

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Lynne Pepall, A&S, President

Doug Matson, SOE, Vice-President

Jette Knudsen, Fletcher, Secretary

Nirupa Matthan, Friedman, Member-at-large

Olympia Karacosta, TUDSM, Member-at-large

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Tufts University Faculty Senate (UFS), I welcome and encourage you to read the inaugural issue of the UFS newsletter. We are enthusiastic to launch this newsletter, which we hope will inform and inspire you about faculty governance and some of the faculty issues that we believe are important to our Tufts community.

Some of you may be familiar with UFS, others may have only heard of us, and others may not know that such a faculty organization exists. That is no surprise –the University Faculty Senate at Tufts is relatively new. It was officially established in the Spring 2017, when thirty faculty senators were elected to represent faculty from across the Schools of Tufts University. This marked a new beginning for faculty governance at Tufts. Up until then Tufts faculty had no University-wide faculty organization that could consider and advise on University plans and policies that go beyond the purview of any one School. The absence of a University-wide faculty governance body has made it difficult, if not impossible, for faculty to have a voice and a way to communicate their views and concerns to the University administration.

The overarching goals of the UFS are to facilitate and enhance the effectiveness of faculty governance at the University, creating a shared sense of community among Tufts faculty. The specific powers and responsibilities of the UFS are detailed in our By-laws on [our website](#). Most agenda items that come to us focus on University wide plans and policies, introduced to us from the administration or from faculty. In our deliberations, the UFS does respect the autonomy and the differences across our Schools. However, we believe that issues arising in one School can affect faculty across other Schools and may be brought before the UFS for our consideration.

The UFS has an Executive Committee, made up of the officers of the Senate: President, Vice-President, the Secretary and two members at large. The five officers are elected annually by the UFS Senators for a one-year term of office.

The Executive Committee meets on a regular basis with the Provost and Vice Provost to discuss issues and policies that are of interest to faculty. These discussions provide the groundwork for setting the agenda for our monthly UFS meetings. The dates of the UFS meetings and the minutes from each meeting are posted on the UFS website. The UFS President is a member of the Academic Council, which meets monthly. The UFS President and two senators are faculty representatives on the following Board of Trustee Committees: Academic Affairs, Administration & Finance and Committee for University Advancement, which meet three times a year.

To deal with the range of issues that come to the UFS for consideration there are in addition to the Executive Committee six Standing Committees: Nominations, Research & Scholarship, Faculty Affairs, Educational Affairs and Policy, Budget Planning and Development, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. These committees, their responsibilities and members can be found on the [UFS website](#).

Perhaps needless to say this year, 2020-2021, has been a year of profound challenges locally, nationally, and globally. The pandemic and racial violence hit us all very hard. The UFS stood unified in condemning anti-Black racism and in its commitment to advancing greater diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice at Tufts. [We passed in June 2020 a resolution affirming our commitment to these values.](#)

The UFS continued to meet regularly throughout the summer of 2020 to understand how as an institution we were meeting the financial and physical challenges of the pandemic. Our concern about the way the University administration partners with the Faculty Senate on financial challenges led to our passing in October of [a resolution on faculty governance and the TUSDM](#).

This brought into focus the importance of UFS being a voice for faculty and helped charter our course of action for 2020-21. The UFS has been working on identifying clear and articulated ways that we can effectively provide input and feedback to the administration and together achieve the University's mission of being an innovative, student-centered top research university.

In this inaugural UFS newsletter we hope to establish the tradition of keeping you "in the loop" on what has been happening in the Senate, including a brief report from each of the Standing Committees. We want to update you regularly on the University issues that these committees are working on and what they see lies ahead in the crystal ball for Tufts. We hope that these updates will inspire you to get in touch. We welcome hearing from you and encourage you to send us [your thoughts on these issues or more in the message box](#).

The dedication of the faculty senators that each School has elected is an inspiration for faculty governance, and it is my sincere hope that faculty governance will be a point of pride for Tufts University.

Best wishes for a healthy and happy summer,
Lynne Pepall, UFS President 2020-21

FACULTY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Roger Tobin, A&S, co-chair; **Tom Dannenbaum**, Fletcher; **Olympia Karacosta**, TUDSM, co-chair; **Nirupa Matthan**, Friedman; **Dominique Penninck**, Cummings; **Ellen Pinderhughes**, A&S; **Mary Jane Shultz**, A&S.

The Committee's primary focus this year has been on developing equitable and practical University-wide principles governing circumstances in which a school takes actions that have substantial adverse consequences for faculty members' conditions of employment, such as by layoffs, reductions in hours and/or salary, or involuntary changes in responsibilities. This issue had come up in the context of salary reductions for faculty at the Tufts School of Medicine in 2018 and had been framed as an issue of the meaning of tenure. A spate of COVID-related actions at the Tufts School of Dental Medicine in Summer 2020 both made the issue more acute and made clear that it related to broader issues of employment stability for all faculty, not just those with tenure.

The Committee proposed, and the Senate passed, a resolution raising serious concerns about the actions taken against TUDSM faculty, and the failures of communication and consultation that they represented. This situation, among others, sparked an ongoing conversation between the Senate and the administration regarding the role of the Senate in situations that have implications for faculty across the University, even if their immediate impacts are confined to a single school.

The Committee has drafted a set of proposed principles relating to faculty employment across the University, which are currently under discussion both within the Senate and with the Provost and school deans.

BUDGET PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Doug Matson, SOE, chair; **Leila Fawaz**, Fletcher; **Janet Forrester**, TUSM; **Nicole Holland**, TUSM; **Mai Vu**, SOE.

During 2020-21, the Budget Planning and Development Committee (BPDC) worked on addressing the concern that many decisions that impact the University are made without receiving feedback from the full campus community. What BPDC is recommending is to develop a set of guiding principles to govern decision-making and implementation and to promote transparency and foster communication.

As a test-case BPDC reviewed past work on gender salary-equity at Tufts with the understanding that such a review may be helpful in assessing diversity and inclusion policy and procedures, specifically with respect to retention and leadership hiring. BPDC discussions also touched on how the "Responsibility Centered Management" RCM-budgetary model employed by the administration supports the vision of a vibrant and adaptable academic climate – the focus being that budget decisions follow management priorities.

This led the BPDC to propose the following six guiding principles:

Adaptability– Tufts shall seek to create an environment conducive for innovation by identifying strategic directions and facilitating research collaborations among different Schools and disciplines while encouraging the ability to maintain a vibrant diverse community.

Equity– As budget decisions are made, equity in pay and opportunity for career advancement should be ensured.

Inclusion– Decisions should nurture a collaborative cultural climate that enables access to educational and scholarly pursuits across our diverse community through freedom of inquiry and expression and to ensure that physical and psychological obstacles do not prevent indi-

vidual achievement or participation.

Public Good– Tufts should be an innovative role model. As the University budget is developed, transparency is a major emphasis such that all stakeholders have a voice in the definition of priorities, identification of key trade-offs and vetting of critical decisions. Since trust is a defining characteristic of our culture, communication that is timely and effective is a prime consideration during this process.

Quality– Three main components describing our approach to satisfying our quality obligations as manifested by our budget and priority decisions: Professionalism, Pedagogy and Research. During budgetary deliberations, these three pillars are interwoven to nurture our unique inclusive academic culture that promotes scientific rigor through interdisciplinary scholarship and embraces attention to ethical standards.

Civic engagement/Public Service– Budget decisions should reflect Tufts' mission to provide transformative experiences for student and faculty to distinguish themselves as active citizens of the world.

To promote transparency in decision-making procedures and in the prioritization of University resources, accountability involves communication and formal documentation of decisions made that demonstrate adherence to each of the guiding principles.

The BPDC's work is meant as a first step, and we recommended that an Ad Hoc Senate subcommittee be formed to coordinate with the University administration and School deans to make these principles a resource to help develop consensus throughout the budget formulation process.

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Brent Cochran, GSBS, chair; **Remco Chang**, SOE; **Greg Gottlieb**, Friedman;
Sonia Hofkosh, A&S; **Jette Knudsen**, Fletcher; **Mitch McVey**, A&S.

Last summer we worked with the OVPR to survey faculty on the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on faculty and research at Tufts. Highlights include:

1. Lack of access to the labs and library during the early months of the shutdown was a big problem.
2. Home environment and family situations were a significant cause of lost productivity and stress.
3. About a third of the faculty thought that research productivity would be impacted beyond the time that labs were closed.
4. Two thirds of the faculty thought the administration was doing a good or very good job of responding to the pandemic. The full report [can be accessed here](#) **password: faculty senate**. The committee is now working with OVPR on another survey regarding support of research at Tufts.

The other major issue the committee has been working on this year is on the role of Research Centers and Institutes at Tufts. This was prompted by our finding of multiple independent efforts to create an AI Institute and by the failure of the Tufts Health Sciences Institute (now possibly being revived as part of an effort to integrate the Medical School and Tufts Medical Center.) We have worked with Vice Provost, Kevin Dunn, on new guidelines for the creation and oversight of Institutes.

We have proposed that the Senate be given the chance to give feedback on proposed Institutes and that applications justify the need for an Institute outside of traditional department structures and to assess the potential impact on existing departments.

EDUCATIONAL AFFAIRS AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Chantal Zakari, SMFA, chair; **Misha Eliasziw**, TUSM; **Anne Mahoney**, A&S;
Michael Malamy, TUSM; **Aikaterini Papathanasiou**, TUDSM; **Parke Wilde**, Friedman.

This year the Educational Affairs and Policy Committee (EAPC) continued to give feedback on the University's revised policy on **Consensual Relations with Students**, expressing concern that the revised version is more prescriptive and less progressive. The new policy requires that any consensual relationship with a student be reported to OEO.

The EAPC supports the administration's intent to forbid relationships by University employees that reflect predatory behavior or use of power and influence. However, the EAPC expressed concern about certain situations where the revised policy on Consensual Relations with Students is not clear, and the challenge of distinguishing between romantic non-sexual relationships (prohibited) and heart-felt friendships (permitted). We suggested that the policy might be more effective and more protective of students if it had a more discerning focus on predatory behavior and abuse of power and influence.

The EAPC identified examples of policies from other schools that could be helpful to explore: [An Exploration of Policies Governing Faculty-to-Student Consensual Sexual Relationships on U. Campuses](#) and [Faculty Perceptions of Consensual Sexual Relationships Between University Faculty and Students](#).

The EAPC has also been in discussion with the administration on revising the University's Policy on **Rights**

and Responsibilities with Respect to Intellectual Property. This policy, last updated in 2005, gives substantial rights to faculty members over copyrightable intellectual property.

Based on discussions with the University counsel and the Vice Provost, Kevin Dunn, the EAPC believes that the University's intention in regards to COVID-induced online teaching, is for faculty members to retain intellectual property rights over their teaching materials, including their videos.

The proposed revision focuses primarily on collaborations with external educational service providers of video-based permanent online education programs. The EAPC understands that contracts for external online educational services, such as short courses and certificate programs, assign ownership of intellectual property to the University or its partners, with limited rights retained by the faculty member. The EAPC advocates that the division of rights over copyrightable intellectual property be similar to the balance struck in the older policy cited above. This discussion will continue in the 2021-2022 academic year, and we encourage faculty to read the following articles on the issue:

- [Copyright Ownership Concerns...](#)
- [University Staff Are Worried ...](#)

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

Henry Wortis, GSBS, chair; **Maher Tabba**, TUSM; **Nicole Holland**, TUSDM; **Ellen Pinderhughes**, A&S; **Soha Hassoun**, SOE.

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEIC) was created this year. Unlike other Standing Committees it can include members who are not themselves Senators. This was done to provide a path toward a diverse membership that would not burden the few Senators from under-represented groups.

Its main task for the fall 2020 was to evaluate the proposal on training and education that Drs. Joyce Sackey and Rob Mack generated as part of the University's Workstreams on Anti-racism. DEIC provided direct feedback via a virtual meeting and produced a report with recommendations that was approved by the entire UFS. DEIC approved the general plan of the Workstream proposal and recommended that it be expanded to provide mentoring on dealing with passive racism and include situational training, which incorporates simulation of situations and role-playing. DEIC also proposed that training in the creation and utilization of support groups be added to the curriculum. These would be particularly helpful to members of currently over-represented groups as they work through their racism and biases.

The DEI Committee was asked to consider a request from AS&E faculty and students for support of their petition calling for an end to direct or indirect investment of University funds in private prisons. DEIC noted that only a tiny fraction of University funds is invested in firms that have ownership in private prisons. Nevertheless, the committee felt that divestment would send a strong message of the commitment of Tufts to the ending of profit through incarceration, mainly of BIPOC peoples. The Senate, voted in favor of backing this initiative.

Currently, the DEIC is examining the possible value of introducing restorative justice into the University's response to racism on campus. The committee, as part of a UFS meeting with Tufts' administrative leadership, raised the need to create explicit medium range goals in our struggle to achieve an anti-racist campus and to make all levels of administration publicly accountable to staff, trainees and faculty for achieving these goals.

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

Melissa Mazan, Cummings, chair; **Carl Kirker-Head**, Cummings; **Lynne Pepall**, A&S; **Maher Tabba**, TUSM; **Henry Wortis**, GSBS.

Affectionately termed the 'NomCom', this committee functions to identify best qualified and diverse faculty from across the University to represent faculty interests and to deliver to the administration the most informed, expert, and representative views in a variety of areas. The committee is charged with nominating faculty for appointment to University-wide committees, task forces, working groups, and Trustee committees that have faculty representation, as well as search committees for the hiring of the University President, Provost and School deans. In addition, the NomCom appoints faculty to fill out-of-cycle vacancies in these committees. By nominating qualified candidates for these positions, the committee contributes to the shared governance of Tufts University.

In the past year, the Committee on Nominations has identified members of the Task Force for the re-imagined Tufts Institute for the Environment, a faculty representative for the University review of Tufts Total Health, has helped in the creation of a new UFS Standing Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, has put forward candidates for the search committee for the new Dean of Tisch College, and, finally, has identified candidates to be UFS representatives to the Board of Trustees.

The Committee on Nominations also conducts elections for the Executive Committee of the UFS each year.

**STAY TUNED FOR A
UNIVERSITY-WIDE FACULTY MEETING
ON ZOOM IN JUNE (DATE TBA)**

WHERE WE CAN CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION THAT WE HOPE THIS NEWSLETTER HAS STARTED !