The Experimental College (ExCollege) remains a welcoming place to try new curricular initiatives at Tufts. It enjoys high student engagement, and offers egalitarian access to small classes.

The Board discussed policy issues, organized campus events, and chose almost 50 new courses to offer to the Tufts community.

Policy issues:

1) Discussions of the perceived merits and drawbacks to peer-teaching and peer-advising (students teaching and advising other students).

2) The Board discussed the Learning Outcomes shared by students that successfully complete and ExCollege course, and submitted these to the Tufts Committee on Learning Objectives and Assessment, Chaired by Prof. Harry Bernheim. ExCollege Learning Objectives will be posted onto the ExCollege website by the end of Spring 2010 semester.

Campus events:

November 2009: Spearheaded by Program Assistant Ali Mehlsak, the ExCollege sponsored “An Evening with Lee Gelernt”, Deputy Director of the American Civil Liberties Union's (ACLU) Immigrants' Rights Project. Gelernt’s visit offered students the chance to speak with him about possible careers in public defense. In addition, his talk drew about 45 listeners.

April 2010: “Feedback: Tufts in the year 2020” student-faculty roundtable discussion. Those in attendance were unanimous in their praise of the opportunity to discuss Tufts issues with colleagues, peers, their teachers, and Provost Barucha who provided opening remarks. The event drew 70 participants (roughly 30 faculty and 40 students).

May 2010: “Trivia Night: are you smarter than a faculty member?” Program Assistant Ali Mehlsak took the lead in bringing about this event, organized like a pub trivia night. One team of faculty (Edith Balbach, Steve Cohen, James Glaser, Natalie Masuoka, Kent Portney, and Sam Sommers) took on 33 teams of students. The first-place team won $100 worth of gift certificates donated by businesses in Davis Sq. The event was to provide fun and relaxation during Reading Period. We look forward to holding the event annually. About 200 people attended.
New Course Offerings: About 700 students (15% of Tufts undergraduates) take one or more ExCollege course(s) in any given semester.

Fall 2009: An unusually high number of course proposals was submitted to the ExCollege for offering in Spring 2010 (possibly due to weak economy with 10% unemployment). A total of 145 course proposals were submitted. Of these, 135 were distributed to 23 subcommittees (each consisting of one faculty member and two students) that interviewed the prospective instructor about their proposed course. Finally, 120 meritorious courses were evaluated by the Board who decided on 23 new courses to offer in Spring 2010, based on subcommittee input, subject area, and teaching style.

Spring 2010: There were 120 course proposals submitted to ExCollege, farmed out to 22 subcommittees. The Board voted on 106 courses, choosing 22 new courses to offer in Fall 2010.

Peer teaching (in independent courses) and peer advising for first-year students (Explorations and Perspectives) are signature programs of the ExCollege. In Spring 2010, we offered two courses taught by undergraduates. Each course carried one credit, and was graded pass/fail:

- “Modeling Alternative Energy” by Tim Lanin
- “Energy and Society” by Tyler Cooper and Ekaterina Titova

Collaborative Programming: The ExCollege works with other groups on campus to offer courses and campus events:

- Communications and Media Studies Program (CMS)
- Tufts Institute of the Environment (TIE)
- Tufts Pre-law society
- Environmental Consciousness Outreach (ECO)
- Institute for Global Learning (IGL)
- Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service (TCCPS)
- Tisch Library
- Tufts Univ. Police Department (TUPD)

We appreciate these continuing partnerships.

Next year’s five student members of the ExCollege Board include four men and one woman. Four are Seniors, the other a Junior. One is an international student, the others are from Boston, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Missouri. Their majors include American Studies, History, and Political Science.

Respectfully submitted,
Prof. George S. Ellmore, Chair ExCollege Board
May 10, 2010