The meetings of the Committee were timed to coincide with important dates in the Admissions calendar, such as the end dates in the selection of early decision or general pool applicants. Through the oral reports of Dean Coffin, the Committee was able to follow the Admissions process through its several stages and discuss with him issues as they appeared. A recurrent theme was the limited financial and human resources that Admissions has available to process more than 15,000 applications, all of which have received the same level of attention in the past. After useful discussion, the Committee recommended unanimously that applications that are clearly not competitive should receive only a rapid reading, a recommendation that Dean Coffin accepted and implemented.

At its first meeting, the Committee decided on an agenda for the year that focused on the different dimensions of diversity and would explore the question: if diversity is a Tufts goal, what are its implications for Admissions and Financial Aid? The Committee examined efforts to recruit minority students and an economically diverse entering class. Here too the chief obstacle was limited financial and human resources. Need blind admissions, President Bacow’s goal, would help maximize socio-economic diversity within the entering class. Minority students presented a particular challenge to Admissions as they often did not come from a culture that applied to private northeastern colleges like Tufts and therefore required an active recruiting that included transporting them to Tufts. This was a costly process which the limited financial and human resources of Admissions could not sustain on a national scale. The Committee recommended that until these financial constraints eased, Admissions should focus its limited resources on actively recruiting minority students within the Northeast, including from high schools with no history of sending students to Tufts.

Lastly, the Committee examined the changes in the characteristics of students coming or applying to Tufts --including the increase in average class rank to the top 6% and SAT scores to 1430, as well as the increase in minority students in the last two entering classes and the evidence that Tufts was now competing for students with the best colleges in the country with growing success-- and congratulated Dean Coffin for the advances in Admissions since he assumed the position of Dean of Admissions.

Peter Winn
Chair