# Table of Contents

- Introduction .................................. 3
- Prior Strategic Plans ....................... 5
- Priorities........................................... 6
- Themes ............................................ 6
- Community and Climate ................. 7
- Research and Scholarship ........... 12
- Academics, Curriculum, and Pedagogy ........... 16
- Concluding Remarks ..................... 19
Introduction

The School of Arts and Sciences at Tufts University is a community of teachers, students, researchers, artists, scholars, practitioners, and staff members devoted to excellence in the discovery, preservation, dissemination, creation, and application of knowledge, ideas, and works of art. The school is supported in its mission by approximately sixty thousand alumni.

Fundamental to the identity of Arts and Sciences is its ability to pursue, in ways both dynamic and complementary, a two-fold commitment: to the education of undergraduate students in the liberal arts and to an intensive research environment that includes graduate students and post-doctoral fellows in professional and academic programs. This combination of education and research allows both undergraduate and graduate students to extend the frontiers of intellectual discovery and to enlarge their capacity for artistic creation. The school rests on the fundamental belief that undergraduate education and the training of graduate and professional students work in concert to produce graduates whose commitment to and participation in the creation of knowledge and art fosters the qualities and characteristics necessary for professional and personal success. Among those qualities and characteristics are: creative and critical thinking; resilience, persistence, and adaptability; independence and the ability to work with others; effective communication skills; insight into the diversity of human experience and the various perspectives from which problems can be approached; a passionate investment in a particular field; and a driving intellectual curiosity.

The School of Arts and Sciences is justifiably proud of its members who embody Tufts’ signature commitment to engaged citizenship by undertaking to have a positive impact on their communities, however understood, and who endeavor to solve the most pressing societal problems through collective or individual action, whether that action be political, scientific, organizational, pedagogical, humanitarian, or artistic.

The School of Arts and Sciences takes equal pride, with equal justification, in its members pursuing knowledge for the sake of knowledge itself. Discoveries or intellectual advances may bear fruit in unexpected ways, and both the pursuit and transmission of knowledge and artistic creation encapsulate something important about the university as the archive and incubator of human resourcefulness. The School of Arts and Sciences, therefore, embraces these various roles in society as its responsibility and its privilege.

The authors of this plan are aware of the many challenges that face higher education and intend to make the case for enhancing our already vibrant intellectual community, both in Medford and beyond, at a moment when brick and mortar institutions are widely said to be under threat on a variety of fronts: from distance learning, changing economic models, shifting demographics among college-age students, and an increasing focus on vocational preparation in place of education in the liberal arts.

The plan affirms our commitment to providing a liberal arts education in which the arts and humanities figure as prominently as the sciences and social sciences. It emphasizes the continuing importance for our students of the broadest cultural formation at a moment when commentators on higher education say that the humanities are in crisis and when many see education as a way to a job instead of as a
preparation for life. It insists that the goal of the academy is to shape future citizens of the world, not merely future employees. It is this approach to education that makes Arts and Sciences graduates so successful in their professions and so much in demand by employers. They have learned how to think, to innovate, to imagine, to evaluate, and to produce.

Our fundamental enterprise is to create a diverse, stimulating, and inclusive intellectual community that not only furnishes its graduates with the knowledge and skills required to become leaders in their fields but also equips them to pursue a lifetime of learning and creativity.

We thank everyone who aided this process. The authors of several previous documents contributed by informing the committee members’ understanding of many pertinent goals and issues. Others from across the institution generously gave their time to engage in thoughtful conversation with the committee. In addition, the strategic planning committee circulated a draft of the plan in order to solicit input and ideas in a series of open sessions with staff, faculty, and graduate and undergraduate students. Further, an online form provided a means for anonymous comments and feedback. We also consulted the members of the Board of Advisors for the School of Arts and Sciences, and their guidance was most helpful. It would not be possible to incorporate every piece of feedback we received into the final document, but most ― if not all ― of the ideas in this plan were initiated or shaped by this input from the community.

1 A report released in January 2014 from the American Association of Colleges and Universities found that students who had received a liberal arts education ultimately had more professional success and higher earnings than those who received professional degrees as undergraduates. For a response to this report that welcomes its findings but also argues that the value of such an education cannot be adequately measured merely in economic terms, see Scott Samuelson, “Would You Hire Socrates?,” Wall Street Journal, 29 March 2014, A11.
Prior Strategic Planning Exercises

This strategic planning exercise should be understood as building upon previous successful strategic planning efforts. The Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience articulated a vision of the ideal Tufts education, one that was important to our accreditors as they sought evidence of purposeful academic planning and assessment. The task force also led to many improvements on campus, including a new system for advising that enhanced “continuity of care,” a new library café, the summer scholars program, a fund for unpaid internships in public service and government, a major lecture series, and a much improved commencement, among other things (see Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience, 2003; final report on implementation, 2009).

Similarly, the last strategic planning exercise of Arts and Sciences in 2005 laid out a vision for significant growth focused on scholarship. Major accomplishments of the last strategic plan include: the humanities center, a vibrant mentoring program for junior faculty, regular external reviews across all departments in the school, a thorough review of interdisciplinary programs, health insurance for graduate students, and a publication fund for faculty. The plan’s ambitious goal of the expansion of full-time faculty by sixty additional lines, as a way to support our aspirations to offer a fine liberal arts education embedded in a larger research institution, has been met. Not everything envisioned by that committee has come to be, but there has been a striking number of successes.

Finally, the Campus Master Plan, which the architectural firm William Rawn Associates prepared in 2004-2005 in consultation with Tufts’ administrators and faculty, focused on the identification of sites for future buildings while sustaining the integrity of the campus. An update to the plan in 2012 helped in the identification of the “hinge” block site for the construction of the Science and Engineering Complex (SEC).

Accordingly, we hope that this strategic plan, developed pursuant to the university’s T10 Strategic Plan, will guide the school as effectively as these prior exercises.
Priorities

This plan builds on these three prior efforts, as it touches on the specific focus of each of them — the undergraduate experience, scholarship, and campus planning. Due both to the extended purview of this particular planning exercise and to the size, breadth, and varied purposes within the School of Arts and Sciences, its recommendations must proceed on many different levels. Accordingly, the pages that follow contain many recommendations, modest and tangible as well as grand and aspirational. Despite the myriad details that necessarily emerge from its broad scope, this plan underscores three central priorities.

First, it is clear to us that the thrust of new resource allocations must now be toward the improvement of facilities. During President Bacow’s administration the major investments of the university were in people: students, staff, and faculty. Tufts has greatly benefited from that approach. As noted, in Arts and Sciences we added sixty full-time lines to our faculty. Although additional work remains in building faculty strength in selected new as well as in foundational areas, our central focus can no longer be on an overall expansion of the faculty. Instead we need to turn our focus to infrastructure, understood both as buildings and the other systems that support the work of the school. In the coming years, resources must be focused on building new spaces to accommodate our ambitions as well as repurposing and renovating older structures to meet the demands of a contemporary university.

Second, it is essential that we continue to invest in our students. As the cost of a college education climbs, our values demand that we continually strive to serve a broader swath of society. The key to meeting this goal is providing financial support to undergraduate and graduate students. Many universities have abandoned the idea of “full need” undergraduate financial aid policies. We have not, and should not, do the same, even though our approach is costly to maintain. Fortunately, financial aid resonates with many of our alumni. We wish not only to articulate its importance to maintaining our identity as a school but also to partner with the university in its advancement effort on behalf of building additional resources.

Third, improving graduate programs should be among the highest priorities for the school. We recommend redoubling our emphasis on the graduate school with the understanding that the undergraduate program has been the centerpiece of the academic reputation of Arts and Sciences. Our undergraduate student body is filled with enormous talent, and our faculty members clearly appreciate the challenge and excitement of teaching very strong undergraduates. Our graduate programs have received far less attention over the years, despite many areas of excellence. Arts and Sciences should focus resources on enhancing graduate student aid and programming. Strengthening the graduate programs is central to the research mission of the school. As we pursue this goal, we must continue to ensure that graduate education continues to complement the commitment of Arts and Sciences to providing an outstanding undergraduate education.

Themes

We elaborate on these priorities within our discussion of three particular themes: community and climate; academics, curriculum, and pedagogy; and research and scholarship. These three themes permit us the scope necessary to do justice to the range of ideals, challenges, and opportunities of the School of Arts and Sciences of Tufts University.
Community and Climate

“Education is all a matter of building bridges.” Ralph Ellison

An Intellectual Community

The School of Arts and Sciences is an intellectual community in which all of its members — faculty, staff, and students alike — pursue the life of the mind. The intellectual community we strive to embody produces an inclusive campus climate that encourages all of its members to assume new responsibilities and challenges and to expand the range of their competencies. Enhancements of the intellectual community on campus should, whenever possible, take advantage of Tufts’ identity both as an elite institution for undergraduate students pursuing a liberal arts education and as a rigorous graduate school that houses academic and professional programs.

The health and success of our intellectual community are built upon the dedication and tireless efforts of the school’s outstanding staff. Their work depends on close knowledge of the specific needs, practices, and priorities of the units in which they work. Even as we seek greater efficiency, it is essential that staff be treated as valued and respected colleagues. Much of who we are depends on close and long-term professional relationships between staff members and the faculty and administrators who partner with them in the educational enterprise.

Composition of the Community and Climate

The intellectual community of Arts and Sciences must be as diverse as possible in order to maximize the experience that Tufts can offer its members. The President’s Council on Diversity has recently completed a large-scale, in-depth study of the many dimensions of diversity at Tufts. We support the council’s various findings and recommendations as they relate to faculty, staff, and students. As a general principle, diversity should characterize all parts of the student body and not be confined to discrete pockets (e.g., undergraduate rather than graduate programs, social sciences or humanities rather than science departments).

Because more than two-thirds of each undergraduate applicant pool applies for need-based aid, continued excellence in undergraduate quality demands expanded endowment resources for need-based financial aid. We are proud to highlight Tufts’ status as one of a diminishing number of institutions that meets the full, demonstrated need of each student we accept and enroll — a resource-intensive commitment we honor for four years — and we call for an affirmation of our commitment to access for students from all socioeconomic backgrounds and the dedication of additional resourc-
es to sustain our policy of “full-need” aid. We also support an expansion of the percentage of need-based grant recipients to at least 40 percent of each first-year class. Of those recipients, at least 10 percent of each class should be first generation college students. The achievement of these goals would require at least $400 million in additional endowment resources.

A healthy campus climate requires that we be ever mindful of who we are and who we wish to be. We recommend the creation of a task force in which faculty and administrators in Arts and Sciences work in concert with central administration to examine the size and composition of the undergraduate and graduate student bodies, to assess the global and socioeconomic diversity of the campus, and to forge a plan for the future demographic make-up of our student body. The task force should ask: “Where do we want to recruit; whom do we want to teach; and whom do we want to enroll?” There is a clear opportunity for Arts and Sciences to enhance its visibility in the West Coast, Southwest, Asia, and Latin America. By attracting these prospective students to our undergraduate and graduate programs, Tufts would enhance the intellectual and social atmosphere on campus. In so doing, we reinforce our international signature by showcasing perspectives from around the globe. (See also Academics, Curriculum, and Pedagogy.) The creation of a discrete endowment to support need-based aid for foreign citizens — undergraduates as well as graduate students — will support this objective.

Increasing the diversity of our graduate student population is an equally important goal. An improved web presence for the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the recent creation of an Office of Graduate Admissions help to address this challenge. We recommend developing productive relations with organizations whose central mission is to increase diversity in graduate programs across the country. Simultaneously, we commit ourselves to increasing those pipelines — at both the undergraduate and graduate level — that serve to diversify the professions and the academy. In addition to the increase in graduate student support recommended elsewhere in this document, we call for increased financial resources necessary for both merit and need-based grant aid to recruit a diverse graduate student population. (For additional discussion and proposals, see Scholarship and Research below.)

Tufts must continue to improve its web-based infrastructure for recruitment as well as for student services at the undergraduate and graduate levels. We need to develop the digital presence of Arts and Sciences in various online and social media channels. An ability to convey to a global audience the myriad opportunities that this institution provides is now an essential element in recruiting student, faculty, and staff alike. Those same outlets can serve to keep the community informed about and engaged in the institution. Attention to and investment in our digital footprint can enhance the campus climate by opening channels of communication among faculty, students, alumni, parents, and prospective students.

Bringing students from diverse backgrounds to campus is not enough; we must also help to ensure that all students thrive once they arrive. To that end, we regard the Bridge to Liberal Arts Success at Tufts (BLAST) as an important and positive initiative. We call for it to be sustained through continued funding so it can provide support to incoming undergraduates who are the first in their families to attend college or who attended under-resourced high schools. In addition, we propose that a multi-year assessment of the program be implemented to gauge its efficacy in helping these students achieve academic success and to provide data for a subsequent review of the program that would consider ways to enhance it. (See also Academics, Curriculum, and Pedagogy.)
A Residential Community

For its undergraduate students in their first and second years in particular, the Medford campus is also a residential community where they sleep, dine, receive medical attention and counseling, socialize, and participate in more than 300 student organizations. When students from different backgrounds live together in a residence hall, they have numerous opportunities to interact as thinkers, and the distinctions between the social and the academic dissolve in ways that promote a sense of community. Co-curricular activities and organizations teach students important life skills as they not only participate, but also found, organize, promote, and lead them. We should embrace the learning that goes on in these activities and strengthen our efforts to bring the learning that goes on in the classrooms, laboratories, and practice spaces into the broader campus community (an express objective of the Task Force on the Undergraduate Experience). Finding ways to integrate curricular and co-curricular activities at Tufts more successfully should be a priority over the next decade. We strongly believe that matters related to admissions, residential experience, co-curricular engagement, and student life are intimately bound up with the academic development of students in Arts and Sciences.

The development of a strong undergraduate community at Tufts is hampered by the fact that approximately 48 percent of juniors study off campus for one or both semesters, and that, when they return as seniors, fewer than 20 percent live in campus housing. For some undergraduates, their involvement in campus life declines after their sophomore year. In addition, there are significant challenges in drawing the graduate students, who are housed off-campus and who currently find their intellectual life largely in their distinct departments and programs, into the life of the campus. We thus propose building a new residence hall designed for advanced undergraduate and graduate students. Such a residence hall would address the needs facing both populations, but its most compelling case, we believe, rests on the type of intellectual community it could help the school to build.

International graduate students in particular would benefit from a residence in which they could live for one academic year before they navigate the rental market in a new country. Moreover, the difficulties of navigating the private rental market in the area surrounding the campus for all students will become more acute when the new MBTA stop becomes a reality. We anticipate that the area surrounding this new commuter hub will become more attractive, increasing property values and driving up rent.

This new residence hall would bring a larger percentage of the senior class back to campus, incorporate some graduate students into the residential population, and allow both groups to benefit from the presence of the other. In this way, we would be making a powerful statement that graduate students are an essential part of campus life.
Additional Spaces on Campus

Individuals with disabilities are valued members of our community and we wish to make the campus environment as accessible as possible. We support the employment of Universal Design concepts throughout the campus as the university continues to improve accessibility for all.

There is a dearth of appealing spaces on campus in which students, faculty, and staff can congregate. Moreover, since the closure of the faculty dining hall in the Chase Center, faculty members have had fewer opportunities to interact with their colleagues from other departments, programs, and schools on the Medford campus. We propose that all new buildings and major renovations include gathering spaces and lounges and, where appropriate, options for refreshments to help establish a vibrant intellectual community.

Undergraduate and graduate leaders have been pursuing the possibility of a pub on campus, which would serve students who are 21 and older, as well as staff and faculty. Students who support its construction note that a pub would address the lack of a campus community for seniors who live off campus. They also note that it would attract graduate students onto campus in the evenings and provide a place for students, faculty, and staff from all three schools on this campus to interact. This proposal is fully compatible with our intention to promote a more vibrant campus community.

We recommend that the School of Arts and Sciences work with operations and campus planning to initiate a phased refurbishing of the current spaces on campus with a view toward creating more attractive and welcoming spaces in academic, residential, and athletic buildings. As the university renovates and remolds, the administration of Arts and Sciences as well as appropriate faculty committees should be consulted to ensure that the new spaces are appropriate for their occupants and as user friendly as possible.

The Community beyond the Campus

We understand that one aspect of Tufts’ appeal is its location near Boston. We support efforts to make the cultural life of Boston available to all students. We also applaud the student government’s effort to discount MBTA transportation to all undergraduate and graduate students.

We recognize that faculty, students, and staff have active commitments to other communities outside of Tufts. Helping employees and students navigate challenges related to work-life balance is an important piece of recruiting and retaining top faculty, staff, and graduate students. We applaud the progress that has been made on these issues and support the continuing work of the AS&E Committee on Faculty Work/Life.
We recommend that the school intensify its efforts to keep track of alumni and to keep them engaged in the intellectual and cultural life of Tufts. The school must actively promote a positive image, assuring that Tufts’ reputation for excellence matches the quality of the students and faculty in the school. Efforts on this front will result in several desirable outcomes. Alumni, both from the undergraduate and graduate programs in Arts and Sciences, will be inspired — to an even greater degree — to serve, to donate, and to mentor. As the school’s reputation grows, recruitment of the best students and faculty becomes ever easier. Indeed, pride of place cultivates a sense of appreciation and commitment to the long-term excellence of this institution among our current students — who are, of course, our future alumni.
Research and Scholarship

“The challenge for Tufts over the next decades will be to balance the values of outstanding teaching, the values that got us part of the way to where we are, with those of significant research, which got us the rest of the way.”

Sol Gittleman

The School of Arts and Sciences regards research and scholarship — carried out by faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and visiting scholars, artists, and experts in their fields — as central to its multiple missions of transformative education, the pursuit of knowledge, and engaged citizenship. Over the past ten years, Tufts has substantially enhanced its research profile through the addition of outstanding faculty members and increased resources, including: the establishment of two semesters of junior research leave; individual faculty research accounts; improved administrative support for sponsored research; and the Summer Scholars program. During the next decade we need to consolidate these gains; this will mean, among other things, securing reliable funding for existing programs, increasing the number of endowed chairs across departments, and enhancing the school’s infrastructure to support a world-renowned research environment. We also must make strategic investments and decisions to reinforce areas in need of support and respond wisely to an evolving intellectual environment.

Enriching the Research Environment

In many fields, research excellence and graduate education are inextricably linked. Graduate education is an area in which relatively modest allocations of resources can be leveraged for much larger improvements in scholarship and competitiveness for external funding. This can be accomplished by attracting a stronger pool of students and providing them with the stipend and research support they need to be successful and productive researchers. Areas of priorities include: year-round support of all doctoral students for five years of study; increased levels of stipend support generally; an increased number of named fellowships for a range of purposes, including support for masters as well as doctoral students; and improved career planning services for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows for both academic and nonacademic careers. Summer support for graduate students should be the first goal, if only because it can be accomplished in steps as resources become available. Many of our aspirations for the graduate school will require active fundraising, and the Dean of GSAS and the faculty can and should play a role in making the case to potential donors.

Further, we advocate that the school consider models for allowing the managed creation and growth of selected graduate programs. Enhancing our commitment to new and current certificate and master’s programs is critical for any subsequent development of new doctoral programs and the strengthening of current ones.

Strengthening the graduate programs in Arts and Sciences also contributes to a stronger and richer undergraduate research experience. In many disciplines, research programs are
built on a three-legged stool with faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates each serving to support and reinforce one another. Undergraduates work as lab assistants or as research assistants to graduate students on their doctoral dissertations; graduate students serve as teaching assistants in undergraduate classes; and both groups of students interact at lectures and departmental events that enrich the intellectual community on campus. Done well, graduate and undergraduate education complement rather than compete with each other. An investment in graduate education enhances the education of all students in Arts and Sciences. The Schools of Arts and Sciences and Engineering should expand the Summer Scholars program to fund teams consisting of a faculty mentor working with both a graduate and an undergraduate researcher. A provision should be made to allow the participation of graduate students on senior honors thesis committees for departments where this is appropriate.

Researchers engaged in externally sponsored projects need to be supported by an effective infrastructure of pre- and post-award administration whose mission is to facilitate the research enterprise at Tufts while ensuring compliance with the growing body of complex rules and regulations. In recent years that support structure has lagged behind the evolving needs of researchers in Arts and Sciences, leading to inefficiency, missed opportunities, frustration, and risk of penalties. We welcome recent steps to improve research administration in Arts and Sciences, and recommend continued effort and investment to ensure that all faculty members who have or seek external funding are fully supported throughout the process.

As our research endeavors have intensified, the school has welcomed increasing numbers of postdoctoral researchers. Arts and Sciences needs to develop policies and programming, in some instances in collaboration with other schools at Tufts, to integrate these valuable individuals into the larger community and to mentor them for their future careers.

The science facilities on the Medford campus have been inadequate and outdated for quite some time. The renovation of 574 Boston Avenue and the new Science and Engineering Complex are projects that begin to address the need for modern, highly-functioning, environmentally-sound research and teaching space. Even with their completion, however, serious deficiencies and needs will remain, and upgrading the physical infrastructure for scientific research and education must continue to be a school and university priority. Planning for these and all new facilities must closely involve the faculty, students, and staff who will populate them so that we create spaces that truly facilitate the research and learning that occurs in them.

We note that modern research takes place within a global community of scholars. Just as Tufts benefits from its reputation as a national and international school at the undergraduate level, the school’s intellectual climate, research enterprise, and reputation are enhanced when new and established researchers come to Tufts either for short visits or for longer-term study and collaboration. The lack of housing poses a major obstacle to realizing such exchanges, especially for international students and visitors. Within the larger context of expanding and improving housing options on and near campus, we recommend that opportunities be sought to provide suitable space for both short-term (a few days to a few weeks) and longer-term (a semester or more) housing for this important population. A guesthouse on campus, perhaps in a repurposed building, also might allow us to accommodate job candidates and other campus visitors, saving significant funds that Arts and Sciences as well as the School of Engineering are presently spending on hotels.
Keeping the Universe in University

Both within and outside the walls of Tufts there has been a strong and welcome emphasis on research and education in the STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and a valuable effort to increase the diversity of the students prepared to explore them. This emphasis, however, cannot overshadow Tufts’ commitment to the role that a liberal arts education plays here and in the wider world. To that end we reaffirm the mission of Arts and Sciences to cultivate excellence in education, research, scholarship, and artistic creativity across the fields of human intellectual inquiry, encompassing the arts, humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and mathematics. We note also the significant fact that Arts and Sciences is the only school at Tufts in which the arts and humanities are a central focus of the educational and research enterprises. We reject any discourse that regards these fields as “impractical.” On the contrary, we regard them as fundamental in cultivating educated individuals who think critically and communicate effectively and therefore as key elements of the university in the twenty-first century. Moreover, we support university and school endeavors that highlight the fundamental role these disciplines play in other seemingly disparate scholarly endeavors. This approach also has the benefit of fostering fruitful collaborations between and among the schools at Tufts. See, for example, the Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities (a2ru.org), of which Tufts is a founding member. In our efforts to enhance research and scholarship in the coming years, we must ensure that all of these areas of inquiry are supported. In this regard we endorse the continuing collaboration of the School of Arts and Sciences with the other Tufts schools, and we call upon our leadership, particularly the president, to advocate forcefully for the enduring value of the liberal arts to our students and to society.

The last strategic plan resulted in several positive outcomes that support the research enterprise, such as: new facilities for the sciences and the renovation of Packard Hall; the institution of semester leaves for longer-term associate professors in the social sciences, humanities, and arts; and the creation of the Center for the Humanities at Tufts (CHAT), among other initiatives. Ensuring the continued success of CHAT through a dedicated endowment should be a priority in the coming years. Allocating funds to “top off” or complete prestigious but often underfunded external fellowships is one important way to promote success in the humanities and social sciences. Given our commitment to the teacher-scholar model for tenure-stream faculty, it is also critical to develop flexible mechanisms for balancing the demands of research, teaching, and service. We endorse the study of a workload policy that takes into account important and time-consuming activities such as directing theses and dissertations, serving in leadership roles, and teaching courses with large enrollments.

Facilities improvements for the social sciences, humanities, and arts are long overdue. We look forward to the renovation of Eaton Hall and repurposing of Barnum Hall, as well as the relocation of studio art into an appropriate new space. It is important that these renovations be well planned, as these spaces and buildings have the potential to offer office space for our overcrowded departments and interdisciplinary programs, new classrooms, and much needed multi-purpose spaces for conferences, meetings, and admissions programming.

Strategic Planning in an Evolving Intellectual Landscape

Every academic institution must be able to adapt to a changing environment of ideas, student interests, resources, and societal needs and demands, while remaining true
to its central values and mission. Over time, fields of inquiry wax and wane in priority and new fields emerge. In many cases new and exciting interdisciplinary intellectual arenas arise at the interfaces between traditional fields, and Arts and Sciences must be nimble enough to nurture scholarship and education in those areas. We seek a vibrant community of scholars and teachers that grows from effective cooperation and collaboration among interdisciplinary programs and departments.

Change is most easily managed during periods of growth, and the changes in Tufts’ intellectual profile over the past decade have been facilitated by the addition of sixty full-time faculty lines, roughly two-thirds of them tenure track. Even as resource constraints dictate that over the next ten years we can anticipate little or no growth in overall faculty numbers, we must not relinquish the hard-won gains of the last decade. With approximately one-third of the tenured and tenure-track faculty over the age of 60, however, anticipated retirements offer the opportunity to evolve in response to changes in intellectual and educational priorities. That evolution should be guided by the regular reviews of departments and programs initiated as a result of the last strategic plan. Future reviews should include both opportunities for and consequences of growth and contraction in particular areas as well as potential synergies with other fields and other schools within Tufts. We also need to continue to evaluate the modes of hiring for faculty who do not fit into traditional academic categories. This challenge might be met by expanded use of the title “Professor of the Practice,” or we may need to develop other titles and positions.
Academics, Curriculum, and Pedagogy

“The object of education is to prepare the young to educate themselves throughout their lives.”

Robert Maynard Hutchins

The School of Arts and Sciences is proud of the education it provides to its students. Our pride is justified by our national and international reputation; strong and ever-improving applicant pool; high retention and graduation rates; and impressive measures of student satisfaction. Rather than a balance between teaching and scholarship, we seek an integration of the two in which faculty scholarship enriches the student experience by offering opportunities for intellectual transformation in the classroom and beyond (for example, by encouraging students to participate in faculty research or engaging in their own). Over the next ten years our academic programs will need to evolve to maintain our tradition of leadership and excellence in the face of several important trends: 1) changes in the composition, preparation, needs, and interests of our student population; 2) the impact of modern technology on citizenship, culture, and scholarship; 3) the rise and influence of cultures outside of western traditions; and 4) the growing body of research on effective pedagogy.

Faculty members own the curriculum both by right and by virtue of faculty composition and interest. We must review and modify our curricular offerings and requirements and invest in the human and physical resources to offer our students the transformative intellectual experiences that make a Tufts education extraordinary. It is critical that we provide a modern interpretation of what it means to have a liberal arts education. This requires a continuous evaluation of our curriculum that recognizes and anticipates the challenges presented by the emergence of new academic fields and changes in the nature of society. As just one example, computers and technology have revolutionized and transformed the world and the academic pursuit of knowledge. Technological literacy across all fields of inquiry will be a requirement in the future. One challenge to the faculty is to respond with initiatives that advance our curriculum and our scholarship within this digital context. We need to prepare our students to be sophisticated digital citizens.

It is also important to recognize that curricular changes are driven in part by student demand and interest. Given a constantly evolving faculty and changing student interests, our curriculum will change and we can expect new majors, minors, graduate degrees, and certificates to be offered as new areas of inquiry develop. We also need to recognize that we cannot be everything to everyone. Within the framework of maintaining a world-class program offering a full experience of the liberal arts and sciences, we may need to prioritize certain areas of faculty strength over others in response to changes in the intellectual landscape. As the world changes, so should our curriculum.

Commitment to Improved Teaching and Learning Infrastructure

A university of Tufts’ caliber requires a first-class digital infrastructure that flexibly and seamlessly works with the different platforms that faculty, students, and staff commonly use. By infrastructure we mean
not only the learning and teaching spaces in the school — the classrooms, teaching laboratories, library spaces, and Academic Resource Center — but also the support systems that allow the faculty to teach and advise students more effectively. While our lecture halls and teaching laboratories have improved since the last strategic plan, classrooms designed to encourage more effective faculty-student and student-student interactions are still not the norm. As old buildings are refurbished and new buildings are constructed, we encourage the updating of our teaching spaces to accommodate a range of approaches to teaching and learning. Our concern with accessibility makes this updating all the more imperative. Classrooms should be outfitted with sound systems that provide equal distribution and clarity as well as up-to-date assistive technology, allowing students with low-vision access to presentation materials without the need for special arrangements.

We understand infrastructure as including software such as our learning management system (TRUNK), student information system (SIS), and new online student evaluation process. The entire community of Arts and Sciences has high expectations in this domain. We encourage continued efforts to improve and update these teaching, learning, administrative, and advising systems so that they are efficient, easy-to-use, interconnected and ADA-compliant.

Finally, Tisch Library is an important intellectual center on the Medford campus. As we move towards a digitized society, a newly envisioned library that reflects both the increasingly collaborative nature of student-learning activities as well as the exponential growth of information in digital form is critical to achieving our scholarly and educational goals. Library staff and administrators in Arts and Sciences are considering how the library space can be revitalized to enhance education and research.

Examining Undergraduate Requirements

The foundation and distribution requirements for the undergraduate degrees in Arts and Sciences should reflect the values and priorities of the school and its faculty. Our present requirements direct students to master certain skills, such as writing and proficiency in a foreign language that are critical to any well-educated person. They further require students to encounter an array of disciplines and methodologies — a reflection of our firm commitment to the importance of the liberal arts, and our belief in forming well-rounded individuals equipped to think critically and creatively.

It has been decades since the faculty has undertaken a comprehensive review of our undergraduate requirements. Our recent accreditation review and the increasingly stronger skills and abilities of our incoming students present challenges to our current requirement structure. Together with the Educational Policy Committee, we endorse a faculty-led comprehensive examination of the foundation and distribution requirements.

Building on our International Signature

Tufts is synonymous, throughout the United States and around the world, with international education. Arts and Sciences contributes to this profile with an international student body and faculty; a curriculum that emphasizes the importance of the languages, arts, literature, history, and religions of other cultures; international research collaborations; and nationally-recognized study abroad programs. More than 20 percent of the Arts and Sciences graduating class chooses to major in International Relations. For decades, Tufts undergraduate students have had the opportunity to study at the Tufts European Center in Talloires, France; in ten Tufts programs of study abroad; and in over forty-five countries around the world through hundreds of approved non-Tufts programs.
It makes strategic sense to build upon this strength. As Arts and Sciences plans for the coming decade and beyond, we encourage the Committee on Foreign Programs to supplement its on-going review of existing international programs with an assessment of the criteria by which Tufts establishes and maintains curricular programming around the world. For example, because Tufts’ study-abroad programs are extraordinary educational immersion programs rivaled by few programs in the United States, the committee might examine whether the institution should capitalize on their stellar reputation by marketing them to students from other universities and colleges, thereby creating a new source of revenue. In addition, our study abroad programs (whether Tufts-owned or Tufts-approved) are based almost entirely on linguistic and cultural immersion. While there are great benefits to such immersion, we see opportunities in off-campus programming focused on academic themes rather than founded on language proficiency. The committee could assess the advantages of establishing intellectually challenging and rigorous programs that are centered on the study of global health, climate change, or art and architecture, for instance, and place students in different parts of the world to study these international issues.

Financial considerations are significant factors as students consider studying abroad. Although Tufts’ financial aid policies enable low-income and underrepresented students to study abroad, any plans to enhance opportunities for foreign study will need to ensure that these opportunities continue to be available to all Tufts students, regardless of family income and resources.

**Supporting Pedagogy and Career Development**

Improving the quality of teaching in the school remains a priority. We support efforts to provide teachers and teachers-in-training with the means: to share best practices; to learn to teach more effectively with technology; and to assist in course development and evaluation. We endeavor not only to be consumers of new knowledge regarding pedagogy, but also generators of it. We call for increased staffing and support for the Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT). We also support the goal of the T10 Strategic Plan to add resources to teacher training via Teaching and Learning Engagements (TALEs) and look forward to faculty and staff in Arts and Sciences participating in its development.

The starting date for new faculty contracts in Arts and Sciences has long been September 1. **We recommend July 1 as the starting date for contracts for all new full-time faculty members.** This change would allow new faculty two months of preparation to be more effective teachers and researchers as they begin their careers at Tufts.

We further recommend that the Campus Planning and Development Committee include teaching and learning specialists from CELT or elsewhere as ex-officio members. This sends the important signal that campus space planning decisions should be informed not only by faculty and staff who are intimately involved in day-to-day teaching but also by scholars who can contribute to a better understanding of new directions in pedagogy.

In providing teaching training for advanced graduate students pursuing academic careers, the Graduate Institute for Teaching (GIFT) has been an extraordinary success, generating more demand than it can currently meet. **We call for greater investment in GIFT, thereby expanding the population that it can serve.** In addition, the development of new programs that focus on professional and career development for our graduate students and postdoctoral fellows is critical for the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.
Concluding Remarks

To think strategically about the future of the School of Arts and Sciences is a significant challenge and a worthy undertaking as the public debates the nature, value, and prospects of higher education. As we plan for the future, one of our highest priorities should be to preserve what is most valuable from our shared past as members of the community of the School of Arts and Sciences at Tufts University. This strategic plan draws on the experience, insight, and perspectives of many members of the community expressed in previously issued documents, faculty and committee meetings, private discussions, public forums, email correspondence, and anonymous online feedback forms. We hope that the process of drafting and revising this document assists in affirming Tufts’ tradition of transparency, open and efficacious conversation, and recognition that decision-making processes must respect our tradition of shared governance.

Much of what we have called for in this plan requires significant new resources. We need to apply the same vision, creativity, and rigor used to develop this plan to generate the resources required to implement it. There are many possible ways to increase revenue, including a larger undergraduate student body, improved grant infrastructure, better support for technology transfer, and new master’s degree and certificate programs. Certainly, our existing intellectual resources and physical plant can serve these revenue strategies in ways that enhance rather than detract from our central academic mission. Creative development and thorough vetting of possible initiatives are necessary elements in implementing this strategic plan. This is a challenge that all members of our community must enthusiastically embrace, and we look forward to this next step.

The key to the success of this plan rests in its implementation. As the committee now disperses, we encourage the administration of the School of Arts and Sciences to use it as a blueprint for future decisions, advancement planning, and resource allocations. We also expect the administration to report back regularly on progress made in implementation. The process of tracking the accomplishments of the plan will keep it relevant through the capital campaign.

It has been a privilege to have had the responsibility of planning for the future of the School of Arts and Sciences. We all care deeply about Tufts, and we look forward to working with the community to build this future together.
The Arts and Sciences Strategic Planning Committee

John Barker,
    Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Students

Joanne Berger-Sweeney,
    Co-Chair; Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences (spring 2014)

Janet Curran Brooks,
    Senior Lecturer, Occupational Therapy

Lee Coffin,
    Dean of Undergraduate Admissions and Enrollment Management

Robert Cook,
    Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences; Professor, Psychology

Lee Edelman,
    Fletcher Professor, English

Ioannis D. Evrigenis,
    Associate Professor, Political Science

James M. Glaser,
    Co-Chair; Dean of Arts and Sciences ad interim; Professor, Political Science (summer, fall 2014)

Zeina Hakim,
    Associate Professor, Romance Languages (spring 2014)

Brendan “Burns” Healy,
    Ph.D. candidate, Mathematics, GSC Vice President

Robert Joseph,
    A15, Political Science Major and President TCU Senate (2014-2015)

Gilbert Metcalf,
    Professor, Economics

Vickie Sullivan,
    Co-Chair; Professor, Political Science and Department Chair, Classics

Joe Thibodeau,
    A14, IR Major and President TCU Senate (2013-2014)

Roger Tobin,
    Professor and Department Chair, Physics and Astronomy