992-1993), the *Task Force on Race* (1996-1997), and the *Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Retention* (2001). We briefly discuss a few of the issues from these efforts that bear on our work.

Shortly after Tufts officially became a University in 1955, the Tufts-Carnegie Self-Study was initiated by then President Wessell to determine the role and purpose of the University as well as the "most suitable philosophy" for Tufts' second century. Supported by the Carnegie Corporation, the Self-Study Executive Committee spent over two years investigating the institution's curriculum, facilities, operations, quality of the faculty and student bodies, and optimal size. According to one observer, "No significant corner of the house of Tufts escaped examination."³ The study resulted in a 4,422 page final report and over 130 recommendations. The spirit of most of the recommendations included, according to the study's Director, "a general acceptance of the notion that better attention and performance could be rendered if we tried to improve in the areas of our present educational commitments rather than take on more students, functions and objectives." In sum, the Self-Study Executive Committee chose to enhance Tufts' existing strengths in favor of aspiring toward additional, new goals; former President Wessell was quoted as telling the Alumni Council in 1958, "It is our intention to do a few carefully selected things well and not try to be all things to all men." A decade later, a significant number of the recommendations, such as curricular revisions and operational modifications, had either been implemented or were in the process of implementation.

In December of 1971, then President Hallowell initiated the second comprehensive self-study and charged the "University Steering Committee" with examining all aspects of the university, defining Tufts' goals for the next decade, and preparing a comprehensive set of recommendations and its projected budgetary impact. Anticipating greater competition among universities for excellent students, the committee felt it was "the right moment" for the study as society had undergone significant changes since the last self-study to which Tufts would need to respond to remain competitive. In January 1973, after a year of information gathering through surveys and focus groups, the group published a 130-page report, *Tufts: the Total University in Changing Times*, which contained 55 recommendations concerning the University's curriculum, facilities, personnel, the student body, and organizational structure.

In the nearly thirty years since the report's publication in 1973, the committee's thoughtful distillation and critical analysis of what it means to be educated that remains the committee's most useful contribution to the current work of the Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience. With technological advances rapidly changing the face of the future their graduates would confront, the University Steering Committee concluded that Tufts should give its students the intellectual and personal tools that would enable them to navigate whatever situation they might find themselves in, either now or in the distant future. They distilled the educational goals of the university into three categories: rationality (a student's capacity for collection, analysis and synthesis of data, construction of an argument, maintenance of an open and curious mind, and sufficient acquisition of the methodology of his field), moral sensitivity (self-knowledge, empathy, and the ability to consider the ethical implications of human actions), and creativity (developing the ability to communicate well both orally and in writing in several capacities: verbal, mathematical, or artistic).

Like the 1973 study, the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on Curriculum Review of 1982-1983 bears particular relevance to the Task Force with regard to its meticulous analysis of the education Tufts should impart to its students. Specifically, in the 1983 "Report of the Tufts University Team," the committee outlined 11 educational goals for Tufts students which encompassed "broad intellectual and social abilities" and "values that cannot be limited by the narrowly-defined specialties of the professions and of the university." In many ways, the goals echoed the sentiments of the University Steering Committee of 1973 and foreshadowed the Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience's articulation of a Tufts education that we describe below.

Tufts' third comprehensive self-evaluation, the Higher Education Initiative (HEI), was initiated by former Vice President Mel Bernstein in 1997, when he asked each department to "reflect upon the threats and opportunities facing liberal education at Tufts and to translate this into department specific issues and concerns."⁴ The scope of the project was immense: to "address pressures of affordability, relevance of curricula, the impact of IT; examine our short-term goals and long-range directions; ask, analyze and answer in Tufts terms, pivotal academic and structural questions; reinforce planning activities of faculty committees and of departments and programs." In its review of the HEI, the Executive Committee of the AS&E faculty, whose formation was a direct result of the project, noted the vast amount of information collected during that process and encouraged the Task Force to read the various reports carefully as part of its process of information gathering. The Task Force found the Executive Committee's analysis of the HEI effort extremely helpful, and it has studied the HEI committee reports at length. Many of the ideas developed as a part of the HEI planning effort have been incorporated into our work.

Over the last decade, there have been several other committees whose work in addressing issues of concern to various minority constituencies at Tufts has given us a solid foundation of understanding upon which to build our own work. Though the Task Force on Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Issues (1992-1993), the Task Force on Race (1996-1997), and the Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Retention (2001) had distinct concerns and

agendas, they have articulated a common set of persistent and pervasive concerns that have informed our efforts throughout the project. Simply put, these committees have forcefully articulated how important it is that Tufts fosters a climate, both inside and outside the classroom, which is safe, welcoming, and encouraging for all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, physical ability, or cultural or socio-economic background. Moreover, Tufts profits from the tremendous and multi-faceted diversity of its population, and it would be to our benefit to enhance the education we receive from one another.

We have found these previous reports extremely helpful for providing an historical context for our work. We note with pride the thoughtful analyses and imaginative ideas that previous members of the Tufts community have contributed to the institution and have drawn on this work wherever possible to complement the many ideas and suggestions that we gathered in our outreach efforts over the past ten months.

After the Task Force was created by President Bacow in early fall 2001, the committee spent several months gathering data and conducting outreach meetings within the Tufts community. We held numerous meetings with the various constituencies of the Tufts community: students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and trustees. In addition to our outreach meetings, we reviewed numerous planning documents made available to us by various departments, programs, and administrative offices, and we analyzed dozens of surveys conducted by the Office of Institutional Research. In addition, the Office of Institutional Research also helped us construct and administer our own survey of full and part-time faculty garnering data that proved to be invaluable to the Task Force.

On the basis of this first round of outreach, the Task Force released an Interim Report in two parts: the first in December 2002 and the second in January 2003. Those reports along with other information about our outreach efforts are available on the Task Force web site, <http://ugtaskforce.tufts.edu>.

At the same time that the Task Force was engaged in the activities described above, the student members of the Task Force established a Student Advisory Committee comprised entirely of undergraduates. In addition to meeting numerous times amongst themselves, this committee conducted informal research and outreach in the student body and reported back its findings to the Task Force. Suggestions from the Student Advisory Committee appear in various forms throughout this report, and the students provided valuable input to the process over the course of the project.

Below is a list of the community outreach meetings that the Task Force has held since its inception; additionally, the group met as a full committee 33 times, and the Chair, Co-Chairs and Project Coordinator met weekly.

Task Force Community Outreach

1. Trustees (2/8-9/02)
2. TCU Senate (3/3/02)
3. Senior Leadership Corps I (3/8/02)
4. Center for Interdisciplinary Studies (3/13/02)
5. Class Deans and Academic Standing (3/15/02)
6. Executive Committee (3/25/02)
7. A&S Chairs (3/25/02)
8. Dean of Students Senior Staff (3/26/02)
9. Student Advisory Committee (3/26/02)
10. Curricula Committee (3/27/02)
11. University Committee on Teaching and Faculty Development (3/29/02)
12. Senior Leadership Corps II (3/29/02)
13. Policy Council (4/2/02)
14. Young Alumni Group (4/2/02)
15. Computer Facilities and Usage Committee (4/4/02)
16. Educational Policy Committee (4/5/02)
17. Equal Educational Opportunity Committee (4/5/02)
18. Committee on Learning Disabilities (4/10/02)
19. Career Services, Religious Services, Athletics, Student Activities (4/22/02)
20. Open Student Forum (4/23/02)
21. Budget and University Priorities Committee (4/24/02)
22. Library Committee (4/24/02)
23. Junior Faculty Luncheon (4/26/02)
24. Center for Academic Excellence, Honors and Student Awards (4/29/02)
25. Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee (4/29/02)
26. UCCPS (5/1/02)
27. EPIIC, Study Abroad, Foreign Programs Committee, et al (5/6/02)
28. Meeting on International Relations (5/7/02)
29. Student Advisory Committee (5/7/02)
30. Greek Life (5/9/02)
31. Engineering Chairs (5/13/02)
32. A & S Board of Overseers (5/16/02)
33. Trustees (5/18/02)
34. AS&E Faculty Meeting (9/18/02)
35. Dean of Students Senior Staff (9/24/02)
36. Nadia Medina of the Writing Center (10/7/02)
37. A & S Board of Overseers (10/8/02)
38. Open Student Forum (10/9/02)
39. Open Student Forum on Cultural Climate at Tufts I (10/10/02)
40. Open Student Forum on Cultural Climate at Tufts II (10/11/02)
41. Open Student Forum on Living at Tufts: Outside the Classroom (10/23/02)
42. Dining Services (10/24/02)
43. Trustees (Academic Affairs Division) 11/2/02)
44. Tufts University Alumni Association (11/4/02)
45. Directors of English 1 and 2 (12/5/02)
46. Educational Policy Committee (12/11/02)
47. Meeting on the Undergraduate Research Symposium (12/11/02)

48. Class Deans (12/13/02)
49. Meeting on the "World Day" Proposal (12/23/02)
50. President Bacow and Senior Leadership (1/15/03)
51. A&S Chairs (1/22/03)
52. Writing Group (1/28/03)
53. Task Force Faculty Dinner I (1/28/03)
54. Task Force Faculty Dinner II (2/3/03)
55. Trustees (2/7/03)
56. TCU Senate (2/9/03)
57. Open Student Forum I (2/10/03)
58. Task Force Faculty Dinner III (2/12/03)
59. Educational Policy Committee (2/12/03)
60. Graduate Student Council (2/14/03)
61. Open Student Forum II (2/19/03)
62. Sandra Baer on Students with Disabilities (2/20/03)
63. Committee on Student Life (2/21/03)
64. Task Force Coffee for Faculty & Staff (2/21/03)
65. Meeting on Diversity Issues with Jean Wu (2/28/03)
66. Student Advisory Committee Open Meeting (3/3/03)
67. Writing Group (3/4/03)
68. Ex College's "Opening Up the Classroom" (3/5/03)
69. Accreditation Team (3/10/03)
70. Tufts University Alumni Association (3/12/03)
71. Engineering Deans (3/14/03)
72. John Roberto (3/14/03)
73. Paul Stanton (3/18/03)
74. Writing Group (3/25/03)
75. Educational Policy Committee (3/28/03)
76. Student Advisory Committee Open Meeting (3/30/03)
77. Meeting with Tim Brooks on Alumni Community Network (4/2/03)
78. AS&E Faculty Meeting (4/9/03)
79. Educational Policy Committee and the Writing Group (4/11/03)
80. Open Student Forum (4/14/03)
81. A&S Chairs (4/16/03)
82. Carol Baffi-Dugan (4/22/03)
83. President Bacow (5/5/03)
84. A&S Board of Overseers (5/13/03)
85. AS&E Faculty Meeting (5/14/03)

Appendix IV. Elements of a College System

We have constructed this proposal to indicate what a college system might entail. We note that such a shift would require significant resources, though it is not as costly as would be a plan that requires new residence halls or reconfiguring the layout of the campus in any way. We see the following as important elements of a college system:

College Centers: We propose the creation of four colleges, each with one residence hall designated as its "college center" to serve as the hub of college life— the locus for college activities and traditions, the home-base for members of the college, and the location for college offices, lounges, and advising. All four residence halls would house only first year students, and all entering students would become members of a college whether they decide to live in the college center or in a mixed-class hall. All students, regardless of where they live, will be members of a college for their entire four years at Tufts, enabling their active participation in the activities, programs, and traditions of that college and lending greater coherence to their Tufts experience. Responding to student feedback, the Task Force encourages any future planners of a college system to ensure students' continuing freedom of choice with regard to where and with whom to live. It is important to allow students to pursue friendships and affiliate with campus groups and organizations without hindrance by the college system because these connections contribute to an important sense of belonging to the Tufts community as a whole.

Advising: The college system could be a natural environment in which to embed the restructured advising system, as described in Section III above, to give students added continuity of support. If each college had its own advising team, consisting of a Dean of Advising and faculty members from a variety of disciplines, students could reap the benefits of being known in significant ways by a group of senior members of the college over their entire four years at Tufts. Such an approach to advising would also ease the burden on pre-major advisors and make it less critical when a student is matched with a pre-major advisor with whom he or she shares no common intellectual interests.

Faculty Participation: Each college, in addition to its student, or junior, members, would have several senior members, consisting of various members of the faculty and staff. One such faculty member would serve as the college director and have a residential appointment in the college, living in an apartment either in or near the college. We envision the colleges as a natural place for students and faculty to establish relationships with one another, and the college director's goal would be to provide the overall vision for the college, a vision in which faculty-student interaction is central. We envision as well a series of college liaisons to make connections between students and Alumni Relations, Career Services, Health Services, Athletics, UCCPS, and the culture centers. Such changes would bring faculty, staff, and visiting scholars back into residential life, without returning to the days when the university positioned surrogate parents in its residences.

Facilities: The facilities of each college would serve as a "home away from home" for student members throughout their four years at Tufts: a college lounge or "living room" for members of the college as well as a central college office for the college director, advisors, and other staff, possibly including student tutors or writing fellows. Other facilities— an exercise room, a multi-function space, a snack center, a laundry center, and an enhanced drop-in lounge with comfortable chairs, good lighting, high-speed internet access, and food and beverages— are additional ideas to provide places to strengthen the college community across all class years.

Integration of Social and Intellectual Life: Students' experiences at Tufts are the foundation for their relationship with the institution. The college system offers a powerful opportunity to improve those experiences by integrating intellectual and social life in a coherent and exciting way. The college center would serve as the hub of college activities, events, and programs for student members of that college but would be open to students across Tufts. Activities to enhance the intellectual climate and improve school spirit could be planned through and hosted by the colleges. Currently, departments host many activities, but few students participate; the college system provides an opportunity to bring students together for programs which integrate intellectual and social life in a natural setting. The colleges could serve as the vehicle for a variety of functions— campus competitions, debates, intramurals, talent shows, ice cream socials— all of which aim to provide fun, intellectually stimulating opportunities to develop a sense of community within the college and— through the inevitable rivalry between colleges— within the Tufts community as a whole.

Appendix V. A Developmental Model of Intellectual Formation at Tufts

Tufts, like many colleges and universities, embodies at present an implicit vision of undergraduate development, but this vision is rarely articulated to the student by the University and is typically left to the students— fresh from high school— to discover on an ad hoc basis. Our model of intellectual formation incorporates three principles: 1) an explicitly articulated *developmental* perspective; 2) a deliberate *integration* of intellectual and personal aspects of development (i.e., students’ social, emotional, and ethical concerns); and 3) an organized *transparency* that makes what is offered at Tufts more visible and accessible. The first purpose of the developmental model is to provide increased coherence in the intellectual formation of our students. We wish to mark, celebrate, and support each critical juncture in their four years as well as the transitions from one year to the next. Simultaneously, we wish to address head-on the typical academic and personal difficulties confronted by undergraduates— from insufficient high school preparation, to disenfranchisement upon returning from abroad, to not knowing how to find a career.

Toward these ends, the second and related purpose of a developmental model is to apply our collective knowledge to an articulation of the central intellectual tasks and challenges in each year of undergraduate life. Recognizing that students learn in individual ways and at different paces, we do not propose a prescriptive, lock-step path for all. Rather, we believe that a more articulated vision of the varied ways that knowledge develops— with more visible structures to facilitate it— will help students navigate their four years with a heightened sense of their own intellectual growth and of being supported throughout by Tufts.

Adding specific details to this vision will be a process that evolves over the years with contributions from many to come. The following developmental framework, therefore, is designed largely to provide principles to guide this process. Within the framework below we describe intellectual tasks and challenges that broadly characterize each college year; and we provide examples of how to respond to them.

Year One:

Pre-Matriculation Period

Task: *Intellectual Preparation and Consolidation*

Challenge: *Heterogeneity and Uncertainty*

Tufts students represent an intentional heterogeneity of backgrounds, high school preparations, language and mathematical competencies, and learning styles. To address this heterogeneity and the uncertainty of most entering students, we suggest a series of initiatives. First, a “*Letter from the President*” might give a description of the Tufts vision with its goals, yearly events, and desired outcomes. Second, students who have differences in learning styles or less rigorous high school backgrounds should be given opportunities for an academic *consolidation session* in August to bolster and prepare them for achieving their best efforts freshman year. Third, a gift from the alumni

association— for example, a carefully selected book for discussion that might be the basis for conversation in the fall— might link incoming students with former Tufts generations.

Post-Matriculation Period

Tasks: *Building an Intellectual Foundation and Intellectual Exploration*

Challenges: *Check-List Mentality and Confusion*

The twin themes of intellectual exploration and the construction of an intellectual foundation constitute the major work of the first college years. Students are introduced to an array of disciplines from which to construct the building blocks of a liberal arts education. Two prevalent challenges— intellectual confusion and an uninformed conceptualization of foundation and distribution requirements— often result in a check-list mentality towards requirements rather than a deeper appreciation of what constitutes an intellectual foundation.

We seek a transformation of attitude towards intellectual exploration and foundational learning. We propose a series of initiatives to punctuate the first year, beginning with a *matriculation speech* by the President that brings to life the six goals and the many milestones of a Tufts education. This speech, the first orientation, and enhanced advising are critical vehicles for setting the intellectual tone for the next four years. On the other hand, most students are too overwhelmed to absorb much of the information provided. Thus we propose a *second*, more elaborate *orientation* from the departments in the pre-spring registration period, accompanied by a lecture from the *Provost* that introduces the Tufts teacher-scholar model and presents an overview of opportunities at Tufts for undergraduates, particularly in research and service. Other similarly guided initiatives include: a *four-year writing program*, where writing is taught as an ever-deepening set of skills essential to much of intellectual development (See elaboration in Section III above) and a *fitness and the curriculum* program. We also recommend a change in the organizational structure of the current Class Dean structure to provide a single Dean of Advising for students from the day they matriculate to the day they graduate (also discussed in Section III C above).

Year Two:

Task: *From Intellectual Exploration to Decision*

Challenge: *Academic Indecision, Identity Formation and Belonging*

The second college year is typically dominated for liberal arts majors by the necessity to focus their explorations and to choose a major. Engineering students, who have already made one level of decision, must refine their initial choices.⁵ The second year is about intellectual discovery and decision; it is also about uncertainty, doubt, and the elimination of various potential pathways. The challenge to the University is to provide structures during this period to help students make well-informed choices and to feel well-supported and advised until they do.

Underlying the ubiquitously observed “sophomore slump” is the fact that many students do not feel prepared to choose a major in sophomore year, often for reasons that are as much personal as academic. The fear of “leaving behind” one’s family of origin, the fear of not fitting in, not belonging, and sometimes the reality of being rejected represent critical challenges. The increasing cultural diversity of our society and student body adds an additional layer to this set of tasks and challenges, with many young adults confused by multiple perspectives on what they are meant to do. Within this complex context, the pressure to choose a pathway that will determine who one may become represents far more than an already difficult academic choice. It should be noted that it can be difficult for sophomores to recognize these challenges or their sources, leading to confusion, isolation from each other, and their inability to help and support each other.

Helping students with these interrelated needs to learn about themselves, to belong, and to choose a major pathway is a critical challenge in the second year and requires, we believe, a perspective that integrates intellectual, social, emotional, and ethical factors. As discussed in recent faculty initiatives, understanding the role of cultural identity in students’ lives is an essential element in advising, teaching, and also designing residential options in a university community. A key component to success in these areas is a university community where students feel safe to explore and develop in both curricular and co-curricular realms.

The primary goals of our second year initiatives are to ensure that students become 1) better informed about their choice of major disciplines, research opportunities, and academic options (including going abroad); 2) more cognizant of the social and emotional factors like depressed feelings and disequilibrium that sophomores frequently confront; and 3) less isolated in their struggles in both areas. The proposals are designed, therefore, to facilitate intellectual choice and to engender a sense of belonging and support.

In the first set of recommendations, we propose an enriched, in-depth set of mechanisms for advising during the selection of majors with multiple layers and redundancy built in. At the departmental level, we propose a new *Majors Day*, where the major disciplines, their methods, and research programs are showcased at a large gathering. At the university community level, we propose a sophomore speech by the Dean of the Colleges “*On Being a Sophomore*,” that describes the intellectual and personal tasks and challenges that characterize this year. This speech is particularly important to provide students with a shared sense of the difficulties they face and the support systems Tufts provides to deal with them.

Other proposals concern community information about what is available at Tufts and about connecting students to each other. Described in Year Three, the *Research Clearinghouse* gives constantly updated information to students about offerings across all Tufts campuses. The *World Day* is meant both to inform sophomores about options abroad and to connect returning seniors (see Year Four) and international students with the rest of the community. Our international students offer a rich resource to other

students that is rarely tapped in an organized way. World Day spotlights their knowledge.

Year Three:

Tasks: *Exploration within a Discipline, Intellectual Immersion and Application
The Integration of Social, Ethical, and Intellectual Realms*

Challenges: *Lack of Engagement*

This year is marked by a substantive introduction to the breadth, methods, and research possibilities within a discipline. Intellectual exploration and immersion within a field are the major tasks in the junior year for many students; for some this includes learning how to apply knowledge in diverse contexts and settings. A distinctive component of the third year experience at Tufts is that nearly 40% of our students study abroad for one or two semesters. For these students immersion within a chosen culture becomes the major intellectual and social task with two extra challenges: deepening their knowledge of the major field(s) while being abroad; and sustaining relationships with advisors, departments, and the Tufts community as a whole during their absence. We propose that departments discuss ways they can best address both of these challenges. Whether abroad or in Medford, this year should allow for the possibility of substantive introduction to research (e.g., with faculty who are teacher-scholars or via on-line research methods courses such as International Relations' efforts to assist students abroad to use opportunities to work in libraries, archives, museums, in preparation for future senior projects).

Wherever they are, we want our third year students to become engaged in learning within their discipline. This means working more closely with faculty members and seeing their dual function as teacher-scholars; it means taking better advantage of the research possibilities at Tufts; it means raising important questions about the nature of knowledge for themselves. What are the boundaries of a discipline? How does one field relate to another? How can they integrate what they are learning? How can they contribute?

The challenge to the University is to create more intentional, transparent curricular and co-curricular structures that lead our students to become actively engaged in discipline-based learning, its application, and its fertilization across disciplines. The possibilities for exploration and engagement are very wide for Tufts undergraduates, but they are not always apparent. We propose, therefore, a *Research Clearinghouse* and an *Internship Clearinghouse* that connect all departments and professional schools within Tufts. In this way the research needs of both faculty and students can more efficiently be realized, and the links among the Schools at Tufts can better be utilized.

As attractive an option as living abroad may be, we propose an additional alternative: *Tufts in Boston*. Growing numbers of departments and programs are initiating seminars or other courses in which important research questions and methods are learned in the context of an internship (e.g., Community Health, Child Development,

Engineering) or a project, (e.g., International Relations) or service learning in a community context (e.g., Peace & Justice, American Studies, Center for Reading and Language research, and Tufts Literacy Corps). Tufts is particularly well situated to integrate academically two areas in which many of our students show strong co-curricular interest: community service and cultural issues. While many students participate in community service through service organizations, others desire more sustained work that is related to their field of study. Recent initiatives suggest that academic work can greatly assist students to be more aware and more effective in their work in US communities, particularly when these cultures differ substantially from that which we have at Tufts. If knitted together across the University, such academic-community service learning could become a signature domestic study program in metro Boston, and a symbol of Tufts' strength in applying knowledge in the communities it serves. Finally, whether one pursues research or project options, the end of the year's *Undergraduate Research and Scholarship Symposium* should provide a well-publicized forum for recognizing student research and for disseminating information about what is available to other students.

Year Four:

Task: *Intellectual Integration, Consolidation, and Learning in Depth*

Challenge: *Disenfranchisement and Unconnected Learning*

In-depth study within a major and the integration of different types of knowledge are the intellectual foci of Year Four. The senior year challenges students to integrate and consolidate their learning, to bring their work to a personally enriching conclusion and prepare for entry into a professional position or other school.

Senior year, then, is a time of transition. For those who have been abroad, the challenge to accomplish something significant before graduation and the need to apply for post-graduate opportunities might be doubly difficult if they have not kept their connections with their major programs and with their professors alive. Also, many experience a sense of disorientation, returning to a campus that should feel familiar but, because of all that has transpired, does not. Their link to Tufts is made all the more tenuous if they choose, as many must, to live off campus. To help re-orient our seniors, then, we propose a number of initiatives, such as World Day, so that returning seniors feel not only welcomed home, but valued in their role of transmitting their knowledge to younger members of the community.

To help move our students toward depth in their field, and toward the integration and consolidation of their experiences and knowledge, each program and department might provide a clear curricular pathway to various culminating experiences, such as thesis writing, internships, and other projects and be explicit from the start of the major about the forms of achievement that each student can pursue. To this end, we should make both the Research Clearinghouse and the Internship Clearinghouse readily available. We should also recognize and celebrate the culmination of their achievements by making the Undergraduate Research and Scholarship Symposium the focus of campus

life for one day each year. Senior Year is also the time to launch oneself into the future. How do we create an environment at Tufts where focusing on a thesis or taking a senior seminar is not compromised by the need to start or prepare for a job search?

Although this is less the case for Engineering than for Liberal Arts, some of our students reach their senior year unprepared to make a transition to post-graduate life. Some have not established close relationships with the professors who will recommend them for jobs, scholarships, and graduate admissions. Some do not know their field well enough to do high-level work. Most do not have the experience and the contacts that will help them find job opportunities. Several of our initiatives are directly aimed at addressing these needs: a *Job Fair* and an enhanced *Career Night* that brings alumni and soon-to-be-alumni together for the purpose of networking and getting “real world” guidance. Academic departments and Career Services could work together to provide students with information on potential careers and networking opportunities that are specific to the disciplines in which students major. Finally, *Two-Part Commencement*, in which departments and programs offer students an intimate ceremony or event prior to the all-university ceremony, will give students, their parents, and the faculty in their majors a sense of having come together, and will provide them with a meaningful opportunity to connect with one another and the University such that their transition into the world is marked by a sense of their enduring membership in the Tufts community.

If the eventual demands of the senior year are made known to our students in their first, second, and third years, then they will be better prepared for the fourth. More to the point, if our curriculum and co-curriculum are more clearly designed to move our students developmentally toward a culminating experience for which they have been well prepared, then the senior year will be a time when students can better recognize their accomplishments at Tufts, and they will leave Tufts well prepared for what lies ahead. We must establish a vision of undergraduate life, and we must keep it before our students throughout their undergraduate years. To this end, we seek to lend deeper meaning to the various developmental milestones of intellectual formation enumerated here by taking into account how carefully and variously that knowledge for a lifetime is acquired.

Appendix VI. Membership of Task Force and Student Advisory Committee

Task Force

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Gilbert Metcalf | Task Force Chair; Professor and Chair of Economics |
| Charles Inouye | Task Force Co-Chair; Dean of the Undergraduate Colleges |
| Bruce Reitman | Task Force Co-Chair; Dean of Students |
| James Blockwood | Student (Class of '04) |
| Frances Chew | Professor of Biology and Director of American Studies |
| Lee Edelman | Professor of English |
| James Glaser | Associate Professor and Chair of Political Science |
| Charline Han | Student (Class of '04) |
| Karen Panetta | Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science |
| Rachel Rubenson | Student (Class of '03) |
| Maryanne Wolf | Professor of Child Development and Director of the Center for Reading and Language Research |

Task Force Staff

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| Lara Birk | Project Coordinator and Editor |
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Student Advisory Committee

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|----------------------|----------------------------|
| James Blockwood | SAC Co-Chair; Class of '04 |
| Charline Han | SAC Co-Chair; Class of '04 |
| Rachel Rubenson | SAC Co-Chair; Class of '03 |
| Alison Clarke | Class of '03 |
| Eliza Drachman-Jones | Class of '05 |
| Lauren Dunn | Class of '04 |
| Jacob Gamerman | Class of '04 |
| Julia Karol | Class of '04 |
| Nikoo Paydar | Class of '04 |
| Danny Pierre | Class of '03 |
| Jason Sangyoon Shin | Class of '03 |
| Sarah Stroback | Class of '03 |
| Elizabeth Sutton | Class of '05 |
| Randi Wiggins | Class of '03 |

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Notes

¹ The Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University, *Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities*, Stony Brook, State University of New York: 1998.

² This metaphor is due to Emily Style, "Curriculum as Window and Mirror," in *Listening for All Voices*, Summit, NJ: Oak Knoll School Monograph, 1988.

³ All quotes about the 1955 Tufts-Carnegie Self-Study were taken from a retrospective essay which covered the project: "From College to University: Some Perspectives on Long-Range Planning," Russell E. Miller, Professor of History, Appendix J in *Tufts: The Total University in Changing Times*, 1973.

⁴ The quotes in this paragraph are taken from the 2001-2002 Executive Committee's November 2001 memo to President Bacow assessing the HEI.

⁵ Note that the close relationship between Engineering and Arts and Sciences raises another set of pathways in the second year. Many students shift from Engineering to Arts and Sciences or vice versa.