

Tufts University



Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience

An Interim Report to the Tufts Community

December 4, 2002

Executive Summary

The Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience was created by President Bacow during the Fall of 2001 to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of Tufts' undergraduate curriculum, co-curriculum, residential life, and the undergraduate experience as a coherent whole; to identify the resources necessary to implement any recommended changes; and to bring forward those recommendations which have broad-based community support. The final recommendations to the President are due in June 2003. This Interim Report is designed to initiate community dialogue on the ideas proposed herein. The Task Force will use the feedback it receives from the community in the wake of this report to shape and refine its ideas before preparing the final set of recommendations. The ideas that follow have come either directly or indirectly from the committee's first round of outreach to the Tufts community, and are organized around three themes: Climate, Community, and Coherence.

This report is the beginning of a process of reporting out ideas for community discussion. Within the Task Force, we have separated our discussion into two categories: co-curricular and residential life on the one hand, and the curriculum on the other. This distinction is somewhat artificial as many of the ideas we've discussed involve both curricular and co-curricular/residential elements. Though the committee has reached consensus on a number of specific proposals regarding the former, we have not yet reached sufficient agreement on the latter to report out proposals. We, therefore, position our discussion about the curriculum more broadly as a series of questions for the community to consider along with the committee. Once we have processed the community's feedback on these matters, we will follow up with a separate report with our proposals for the curriculum.

We propose three major initiatives that reflect our deliberations and interrelated goals for Arts, Sciences, and Engineering in each of these areas. The initiatives, elaborated in detail in the body of this report, include:

1. *Constructing a Tufts College System*

We propose a transformation of Tufts' existing residential system into a system of four colleges. These colleges would create smaller, more intimate communities in which all students could maintain a connection to a core group of faculty, staff, and other students throughout all four years of their Tufts experience. Each college would serve as a vehicle for academic, social, and cultural activities and, as such, become the central foundation of each student's intellectual and social growth at Tufts.

2. *Promoting Intellectual Engagement*

We propose an interconnected set of initiatives both to promote a climate of intellectual engagement across curricular, co-curricular, and residential life and to provide increased coherence across the four undergraduate years at Tufts. With regard to the curriculum, we put forward for the community's consideration a developmental

perspective which encourages engaged learning in each phase of a student's intellectual experience at Tufts. We also propose several initiatives in the co-curricular realm which are geared to enhance the intellectual climate on campus and to make connections between a student's life inside and outside of the classroom. In particular, we note that physical space can powerfully shape the sense and purpose of a community. As such, we make a number of recommendations with regard to space as a means for enhancing the intellectual climate at Tufts.

3. *Building Community and Strengthening Diversity*

We propose a series of initiatives designed to address the concern we have frequently heard from students, faculty, and staff alike that although there are many sub-communities at Tufts, Tufts lacks a sense of overarching community. We seek to build community in this larger sense and we approach this goal from several angles. First, just as space can be used to enhance intellectual climate, we believe it can also contribute to community building. Toward this end, we strongly recommend the completion of Campus Center Phase III to provide Tufts students, faculty, and staff with a social center better able to fulfill the purpose for which it was intended. Second, we recommend that Tufts move toward need-blind admissions, thus allowing the institution to construct a community of students that provides the richest possible experience for all Tufts undergraduates. Third, we seek the creation of an Alumni Community Network that will enable students and alumni to connect with each other in ways that reconceptualize Tufts as a life-long intellectual community.

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These proposed initiatives attempt to make the most of Tufts' distinctive profile as a liberal arts college and engineering school embedded in a research university, where faculty members have the unusual, challenging, and highly sought-after profile of being both cutting-edge scholars and caring teachers. Embedded within the initiatives are statements of current, if implicit, goals at Tufts – academic excellence, community enrichment, and commitment to diversity – and also a newly articulated set of outcomes that represent desired educational goals for a Tufts University graduate. Described in detail within the report, these outcomes cover six areas: intellectual engagement; critical thinking and creativity; communication skills; appreciation for complexity, synthesis, and application; personal, ethical, and social development; and a sense of community and culture.

We encourage all members of the Tufts community to discuss, debate, and critically evaluate the ideas and proposals in this document. Our charge from President Bacow is to "work hard to achieve a consensus for change." It is our intention to meet with campus groups to gather further input, to discuss this document and – as a community – to determine how best to move forward to a new level of excellence. Tufts will embark on a new capital campaign in the next few years. We take seriously the promise of the President that "[t]he work of the Task Force will help to shape the priorities for undergraduate education and life in this new capital campaign."

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I. Background

In his first few months at Tufts, President Lawrence Bacow established the Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience to engage in a comprehensive assessment of undergraduate life and education. In the words of the president in his charge to the Task Force:

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.

This ambitious review 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."¹ 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

¹ 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.

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."² 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.

II. Task Force Outreach

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. As detailed in Appendix C of this report, we held nearly fifty meetings with various groups of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and trustees to discuss various aspects of our charge. In addition to our outreach meetings, we reviewed a number of surveys that the Office of Institutional Research regularly conducts along with other planning documents. The Office of Institutional Research also helped us construct and administer a survey for full and part-time faculty that was invaluable to the Task Force.

² The quotes in this paragraph are taken from the 2001-2002 Executive Committee's November 2001 memo to President Bacow assessing the HEI.

Over the summer, the committee analyzed and discussed the information it had collected in the preceding months. Committee members identified areas in which the Task Force needed more input. As a result, the Task Force conducted several more community outreach meetings in the fall of 2002, including four open student forums on a variety of issues of particular concern to students. A fuller discussion of our outreach efforts is contained in a Status Report that we released in September 2002. That report, along with additional outreach information is available on the Task Force web site, <http://www.tufts.edu/president/ugtaskforce>.

At the same time that the Task Force was engaged in the activities described above, the student members of the Task Force established a separate Student Advisory Committee comprised entirely of undergraduates. This committee met a number of times to discuss various topics and met occasionally with members of the Task Force and has written a short report that is attached as Appendix A of this report.

III. Moving Tufts Forward

A. Themes

A number of themes have emerged as a result of our discussions and meetings with faculty, students, staff, trustees, and alumni. Our outreach efforts have helped us to identify problems to address as well as opportunities to enhance our existing strengths. We have grouped these various issues into the three themes of Climate, Community, and Coherence.

1. Climate

In the course of our interviews with various groups, we heard many positive statements about the unique benefits Tufts can derive from its location near the center of Boston while enjoying the relative tranquility of a suburban campus. There is a sense that we can do more to take advantage of our location in a way that contributes to the intellectual life of our students. We also heard a sentiment from many faculty and students that Tufts somehow 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 the shared experiences of students in their campus life beyond the classroom.

A number of reasons have been proposed to explain this separation; we list below those that do not pertain specifically to curricular issues, but that reflect instead a concern about the intellectual atmosphere on the campus more generally:

- 1) An unusually heavy emphasis at Tufts on co-curricular experiences that often do not include intellectual engagement.

- 2) The lack of a sense of coherent purpose on the part of students or of an intellectual mission being promulgated by the university.
- 3) The paucity of opportunities and resources for collective engagement with ideas outside the classroom.
- 4) A campus environment in which politicization impedes rather than encourages discussion and dialogue.
- 5) An insufficiently articulated statement of the value of the liberal arts mission to produce well-rounded citizens with a commitment to the liberal arts, sciences, and engineering.
- 6) The lack of on-going and campus-wide recognition for intellectual achievement of students and faculty.
- 7) An undergraduate student body that is often fractured by divisions of politics, religion, race, gender, sexuality, socio-economic position, etc., to the detriment of any shared sense of participation in an ongoing university-wide intellectual experience.
- 8) A sense that foundation and distribution requirements will, by themselves, produce well-rounded students, even though the effect may be the opposite: producing students who, having taken so many courses to “get rid of” requirements, have no investment in wide-ranging intellectual pursuits for their own sake.
- 9) A thriving cultural and intellectual metropolitan area that pulls some faculty away from campus.

This list, which is not meant to be exhaustive, suggests that 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. We feel that further progress can best occur if the experience of students in a community primarily dedicated to nurturing the values of curiosity, free inquiry, and scholarly research contributes to an atmosphere of shared intellectual commitment. Though the annual student surveys identifying influential courses and professors make clear that Tufts has many professors who imbue their students with their own passionate investment in the subjects that they teach, that passion all too rarely informs the life of the Tufts community— to the point where many from whom we have heard wondered whether there was such a thing as a “Tufts community” at all.

The solution to this problem cannot be considered in isolation from other issues: the organization of the curriculum, the number and type of required courses, and the

quantity and quality of classrooms. But we wish to direct attention to how the co-curricular life at Tufts might be enhanced to produce a culture more focused on the importance of ideas.

At the end of the day, the atmosphere on campus will respond to the values promulgated by the administration through the allocation of resources and its engagement with the community. We are encouraged by the statements and actions of our current leadership. We feel that more can be done. We repeatedly heard that students feel disconnected and atomized in their relation to other groups and to the university as a whole. 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 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 the need 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 centers that support 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 classes, a shared experience of Tufts as a crucible for intellectual transformation. Our proposals in Section V provide vehicles for creating these shared experiences.

2. Community

How is a common identity forged for an institution that declares it has no typical student; has no core curriculum and no uniform requirement for capstones, internships or seminars; where housing assignments change from year to year according to availability; and where athletics is primarily a participatory rather than a spectator activity? How would individuals focused on individual goals, individual identity, and individual perspective and whose associations are with those who share their interests -- too few to be considered a community and too distinct from other small groups to feel connected -- come to think and act as a community? What perspective could be inclusive enough for all to share and non-restricting enough to allow everyone to pursue individual goals unimpeded?

HEI Report: Recommendations About Communication
and Community, May 17, 1999

The quotation above poses the challenge for creating and sustaining a sense of community at Tufts. We have encouraged students to take initiative in student-run organizations and we send many of our students (the majority of juniors and seniors) to find housing off-campus in the private real estate market. While the HEI report focused on community from the perspective of students, the same challenge applies to faculty. Faculty increasingly affiliate by field rather than by institution. Thus, a social scientist may have closer ties to social scientists in his or her field at other Boston area schools than with Tufts faculty in the humanities. Moreover, individual faculty likely have closer ties to their local communities than to the Tufts campus community.

The HEI report provides some historical context to help understand how we got to the present day state of affairs. Prior to the 1970s, Tufts had a well developed sense of community: "... nearly half our students commut[ed] from homes in surrounding neighborhoods that also housed many of the faculty... Faculty and administrators sometimes lived in the residence halls, sang in the chorale, advised student organizations, attended student performances, and invited students home for dinner." Some of this cohesion was facilitated by the socioeconomic and racial homogeneity of the faculty and student body.

Beginning in the 1970s, several changes occurred. First, Tufts, like many colleges and universities, took steps to increase the diversity of its faculty and student bodies. The increased diversity, while bringing major benefits to the process of education, brought with it the dual tensions of affiliation (developing interests of one's own mind and self-identity) and integration (developing collaborations and connections with others on the basis of shared interests). Given the sizeable increases in diversity (intellectual, socio-economic, geographic), both students and faculty are uneasy about centrifugal forces of affiliation that threaten to pull us apart. The trend towards increased desire for affiliation based on shared interests or background is not unique to Tufts or to "minority" groups. The energy and enthusiasm focused on extracurricular activities may be one expression of a desire for affiliation. Over and over, students comment on how meaningful these activities are for them, perhaps because they combine personal relationships with meaningful collaborative activities, a point emphasized in a recent book by Harvard Professor Richard Light.³

Our job as educators is to help students navigate this diversity of intellectual and social interests. Individual students need to find intellectual and social "homes" within which to explore affiliation and from which to explore integration. For many students, college is the first place where they have an opportunity to pursue their interests with sizeable numbers of peers who share their backgrounds— hence the pull towards affiliation. And it is also the hope of most of our students to gain perspectives outside those they grew up with— hence the pull towards integration. Our proposals below attempt to create opportunities to engage in both affiliation and integration in ways that benefit the entire Tufts community.

³ *Making the Most of College, Students Speak their Minds*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001.

A second change beginning in the 1970s is that students desired an end to the *in loco parentis* role played by faculty and staff. While colleges and universities largely accommodated this increased desire for independence, there is a re-examination taking place nationally about the appropriate role and responsibility of faculty and staff in the lives of students. Educational administrators can no longer turn a blind eye to the social and extracurricular activities of students for moral, ethical, and – alas – for legal reasons.

Third, rising housing prices forced faculty to move farther from campus to find communities with the high quality housing and school systems that they demanded. This complicates any efforts to build community on campus that includes faculty.

Fourth, an increased emphasis on research led many faculty to reduce their involvement in student life and activities. Tufts has made an explicit commitment to academic excellence that forces us to be creative in our efforts to build community in a way that supports our academic aspirations.

We heard many comments (both positive and negative) about community in the meetings we held last semester as well as in the faculty survey. Some comments have been direct and very pointed. Other comments about community are both indirect and of long-standing duration. For example, the HEI working group on The Student Experience (final report, March 4, 1998) noted that students "were happy with the quality of the educational experience, the strong friendships they had formed, opportunities for personal and individual growth and development, and their prospects for a successful future." Yet they tended not to attribute any of these outcomes to the institution. While this failure to give Tufts any credit for these positive outcomes is a larger problem than one of community, we believe that the failure to develop a sense of a Tufts Community is central to this problem.

It is striking that issues of community arise in many forms. We grouped the perceived problems of community by the following clusters: faculty, student, academic, residential, cultural and social, living-learning, and cohort. Not surprisingly, there is a great deal of overlap in these groupings.

faculty community: A number of faculty bemoaned the lack of community among faculty (beyond any community within academic departments or programs). Some of the trends above contribute to a "9 to 5" approach to their campus lives among many faculty. In addition to the lives of faculty in communities away from Tufts as well as greater research expectations, the absence of appropriate facilities contributes to this lack of community. We have no faculty club nor other gathering place for faculty other than a faculty dining room far from the center of the AS&E campus. The one "social" event regularly bringing faculty together is the coffee and cookies prior to faculty meetings – meetings, it should be noted, that are viewed by many as an onerous duty rather than a stimulating or uplifting activity.

student community: The co-curricular and academic spheres of student life are separate, which causes students to feel more connected to specific groups and organizations than to

Tufts itself. The many student organizations do a superb job of teaching students leadership skills while creating community among students with common interests. But the lack of a structure that encourages students to be part of a community beyond these individual groups and to connect their activities to their academic interests poses the challenge identified in the above quotation from the HEI Report on Communication and Community.

academic community: Many students do not feel part of an academic community. They do not identify with their major ("I'm a biologist.") nor do they typically identify themselves more generally as intellectuals or as part of a community of scholars. Faculty see themselves as part of a narrow academic community, one more typically discipline-based than institution-based. Conscious efforts to bring together the intellectual work of faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students are rare and Tufts faculty and students tend not to think of themselves as members of a common community of scholars. The observation that students do not typically think of themselves in academic terms relates to the issue of climate discussed above. The impediments to the development of intellectual communities extend beyond our culture to include such things as, for example, our facilities. Some departments lack the physical space where students and faculty can informally gather to discuss issues related to the discipline. Finally, it should be noted that the faculty survey suggests that we have many faculty involved in activities that contribute to the development of an academic community. Many others expressed a willingness to engage in activities that foster a greater sense of community under the right circumstances. Thus, the problem cannot be attributed to a lack of interest on the part of faculty to engage with students outside of the classroom.

residential community: Our residential system has the potential to create significant opportunities to build community across student groups and between students (both undergraduate and graduate) and faculty. Some questions that the Task Force has grappled with and which we as a community should address include: how intentional a residential community should we strive for? What role should faculty play in residential life? How much should we try to integrate the academic and intellectual life into residential life? What are the implications for our sense of community and continuing connection to Tufts, when most of our juniors and seniors live off-campus? Should we extend the Tufts community to incorporate off-campus housing in some fashion?

cultural and social community: Cultural and social events are key ways to build community. We are currently limited by space constraints in hosting cultural or social activities for the entire undergraduate population (though the Gantcher Cage is a facility that gives us greater flexibility for large-scale affairs). In addition to large events that could attract faculty, students, and staff to engage in common activities, small events could significantly contribute to the intellectual, cultural, and social life of campus. The campus center is a social hub to some degree, but the failure to complete Phase III limits its potential as a true social center. Students have also identified lack of resources for the Programming Board as a problem for student-sponsored cultural and social programming. A university-wide calendar would increase coordination of both academic and student-sponsored cultural programming.

living-learning community: A fundamental question for a residential academic institution is how it can better integrate learning throughout the life of the institution. The final report of the HEI Committee on the Student Experience put this very well: "The growth stimulating experience of a university student is not limited to the classroom and the library. The entire environment of the institution, architectural, social, organizational, and cultural plays a part in the students' growth and development." Focusing on this aspect of community also draws our attention to the idea of Tufts as a life-long learning community. We would like to see alumni return to serve as mentors to current students, to participate in alumni educational programs, and to refresh their intellectual batteries. Developing a concept of Tufts as a lifetime living-learning community is a key way to develop institutional loyalty.

cohort communities: We feel there is value in each class-year viewing itself as a community. This was made patently clear to us by the extremely positive evaluation students gave the first-year residential experience of Tilton Hall. Shared common experiences for each class-year can both develop a sense of class identity and contribute to the "distinctive, coherent, and thoughtfully designed transformation of intellect and character" described in the President's charge to the Task Force. We also feel that there is great potential in each class playing a role in the intentional construct of mixed-class communities that incorporate but are not limited to residential experiences, and discuss this further in our proposal for a college system.

All the comments and concerns raised in the meetings underscore the following essential point about community: the Tufts community can be a powerful instrument for achieving academic excellence at Tufts. Communities provide opportunities for students and faculty to engage in intellectual discourse. Communities also provide a foundation of safety and security from which students can explore new and difficult topics, especially in the area of diversity and cultural awareness.

3. Coherence

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, even in our engineering program. Our scholar-teacher model provides a particularly effective framework for providing a first-rate undergraduate education. It is a framework that incorporates the traditional "breadth" and "depth" approach to education.

Despite this clear strength, there are several significant shortcomings in the undergraduate academic experience: for example a checklist mentality exists among many freshmen and sophomores towards distribution requirements that is antithetical to their intended purposes; there is much confusion surrounding finding a major and

pursuing research within it; there is considerable disconnection felt by students returning from study-abroad; and there are too few systematic efforts at intellectual integration and application by seniors.

To address some of these problems, the Task Force has found it valuable to consider a third, catalytic element to our present emphasis on breadth and depth – explicit attention to developmental coherence in the undergraduate experience. We sought 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. We eschew any prescriptive, lock-step path for students; rather, we wished to design a framework of intellectual milestones that are variously addressed and visibly provided for at every phase of a student's development.

For example, in the beginning phases, emphases are placed on a student's membership in a scholarly community and on the development of research and communication skills. Within such a framework, a student's first milestone is to strive to understand college life as distinct from high school and to take on the responsibility for his or her own intellectual and personal development. A second milestone follows: the exploration of various intellectual pathways that introduce undergraduates to methodology while considering the relationship between the production of knowledge and its application to society. The third milestone is intellectual expansion and depth. For some it will be an immersion in a foreign culture or working with a local community-based organization. For others it could be pursuing a research interest at the Health Sciences Center in downtown Boston, or working in the day care center on the Medford campus. But for all, it will be an integral part of the overall project of immersing oneself in the pursuit of one's interests. Ultimately, our graduating seniors should possess a sense of accomplishment and habits of mind that will ensure a life of continued learning and effective communication whatever the next steps.

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 and enable both the student for whom Tufts is a formidable challenge as well as the precocious student-scholar.

In sum, the Task Force believes that adding a developmental perspective to the traditional "breadth" and "depth" focus 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. We do not mean to suggest that every student at Tufts need write a senior thesis. But our students are among the best students in the world and the best of those students have the capacity to do extraordinary work if given preparation and the right framework to encourage them to push themselves beyond satisfying the requirements for the various degrees.

B. Goals

The themes discussed above provide some context as we think about our aspirations and goals. We will return to the themes of climate, community, and coherence when we discuss specific initiatives. Before turning to initiatives, let us articulate our institutional goals. We see the three goals of academic excellence, community building, and a continuing commitment to diversity as paramount.

1. Academic Excellence

Over the last several decades, Tufts University has made a remarkable transformation from a regional university to a university of international prominence. Faculty throughout Arts, Sciences, and Engineering are engaged in path-breaking scholarship that contributes to the university's national and international prominence. Our students are superb as well. With a new president and provost and new leadership in Arts, Sciences, and Engineering, AS&E is in a position to make the leap to the next level of academic excellence. Many of the initiatives that we describe below serve to enhance academic excellence in a way that honors our commitment to Tufts as a community of scholar-teachers.

2. Community Building

As noted above, the Tufts community can be a powerful instrument for achieving academic excellence at Tufts. Many of the initiatives we discuss below build on this premise. A well-designed community can also help us effect a better balance of responsibilities between faculty and staff in a way that maximizes the efficient use of their time and energy. We also see community building as important in its own right. As we discuss in the next section, one of our educational goals is to develop a sense of community in our students along with an appreciation for the varied perspectives arising from the differing backgrounds and experiences of our students. This appreciation prepares our students to be more responsible citizens in local and global communities both while they are students at Tufts and in their lives as Tufts graduates.

3. A Continuing Commitment to Diversity

Tufts now attracts students of many diverse backgrounds creating an environment in which the encounter with differences educates and prepares students for the world in which they will reside. Ironically, the achievement of this diversity is best demonstrated in the occasional tension on campus among constituencies based on race, gender, ethnic backgrounds, and political ideologies. Freedom of expression and controversial dialogue are essential aspects of learning and integral to the mission an academic community should embrace.

Need-blind admissions is an important tool in creating the type of community that Tufts aspires to be. An analysis of the 1.3 million students who took SAT tests in 2001-

02 indicates that there are fewer than 50,000 students with the academic characteristics that we look for in our student body. Limiting this pool to students coming from families with incomes of \$100,000 or more shrinks the pool to roughly 12,500. The group of highly selective schools with which Tufts competes have roughly 24,500 slots for first-year students. Even if we wanted to fill our first-year class with highly accomplished students with the resources to finance their Tufts education entirely out of pocket, we would be unable to do so since there are roughly two slots for every candidate.

Nor would we wish to engage in such a policy. Diversity of opinion, background, economic status, ethnicity, nationality, geography, and talent enriches the educational experience of all our students. In fact, this diversity is a strong magnet for those exceptional students who do not need financial aid.

In short, a strong financial aid program is imperative for Tufts. Currently, we meet full need for those students we admit but do not engage in need-blind admissions. Moving to an environment where we can engage in need-blind admissions and still meet full need allows us to focus our energy in the admissions process on constructing the best possible class without the constraint of limited resources.

Attracting a diverse population of students to the university is essential, but it requires additional resources to provide the tools that will help all students be successful in their experience at Tufts and enable Tufts to benefit from their contributions. We need to institutionalize our welcome to students from diverse backgrounds, along with the ideas, approaches, and values they bring to campus. Our climate, curriculum, and college-wide activities need to provide students with mirrors of their own experiences, and windows onto experiences and visions that are new to them. Addressing these issues in intellectual as well as social arenas will require faculty engagement and resources for faculty development to implement change.

The retention rate of students and faculty of color and international students also needs to be addressed. A pre-baccalaureate program for skills-building is essential as we continue to welcome students of varying backgrounds. Additionally, the orientation for new students should pay careful attention to the establishment of community. This may be achieved most realistically in the college system which we are proposing.

IV. Defining a Tufts Education

Before Task Force members turned to the assignment of developing a number of initiatives for community discussion, we developed a list of 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 as a result of our proposals. The outcomes themselves are not particularly distinctive or unique to Tufts, nor are they intended to be. 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 desired educational outcomes

has provided the Task Force with a useful frame of reference as it evaluates 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. Complexity, Synthesis, and Application

Tufts graduates will be able to see their courses as interconnected pieces of a larger whole. During their four years at Tufts, they will have gained both depth and expertise in a specific discipline and also an understanding of the relationship of this discipline to other areas of study. They will approach with enthusiasm the application of their knowledge to the world's many problems. They will be open to new and unfamiliar ideas and able to incorporate into their understanding newly discovered facts, transformed circumstances, or 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 courses, 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

Every Tufts student will feel that he or she is known in significant ways by members of the Tufts community during their years at the University. Each student 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.

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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.

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We have used these six outcomes as a working definition of a Tufts education. As we considered new initiatives to propose for the community's consideration, we have asked ourselves how each initiative contributes to one or more of these outcomes that we hope to effect for each of our graduates.

V. Proposals For Community Discussion

A. Overview of Proposals

The following proposals have emerged either directly from recommendations by faculty, students, or other members of the Tufts community or indirectly as a result of the input we have received from members of the Tufts community.

1. Constructing a Tufts College System

Overview: We propose a system of four colleges within which academic, social, and cultural programming can take place. These colleges create smaller communities within our larger Tufts community where students can become known in significant ways by a small group of students, staff, and faculty for all four years of their Tufts experience.

- *Housing:* Our current (and future) undergraduate housing stock would be allocated among the colleges in a way that creates four comparable colleges. We would expect that two colleges would be located uphill and two downhill. Current and future housing units would be allocated across colleges in a way to create a mix of housing options that would be attractive to students regardless of class year. Ideally, the housing within a college would be geographically clustered to foster a sense of identity within the college. As part of the planning around the construction of colleges, thought should be given to the value of providing within each college one all-freshmen dorm similar to Tilton.

Space would be provided for college offices and a college common room. As an early phase of this proposal, a planned schedule of renovations would be required for dorms to create equity in housing quality across colleges. The four colleges would not be affiliated with particular dining options or halls, but would have regularly planned “college night” programs that might involve meals in the enhanced campus center.

- *College Directors and Directors of Advising:* Senior members of the faculty would serve as College Directors. The College Directors would take primary responsibility for overseeing academic, cultural, and social programming in the colleges. They would be provided with housing during their term of office as well as a budget for college activities. Ideally, housing for College Directors would be located near their college. The apartment that has been proposed for a new dorm currently under consideration could serve as one of these four residences. The current provost house could also serve as one of these residences. Their housing should allow for small-scale entertaining of students or faculty.

In addition to a College Director, each college would have a full-time Director of Advising to oversee advising for all student affiliates of the college. The Director of Advising would have office space within a college office located somewhere in each college and would have staffing appropriate to the position located within the college. We would expect the College staff to work with Residential Life and RA's on programming. Forms that are currently only available in Dowling, as well as brochures on the counseling center, the group of six, student activities, etc., could be stocked in the college offices.

Some thought should be given to the administrative structure overseeing our advising system. One possibility would be to construct an Advising Board constituted of the College Directors, the Directors of Advising, and other key individuals. Whether

such a board is deemed desirable or not, we feel that the advising program should come under the auspices of an academic dean.

- *Affiliation and Advising:* Students would be affiliated with a college throughout their college years regardless of place of residence. Affiliation could conceivably continue after graduation thereby creating additional links between our current students and alumni. We envision students being randomly assigned to colleges. Fraternities, sororities, and culture housing units would not be assigned to a college but students living in these facilities would preserve their particular college affiliation. Non-resident students (living in apartments in Medford/Somerville) or elsewhere (study-abroad) would also maintain their college affiliation.

The supervision of advising would be decentralized to the colleges. The director of advising for each of the colleges would oversee advising for all students within the college. Actual advising for pre-majors would be done – as under the current system – by faculty and staff using the existing advising options (or any new options that are deemed desirable over time). Pre-major advisors would be college affiliates and would be able to draw on college resources to assist in advising. The director of advising within a college would serve as a resource both for pre-major advisors as well as for advisors within the student's concentration. The rationale for this shift in advising supervision is to ensure that a single set of people have continuous knowledge of a student throughout his or her college career. This continuity of knowledge is invaluable both for students struggling in either personal or academic areas and for students who because of their academic performance should be singled out for post-graduate guidance towards fellowships or other opportunities.

Because of the small numbers of engineering students and our belief that engineering students should be members of all four colleges, we propose a slightly different model for the Dean of Advising for engineering students. We recommend that the Associate Dean of Engineering and Academic Services be affiliated with all four colleges and work closely with the four Directors of Advising within the colleges. We envision these two individuals working as an advising team within each college.

College directors could (and we hope would) encourage other faculty and staff to affiliate with their college. Benefits of affiliation would include the opportunity to participate in college activities. We also propose that faculty affiliates who are pre-major advisors be given a free meal plan – perhaps a 40 meal plan – to the student dining halls both to serve as compensation and to encourage faculty-student interactions over meals.

- *College Programming:* An essential benefit of the college system is the opportunity to carry out programming for students, staff, and faculty in a more intimate fashion. This is an essential element of our strategy to utilize community building to contribute to academic excellence. Each college would have resources for programming, academic tutoring, and peer writing review mechanisms, among other things. Programming could include bringing speakers to campus, hosting cultural and

social events, and sponsoring intramural events of either an athletic or intellectual nature across colleges.

We also believe that the advising system within colleges could play an important role in orientation for first-year students as well as an on-going role through the first year. For example, we have discussed the merits of a reading program for the summer prior to a student's first year at Tufts. Book discussions could serve as an ice-breaker for faculty and students and serve as an initial bond that can be strengthened through subsequent activities. We also feel that the colleges can be important instruments for addressing difficult issues such as cultural differences and diversity. It is our belief that people can best address sensitive topics in groups when they know the members of the group well and have some level of comfort within that group. If Tufts is to make real progress in dealing with cultural, ethnic, racial, and other differences, it must create safe environments in which to explore our differences. We feel that the college system can help foster that safe environment.

2. Promoting Intellectual Engagement

Overview: Our goal is to enhance the intellectual climate on campus, and as such, we propose below several initiatives intended to foster and maintain a greater sense of intellectual engagement among our students. We have separated our discussion into two categories: co-curricular and residential life on the one hand, and the curriculum on the other. Though the committee has reached consensus on a number of specific proposals regarding the former, we have not yet reached sufficient agreement on the latter to bring forward proposals. We, therefore, position our discussion about the curriculum more broadly as a series of questions for the community to consider along with the committee. Once we have processed the community's feedback on these matters, we will follow up with a separate report with our proposals for the curriculum. While we have separated these for discussion, we wish to emphasize the value of connecting the curricular and co-curricular/residential spheres.

A. *Intellectual Engagement in Co-curricular and Residential Life:* We propose a number of initiatives to promote intellectual engagement in co-curricular and residential life. These range from an expanded cultural ticket to Boston to an annual campus-wide intellectual competition that can engage students in creative and rigorous modes of thought. In addition, we note that space can shape the sense and purpose of a community. It is a resource that we should consciously use to achieve our goals of attaining academic excellence. We have focused primarily on the library as a locus for intellectual engagement in keeping 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. In particular, we propose that resources be made available for creating group study space in the library along with a library cafe. Serving as an intellectual meeting house for students and faculty, the cafe could encourage discussion, debate, and the free exchange of ideas. Properly designed, it could also be a campus "gem" and architectural symbol of intellectual engagement at Tufts. A fuller list of ideas include the following:

- Create a systematic plan to develop a variety of spaces around campuses both indoors and outdoors where students and faculty can gather for informal discussion. Possibilities include small cafe style tables with chairs dotted around campus and lounges for students and faculty in buildings where faculty offices are housed as well as in dorms.
- Create group-study space in the library.
- Create a cafe-like entity associated with the library that is a centerpiece on the campus, architecturally, socially, and intellectually.
- Carry out much needed renovations to classrooms. As part of that renovation process, replace tablet desks in small classrooms with modular tables that can be arranged to create a true seminar atmosphere.
- As part of those renovations, where possible create more seminar-appropriate rooms. Some could be located in the colleges which would relieve some of the space problems on the hill and make possible more intellectual engagement in the residence halls.
- Establish an annual campus-wide competition, modeled perhaps on intramural sports that could take the form of a series of debates, presentations of research, or performances, responding to a given topic announced at the beginning of the year. This might be organized through colleges once they are established.
- Provide a cultural ticket to Boston for our students. Our proximity to Boston is a major asset for the university. We currently provide free access to the Museum of Fine Arts. We would encourage expanding free museum access wherever possible as well as subsidized tickets to symphony, theater, and dance events in Boston and Cambridge.
- Institute a Presidential Lecture and Dinner Series to invite renowned public figures to campus three or four times a year. Dinners could be rotated among the colleges, or among groups of seniors to bring students and faculty together through a major event.
- Support an initiative to encourage healthier lifestyles among students. There is presently a series of projects underway to encourage better nutrition, fitness, and sleep habits among students. These projects are not only intended to improve student health, but to create an opportunity to study the actual outcomes of various strategies. Students would continue to be involved in both the experiential learning and research aspects of these projects.

B. *Curriculum*: The Task Force, as it continues to examine the Undergraduate Experience, is currently considering the organization of the curriculum and how best to assure the successful development of all our students' talents. We give serious importance to faculty governance and the determining role that faculty committees must play in any question of curricular transformation. Our goal in these discussions is neither to supplant those various committees nor to preempt them. Rather, we hope to present some large-scale suggestions for ways in which the Tufts community can think about a number of pressing questions, including:

- 1) How to extend the academic focus on expository skills over all four years of the undergraduate curriculum. Because one hallmark of the well-educated student is the ability to write and speak effectively, we are focusing attention on ideas that will enable Tufts to become a leader among universities in training its students in the arts and skills of successful communication.
- 2) How to keep students from losing touch with the academic community in their junior year. With so large a percentage of students making use of our excellent study abroad options, we see a need for mechanisms that will keep our juniors connected to the Tufts community while helping to prepare them for whatever projects they might undertake in their senior year.
- 3) How to redefine senior theses or capstone projects and allocate resources for the students who do them and the faculty who sponsor them. We are thinking about the place of senior research projects in the academic curriculum and trying to imagine ways in which they can be made more useful for the students pursuing them and less burdensome for the departments and programs that encourage or require them. For example two ideas the Task Force has considered are 1) to require candidates for graduation *summa cum laude* to write a senior thesis (or its programmatic equivalent) and 2) to remove the "honors" designation from senior theses to remove the incentive for students who would not otherwise graduate with honors to pursue a thesis in order to have the thesis honors designation on their transcript. We are also thinking about possible connections between senior projects and the various honors awarded at graduation.
- 4) How to improve the connection between academic work and the co-curricular life of the university. This includes creating greater consistency across disciplines in developing mechanisms to ensure close connections between internships and the curriculum. We are considering a series of proposals that will attempt to integrate intellectual achievement into the social life of the campus. These include a wide range of possibilities, from a pre-matriculation program in which each first-year student, upon admission, would receive one or two books as a gift from the Tufts Alumni Association, to a "World Day" event in which juniors who have been away from campus share their experiences with sophomores considering their options for the junior year, to a redesigned Commencement ceremony in which smaller clusters of departments or programs would have separate events to award diplomas.
- 5) How to address the issue of requirements and their effect on the undergraduate experience. Many of our students feel that the number of courses needed to fulfill the foundation and distribution requirements is excessive. We are still in conversation about how best to maximize occasions for students to discover and explore their intellectual passions with rigor and depth while producing scholars whose exposure to the various disciplines and fields of inquiry assures their ability to think broadly and assume the responsibilities of citizenship in national, global, and academic communities.

- 6) How to engage all quarters of the university in educating our undergraduates for participation and leadership in a world where historical legacies are increasingly challenged and reinterpreted.
- 7) How to assemble the appropriate faculty and staff resources to carry out the various curricular initiatives that emerge from community discussions.

The work of the Task Force continues, and this interim report, though it offers our central ideas for careful consideration and response, will be supplemented by our ongoing attention to these questions and by the invaluable feedback we enthusiastically invite from all members of the Tufts community.

3. Building Community and Strengthening Diversity

Overview: We propose a series of initiatives designed to address the concern we have frequently heard from students, faculty, and staff alike that although there are many sub-communities at Tufts, Tufts lacks a sense of overarching community. We seek to build community in this larger sense and we propose a number of initiatives to this end. The first initiative focuses on space. Just as space can be used to enhance intellectual climate, we believe it can also contribute to community building. We have already proposed above a cafe for social and intellectual engagement in the library. Our primary proposal to contribute to community building in this section is a significant enhancement to the Campus Center. Our second proposal is a long-term commitment to need-blind admissions. The third proposal is the creation of an Alumni Community Network. In addition to these specific proposals, we refer readers back to our discussion of resources and programming in the goals section titled "A Continuing Commitment to Diversity."

1. *Space:* We propose that fundraising efforts be included in the next capital campaign to construct an addition to the Campus Center 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. 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.
 - Construct a "town commons" area that serves as a social focal point of campus. Among its attractions would be a central mailbox facility for students.
2. *Need-Blind Admissions:* We propose that Tufts make a long-term commitment to providing need-blind admissions. Tufts currently meets full need for students it

admits but does not engage in need-blind admissions. Our current policy means that we must turn away, for financial reasons, students who, by providing some unique perspective or background, would contribute to the educational experience of their peers. Moving in time to a system of need-blind admissions combined with meeting full need would allow us to focus our attention in the admissions process on constructing an entering class that provides the richest possible experience not only for students in that class but for all Tufts undergraduates.

Need-blind admissions is a goal that is likely to be achieved only towards the end of a major capital campaign. Tufts currently has a "need aware" admission policy combined with a commitment to meeting full need. As funds are raised and earmarked for financial aid, we can gradually move away from a need aware policy 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. We recognize that some institutions advertise a need-blind admission policy while not committing to meeting full need. Such a policy, however, can only lead to discouragement and resentment on the part of students who may not understand the distinction between need-blind and full need policies. Tufts has a policy of assembling a first year class that brings in exceptionally bright students from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. It is also committed to retaining those students once they matriculate. This is a policy we wholeheartedly endorse.

3. *Alumni Community Network*: We propose that thought be given to a series of initiatives that would more closely link our current undergraduates with our alumni. A variety of programs could be developed to bring alumni back to campus to serve as mentors to current students, to facilitate research and internship opportunities, and to provide a career network. These services should be available to current students as well as graduates. Related to this network is a proposal to establish a community service house for current students. We include this idea here to emphasize the potential for linking alumni to such an initiative in a way that enriches both student and alumni experiences.

B. Evaluating Proposals

This report sets out a number of initiatives for the Tufts community's consideration. As we begin the discussion, we would like to emphasize four points. First, the three proposals above are our initial efforts to respond to problems or opportunities that we have identified. They are not cast in stone and we ask you to approach them with an open mind. If a particular initiative does not appear workable or sensible, please so indicate. At the same time, however, indicate how the idea can be improved or how the underlying problem or opportunity can better be addressed. Put differently, we view this as an "interim" report designed to help move us towards consensus on a set of proposals emerging from a community discussion.

Second, we have tried to be mindful of the resources required as we bring about change. We have identified three key resource constraints that have influenced our

thinking as we developed proposals: financial, spatial, and temporal constraints. Our financial constraints are obvious. Our endowment lags considerably behind our peer institutions. It is 80 percent of Georgetown's endowment, roughly 40 percent of Brown's endowment, and less than one-quarter Dartmouth's endowment. We are unable to provide adequate financial resources to our current faculty in the form of salaries, opportunities for funded research leaves, and sufficient research support to match our expectations for faculty scholarship. Our spatial constraints also affect our possibilities for change. The Medford/Somerville campus is tightly hemmed in by residential neighborhoods. The opportunities for expansion - either internally or beyond our current boundaries - are quite limited. Constraints on time were repeatedly raised by faculty who expressed a concern about additional responsibilities given current teaching, advising, and scholarship expectations. It is clearly unreasonable to place additional responsibilities on our current faculty unless we can construct creative ways to offload some of their current burdens. Our approach has been to offload low value-added responsibilities to provide time for high value-added responsibilities. An example of a low value-added responsibility is faculty time spent helping a student find a curriculum regulation or requirement in the *Tufts Bulletin* while a high value-added responsibility is time spent with a student who is struggling to see connections between two seemingly unrelated intellectual concepts.

Third, we ask readers to bear in mind that some proposals represent a substantive change to the culture of Tufts - one that may or may not be attractive to current students. We have tried to address the concerns that we have heard from faculty, staff and students over the last year of outreach. As the details and mechanisms of these proposals are defined, it is inevitable that some outcomes will be seen as a narrowing of choices. Wherever possible, we have tried to avoid restricting choices except in cases where we felt that the benefits of a proposal clearly exceeded the costs. We encourage readers to evaluate the proposals not in terms of how the proposals affect current students, but rather of how they will affect future Tufts students attracted to the university after the changes are implemented.

Fourth, as we evaluated ideas we have asked ourselves how they contribute to the educational goals embodied in our definition of a Tufts education. Given our inability to do everything, we have tried to prioritize in terms of cost and effectiveness. We have also tried to identify a mix of ideas from low-cost initiatives that Tufts can immediately implement to initiatives that are aspirational and will require time and money to bring about. If at the end of the process we only put forward proposals that will require many years and many millions of dollars, then we would risk losing momentum and enthusiasm as we slogged towards a distant goal. If, on the other hand, we only put forward quick and easy proposals that require a minimum of time, effort, or resources, then we would have set our sights too low. As elsewhere in life, balance is everything.

VI. Process and Next Steps

We ask that all members of the Tufts community carefully and critically examine the vision and proposals laid out in this report so that, as a community, Tufts can determine which proposals serve us best (and with what modifications). President Bacow's charge to the Task Force is to "work hard to achieve a consensus for change." It is our intention to meet with groups to gather further input, to discuss this document and – as a community – determine how best to move forward boldly and in a distinctive fashion to a new level of excellence. Tufts will embark on a new capital campaign in the next few years. We take seriously the promise of the President that "[t]he work of the Task Force will help to shape the priorities for undergraduate education and life in this new capital campaign."

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Appendix A: Student Advisory Committee Report

Space Improvement Initiative

In discussions with our classmates, the Student Advisory Committee identified improvement of space and facilities as key to improving the themes of community, climate, and coherence that were noted by the Task Force. 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 enable 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 feel strongly that there are many problems with current facilities on campus. Existing facilities are designated by their social, academic, and residential functions, and there are few facilities that bridge these areas of campus life. To supplement and enhance the initiatives proposed by the Task Force, we have identified some areas that need improvement.

Intellectual Atmosphere

To bridge the gap between students' social and academic lives, it is crucial that residential facilities facilitate intellectual dialogue among students and between students and faculty. For this reason, we think the college system proposed by the Task Force is an excellent idea. But for it to work, students must take pride in the dorms in which they live. The benefits of the college system outweigh the restriction of living in one cluster for the first two years of college only if all dorms are equally desirable residences. Many of our existing dorms are not designed well, and students have no desire to congregate in the common rooms because they are run-down and offer few amenities. There are also many classrooms that are in poor conditions, and it is difficult for students to learn when they do not feel comfortable in a room.

To strengthen intellectual atmosphere through the residential colleges and classroom space, we make the following suggestions:

Short term:

- The maintenance of current study spaces and the addition of more chairs and tables will provide a space for academic discussions and group learning. Vary table size and add study carrels so as to attract different types of learners to the common space.
- Adding Ethernet access to all study lounges is essential to bringing students out of their rooms to learn with each other.
- Install lamps so that all common/study rooms have adequate lighting.
- Put round tables in all small classrooms.
- Continue existing efforts to renovate classrooms and update them with technology.

- Construction of small study rooms outside the library -- for example, in the common areas of dorms or in academic building. These spaces must be designed to be soundproof.

Long term:

- Make existing study lounges soundproof.
- Renovate dorms so that small study lounges are easily accessible on every floor, such as in Miller Hall.
- Complete Phase III of the campus center so there is a dining space where students and faculty can come together.

Community

Social facilities on campus are inadequate, and the lack of spaces that bring students and faculty together has a negative affect on our sense of community. Students are reluctant to go to the campus center to eat or study because it is too crowded. Faculty dining areas are separated from student ones, and there are few places that are quiet enough for a student to sit down and talk with a professor. To promote a stronger sense of community, we recommend that improvements be made to facilities where faculty and students could congregate.

Short term:

- Invest in games and nice furniture for the common rooms of dorms. Establish a plan for beatification of dorms over the summer – redo common rooms, paint the walls, buy nice chairs (bean bags, papazons, etc), and new carpets.
- Put cardiovascular exercise equipment in dorms.
- Use Gantcher for the large events and speeches that students want to go to. For example, some seniors were unable to get into pub night at Dewick – an event that is supposed to build community in the class – because the facility is not big enough.
- Put swinging benches in the space between Tilton and Lewis. Also, put benches on the residential quad.
- Install e-mail stations in the campus center and Brown and Brew.

Long Term:

- In implementation of Phase III of the campus center, build a central mailbox facility.
- Put a small eatery or coffee shop on or near the residential quad or revamp and advertise Oxfam Café.
- 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 and the Baronian Fieldhouse.

Cohesion

That there are few buildings that combine the residential, academic, and social aspects of student life causes student life to be segmented. Many of the suggestions we have already made address the need for crossover facilities. But another reason for the lack of cohesion to the Tufts experience is that students do not take pride in the places in which they live and learn because of their physical condition. To address this problem, we make the following suggestions:

Short Term:

- Continue the effort to put the Tufts name, colors, seal, and mascot all over campus. If the residential college system is implemented, design seals and mascots for each college and place them all over those buildings.
- Place more signs and information about Tufts history around campus. Establish a walking tour that visits significant spots and place signs there explaining the spots. Hang older pictures of Tufts prominently in each building.

Long term:

- Renovate dorms and classroom buildings to have spaces like the East Hall Lounge in which classes can be held.
-

Though many of our suggestions may seem costly, none are radical departures from the improvements that are made to campus each year. Each of the short-term solutions simply asks that money be spent in a more intentional way and that improvements that enhance intellectual atmosphere, community, and coherence be given priority. Additionally, such projects can gain funds by having fundraisers pitch specific ones to particular donors and put their name on it. For example, a campus beautification fund could be established through which alumni can pay a certain amount of money to have a flowerbed or tree with a plaque with their name on it – or they can dedicate it to an influential professor or friend. Classrooms and common rooms could be named after alumni who donate money to renovate them. No matter what the cost of these improvements, we see space and facilities improvements as necessary to the realization of many of the Task Force recommendations.

Appendix B: Task Force Charge

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 better prepare students 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 C: Community Outreach Meetings

- **Trustees (2/ 8-9/02)**
- **TCU Senate (3/3/02)**
- **Senior Leadership Corps I (3/ 8/02)**
- **Center for Interdisciplinary Studies (3/13/02)**
- **Class Deans and Academic Standing (3/15/02)**
- **Executive Committee (3/25/02)**
- **Chairs (A & S) (3/25/02)**
- **Dean of Students Senior Staff (3/26/02)**
- **Student Advisory Committee (3/26/02)**
- **Curricula Committee (3/27/02)**
- **University Committee on Teaching and Faculty Development (3/29/02)**
- **Senior Leadership Corps II (3/29/02)**
- **Policy Council (4/2/02)**
- **Young Alumni Group (4/2/02)**
- **Computer Facilities and Usage Committee (4/4/02)**
- **Educational Policy Committee (4/5/02)**
- **Equal Educational Opportunity Committee (4/5/02)**
- **Committee on Learning Disabilities (4/10/02)**
- **Career Services, Religious Services, Athletics, and Office of Student Activities (4/22/02)**
- **Open Student Forum (4/23/02)**
- **Budget and University Priorities Committee (4/24/02)**
- **Library Committee (4/24/02)**
- **Junior Faculty Luncheon (4/26/02)**
- **Center for Academic Excellence, Honors and Student Awards (4/29/02)**
- **Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee (4/29/02)**
- **UCCPS (5/1/02)**
- **EPIIC, Study Abroad, Foreign Programs Committee, et al (5/6/02)**
- **International Relations (5/7/02)**
- **Student Advisory Committee (5/7/02)**
- **Greek Life (5/9/02)**
- **Engineering Chairs (5/13/02)**
- **A & S Board of Overseers (5/16/02)**
- **Trustees (5/18/02)**
- **AS&E Faculty Meeting (9/18/02)**
- **Dean of Students Senior Staff (9/24/02)**
- **Writing Center (Nadia Medina) (10/7/02)**
- **A & S Board of Overseers (10/8/02)**
- **Open Student Forum (10/9/02)**
- **Open Student Forum on Cultural Climate at Tufts I (10/10/02)**
- **Open Student Forum on Cultural Climate at Tufts II (10/11/02)**
- **Open Student Forum on Living at Tufts: Outside the Classroom (10/23/02)**
- **Dining Services (10/24/02)**
- **Trustees (Academic Affairs Subcommittee) 11/2/02)**
- **Tufts University Alumni Association (11/4/02)**

Appendix D: Membership of Task Force and Student Advisory Committee

Task Force

Gilbert E. 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

Lara Birk	Project Coordinator and Editor
Jay Kim	Part-time Student Staff Assistant

Student Advisory Committee

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 '03
Nikoo Paydar	Class of '04 (currently abroad)
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