

January 17, 2018

Dear members of the Arts and Sciences community,

Three years after the January 2015 release of the School of Arts and Sciences' strategic plan "Building Our Future," I am pleased to present this report outlining our progress. This update is informed by – and would not be possible without – the dedicated efforts of the faculty committee who wrote the original plan, and whose wisdom and commitment to planning for our future helped guide our activities.

The school has made significant strides in each of the three themes outlined in that plan: Community and Climate; Academics, Curriculum, and Pedagogy; and Research and Scholarship. We owe our progress in these areas to the collective efforts of faculty, staff, and students who dedicate themselves to advancing our school's success. Many improvements were also made possible by the successful fundraising efforts of our partners in Advancement, while a close collaboration with Dean Qu and the School of Engineering helps us achieve our mutual goals for undergraduate students in AS&E. In all cases, we strive to align with T10, and are grateful to the work of senior leadership and our colleagues in operations who support Arts and Sciences' infrastructure goals.

A strategic plan is a work in progress, impacted by our ever-changing world and the university environment. We will continue to be guided by the goals and objectives outlined in "Building Our Future," and look forward to keeping you updated about our challenges and successes.

[Read the Strategic Plan Update.](#)

Sincerely,

James M. Glaser

Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences

*Goal: Affirm our commitment to access for students from all socioeconomic backgrounds and sustain our policy of "full-need" aid. In the past two years, we have added \$2M to the first-year grant aid budget (AS&E) and just over \$9M in undergraduate grant aid (again AS&E) as we continue our full-need policy. We have made progress on our goal to expand the percentage of need-based grant recipients. The class of 2019 had 33.7% grant recipients, the class of 2020 35%. First generation students have been 10% of the incoming class in the past two years. For the class of 2021, 36.5% of the class were grant recipients, and 11.5% were first generation students.*

Last year, Tufts joined a cohort of schools that evaluated undocumented high school students alongside other U.S. students, and agreed to meet full demonstrated need upon undergraduate admission. This Fall, we have – to the best of our knowledge – approximately two dozen undocumented students, including incoming, transfer, and returning students. An active working group continues to examine and meet the unique needs of these students and their families. A report on the group's progress is forthcoming.

Since 2015, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences has increased its efforts to recruit a diverse cohort. New initiatives include offering a workshop for graduate faculty on how to read applications in an inclusive way. GSAS also has increased recruitment strategies at historically black colleges through targeted marketing and on-campus recruitment. [See Tufts partnerships aimed at increasing diversity.](#)

*Goal: Enhance the four-year residential experience for all Tufts students. Develop a strong undergraduate community at Tufts supported by housing that promotes a sense of community. Provide numerous opportunities to interact as thinkers and to engage and form a sense of community that incorporates social and academic living.*

A comprehensive housing study was conducted in 2016 to assess the existing portfolio of residential facilities on the Medford/Somerville campus. This study sought to identify the limitations and opportunities for a phased improvement plan, and to identify concepts for limited construction of new housing that, when implemented, will increase the share of students living on campus in order to enhance the four-year residential experience.

**Packard Ave “Spine.”** Connect the residential facilities in upper and lower campuses by creating community spaces (e.g., “grab and go” retail, clustered outdoor furniture, etc.) along Packard Ave.

**Class year housing assignments.** During the 2017-18 academic year, we provided cluster freshmen housing (Houston+Miller+Carmichael and Lewis+Hodgdon+Tilton+Bush) in order to strengthen the first-year residential experience and to meet the overwhelming demand for first-year residence halls. This also reserved the apartment-style facilities (Hillside Houses, Sophia Gordon, Latin Way) for juniors and seniors. In this way, we hope to lure a larger number of upper class students back to campus as we expand our housing stock.

**Villages.** We are in the process of increasing on-campus housing for juniors and seniors while reducing demand for rentals in the surrounding neighborhoods. The centerpiece of this plan is the creation of “villages” comprised of wood-frame houses co-located in neighborhoods on the periphery of the campus. These villages will provide independent living opportunities that juniors and seniors desire, in a setting designed to create community. We have secured a major gift to build an “eco-house” in the first village. Construction on the first village will start in February ’18 and the final units will be delivered in Fall ’19, according to the most current schedule.

*Goal: Over the next decade, increase the number of professorships across departments.* Since the issuance of the Strategic Plan, we have secured two endowed professorships (one in conjunction with Tisch College), two endowed junior professorships, and three term (unendowed) junior professorships. These professorships allow the school to attract and retain excellent new faculty.

*Goal: Update teaching spaces to accommodate a range of approaches to teaching and learning.* In 2016, the consulting team of Biddison Hier, Ltd., and Sasaki Associates completed an in-depth study of campus learning spaces with the goal of better aligning approximately 250,000 square feet of classrooms, auditoria, teaching and computer labs with modern approaches in pedagogy and teaching technologies.

In summer 2016, 24 learning spaces were upgraded for a total cost of approximately \$2.8M: [The Learning Spaces Working Group](#) comprised of representatives from TTS, Operations, CELT, the Registrar, and the deans’ offices from AS&E and Fletcher, meet on a monthly basis to discuss [future upgrades](#).

The addition of two new science buildings – CLIC and the SEC – has provided new, extensive, sophisticated, and interdisciplinary teaching and learning spaces, as well as new office and public space. The Departments of Biology, Physics and Astronomy, Community Health, and Occupational Therapy have been the main beneficiaries in Arts and Sciences of the new buildings. In the upcoming year, the Barnum-Dana complex will be renovated to accommodate Film and Media Studies and new fine arts studios. The upgraded building also will host Environmental Studies, as well as Tisch College and some Fletcher units.

*Goal: Ensure the continued success of the Center for the Humanities at Tufts (CHAT).* To support our commitment to strengthening the humanities, in 2016 we appointed Distinguished Professor of English Lisa Lowe the new director of CHAT. Under Professor Lowe, in 2016-17, CHAT hosted the Mellon Sawyer Seminar in Comparative Global Humanities, bringing distinguished visitors to present their research in interdisciplinary humanities and social science. Speakers included Judith Butler, Alain Badiou, Robin Coste Lewis, Mahmoud Mamdani, Audra Simpson, and many others.

*Goal: Improve research administration to support faculty members who have or seek external funding.* In our effort to create a framework for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of research administration activities, we created the new role of Assistant Dean of Research, filled by Jackie Dejean in February 2017. Dejean is responsible for training our faculty, graduate students, and post docs in grant writing, liaising with federal agencies, foundations, and other funders, and identifying ways to advance the research environment in the school. Unfortunately, the actual research administration provided to faculty has not been adequate in the past year, and we are in the process of reorganizing that unit.

*Goal: Expand summer support for graduate students.* GSAS made significant progress towards its strategic goals by funding 72 percent of Ph.D. students over the summer and by awarding three summer scholarships. Compare this to 2016, when 56 percent of Ph.D. students were funded over the summer. Finally, two more summer scholars were awarded in 2017, underscoring GSAS's commitment to strengthen the partnership between graduate and undergraduate research.

*Goal: Focus resources on enhancing graduate student programming and strengthen graduate programs.*

We have established several new graduate programs. These include a doctoral degree in Economics and Public Policy, funded by a major gift from the Neubauer family. The program is offered jointly by the Fletcher School and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and aims to produce scholars who can address the emerging critical issues centered on economic development. Other new programs include a master's degree in Diversity and Inclusion Leadership; an interdisciplinary master's degree in Environmental Economics and Urban Planning; a (rebranded) open choice M.S. in Biology; and new certificate programs in Early Childhood Technology, Science Education, Spanish for Health Professionals (to launch in Fall '18), and Urban Justice and Sustainability.

In January 2017, GSAS offered its first round of winternships in partnership with the ExCollege and Alumni Relations. The program is designed to allow students to explore career paths with alumni hosts.

## **Broad Improvements to Community, Curriculum, and Research and Scholarship: Evolving Developments in the School**

Rarely do things stand still in a university. Since publication of the strategic plan, there have been unanticipated developments in the school that are nonetheless important to note.

- In July 2016, the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, officially became part of the School of Arts and Sciences (SMFA at Tufts). The country's only art school that is affiliated with a world-class museum and also part of a major research university, SMFA and its students bring audacious ideas, creativity, and distinct perspectives to the Tufts community and beyond. Already, A&S has experienced positive and exciting benefits of this unique institution housed within our school. This new enterprise, led by Dean Nancy Bauer, heralds a renaissance for the fine arts at Tufts, and opens up myriad collaborative opportunities for faculty and students across A&S and all of Tufts' campuses. The SMFA is renowned for its deep commitment to the fine arts as valuable unto themselves and for the faith it places in its students to grow as self-directed art-makers under the tutelage of a highly skilled and committed core faculty. This tradition of commitment to the arts will undoubtedly strengthen the arts programming already offered at Tufts. Students and faculty will also benefit from enhanced access to the Museum's collections, facility and staff.
- Due to reports of hazing and/or sexual misconduct within the Greek system, a Student Life Review Committee was appointed to undertake a holistic assessment of the culture of undergraduate student life at Tufts with attention to the roles of residential strategy, student organizations, athletics, and clubs, as well as the Greek system. The committee's recommendations will help us strengthen student life and enhance its contribution to

our students' well-being, personal growth, and sense of connection to a vibrant Tufts community. [Read the Student Life Review Committee Recommendations.](#)

- Among the meaningful curricular developments, Community Health has evolved from a program to a department, allowing for new tenure track lines and a first major. We also have launched a new major/minor in Science, Technology, and Society, and new minors in Food Studies and Finance to respond to burgeoning student interest in these disciplines.
- The cost of major infrastructure improvements on campus – so necessary to meet the demands of research and pedagogy and prepare for the future – have placed a significant burden on the school's budget. The school has entered a period of austerity as we absorb these costs into our budget, and we are required to make some cuts as well to our organization and our programs. As we make decisions about resources, the school's administration will aim to set priorities that align with the strategic plan.
- Achieving our fundraising aspirations helps us accomplish so many of our important goals. In Fall 2017, the university launched the capital campaign, [Brighter World](#), the largest fundraising initiative in its history. To date, the School of Arts and Sciences has raised \$194M or 43% of its \$450M campaign goal.