The Experimental College
Annual Report, 2015-16

ExCollege Mission Statement: Through its innovative, interactive, and interdisciplinary programs, the ExCollege strives to enrich the intellectual experience of undergraduates at Tufts. These programs serve as an incubator for new ideas about teaching, learning, and curriculum. They also aim to engage students actively in the design and delivery of new academic initiatives, often in collaboration with faculty. Shared governance, collaborative learning, and involvement with the community are hallmarks of the ExCollege.

Faculty / Student Board: The board of the Experimental College is charged with selecting courses to be offered each semester, of identifying functions for the ExCollege to support, of selecting undergraduate board members, and of supporting the ExCollege’s mission. The board is composed of ExCollege staff, a rotating body of faculty (with frequent assistance from board alumni), and students. This diverse mix of perspectives on Tufts as a community and an institution makes the board a particularly vibrant corner of Tufts and the insights it produces lead to unique and timely programming.

Board members, 2015-2016:
- **Faculty:** Mary Davis (Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning), Virginia Drachman (History), Stephan Fuchs (Biology), Ariel Goldberg (Psychology), and Qiaobing Xu (Biomedical Engineering)
- **Undergraduates:** Sarah Killian (AY 2016), Stephanie Li (AY 2016), Scott Mongold (AY 2018), Sara Newman (AY 2018), and Ronna Ten Brink (AY 2017)
- **Graduate Student:** Seth Rothschild, PhD student in Mathematics

Faculty Chair: Mary Davis served as chair for the 2015-16 academic year. She will be replaced by Ariel Goldberg for the 2016-17 academic year.

Meetings: The Board met once a month for 1½ hours to discuss ongoing business and for a half day on the 1st day of reading period each semester to select courses for the following semester. All the undergraduates on the Board also met every Tuesday as a student working group to further collaborate on events and campus initiatives.

The board’s major activities this academic year were as follows:
1. We selected courses for both the Spring 2016 and Fall 2016 semesters.
   a. Fall 2015 (selected Spring 2015): Of 89 lecturer proposals submitted, we accepted 23. 321 students enrolled in these courses. 157 students enrolled in first-year seminars. Total enrollment in all ExCollege courses was 832.
   b. Spring 2016 (selected in Fall 2015): Of 120 visiting lecturer proposals submitted in the Fall, we accepted 21. 218 students enrolled in these courses. Total enrollment in all ExCollege courses was 709 students.
   c. **Total enrollment for the 2015-2016 academic year was 1,541.**
   d. Fall 2016 (selected in Spring 2016): Of 144 visiting lecturer proposals submitted this semester, we accepted 22. Students will register for these courses on June 6th.
2. In Fall 2015, the ExCollege moved to an online application process for the very first time to select its visiting lecturer courses. It adopted Interfolio, a new system used by the University for all faculty searches. Total number of proposals, since moving to an online applicant, grew by 31 the first semester and by 55 the second semester.

3. The Experimental College was the recipient of a Tufts Innovates Grant to launch a new initiative that provides graduate students opportunities to teach original courses with sustained guidance, support, and reflection.

4. The aforementioned grant led to the Robyn Gittleman Teaching Fellows Program in honor of Robyn’s forty-four years of service to the ExCollege and the University. Eight advanced graduate students from three schools – Arts and Sciences. Engineering, and Sackler – will teach as part of this program in Fall 2016.

5. In building this new relationship with the graduate school, the ExCollege Board added a graduate student representative, Seth Rothschild, who joined at the start of the academic year.

6. On April 16th, over 150 alumni, students, staff and faculty gathered in the CLIC Building on 574 Boston Avenue to thank Robyn for her many years of service and dedication to the ExCollege and Tufts University. Robyn stepped down as director this academic year, and was succeeded by Howard Woolf. Robyn is now a Director Emeritus, and still involved at both the ExCollege and the University.

7. On April 21, 2016, students, staff and faculty joined the ExCollege for our annual Voices from the Edge: Janover Family Lecture Series, featuring Tufts alumnus and visionary chef, Dan Barber (A'92). The lecture series is made possible by a generous gift and five-to-ten-year commitment from Tom and Sarah Janover. Sarah (A'85) moderated the open discussion using questions submitted by members of the Tufts community. Approximately 200 people were in attendance.

8. The ExCollege welcomed new Assistant Director, Amy Goldstein. Amy brought a renewed focus to social media and expanded our presence within the Tufts community, as well as the Greater Boston Area. In particular, one initiative involved working with student photographers and videographers to produce more content for our social media channels. Finally, Amy is working with Robyn Gittleman to transition oversight of the Explorations first-year advising program.

9. We selected student and faculty members for 2015-16 (see below).

10. I, Mary Davis, will be stepping down as chair of the ExCollege Board after one year. Ariel Goldberg will be chair of the board in the 2016-17 academic year.
Next Year (2016-17)

Faculty Chair: Ariel Goldberg will be faculty chair for 2016-17.

Board members, 2016–17:

- **Faculty**: Ariel Goldberg (Psychology), Claire Schub (Romance Languages), Natalie Shapero (English) – the final two faculty members are to be determined.
- **Undergraduates**: Kate Sienko (AY 2017), Grace Segers (AY 2017), Lilly Tahmasebi (AY 2017), Scott Mongold (AY 2018), and Hanzhi Zhang (AY 2019)
- **Graduate Student**: To be determined.

On behalf of the committee
Mary Davis, Chair