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## **Tufts Republicans Condemn Libelous Film**

The Tufts Republicans are appalled and outraged over the libelous content in the film “Political Passion: Taking on the 2004 Election,” produced by students in a University College of Citizenship and Public Service class and screened tonight for the first time in Cabot Auditorium at Tufts University.

The Tufts Republicans Club takes issue with the following:

- The film quoted Club member Kristen Casazza as accusing the Republican leadership of forcing her to quit the Club. This is false on many levels. Ms. Casazza remains a member of the Tufts Republicans Club, having participated in the executive board elections as recently as December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2004. The Republicans Club emphatically asserts that no action whatsoever was taken to either force or urge Ms. Casazza to leave the Club.
- The narrative of the film asserted Ms. Casazza’s position was recently written out of the Club constitution by members upset about her decision to lend her name to a petition condemning the Republicans Club in the Tufts Daily. In reality, the position held by Ms. Casazza, that of PR Director, never was specified in the constitution of the Tufts Republicans Club. The proposed revised constitution did not change the status of Ms. Casazza’s position, and it was in fact tabled at the meeting that was convened to vote on it.
- Ms. Casazza mischaracterized the degree of her involvement and authority to speak on behalf of the Club. Though she officially held position of Tufts Students for Bush Chair, her role in organizing campaign trips or other related activities was minimal and her attendance sparse. She was not authorized to speak on behalf of the Club in this film.

These facts are readily verified by consulting other active members of the Tufts Republicans Club or the weekly minutes recorded at meetings.

The array of baseless and factually inaccurate accusations makes this film libel. Plans to air this libelous film on campus and local television as well as enter it into film festivals are cause for serious concern. The material in the film is defamatory to the Club and to its board members, many of which are pictured in the film without consent. The film’s motives are malicious because the producers of the film intended to defame the members of the Tufts Republicans Club in order to make their production more sensational.

At the screening, the producers indicated attempts to corroborate the evidence were made to their satisfaction. Since no such attempts in fact were made, the Club concludes the producers were content with printing malicious allegations without reasonable corroboration. Such disregard for journalistic ethics must also be construed as malicious in and of itself toward the Tufts Republicans Club.

The Club further believes the submission of a project rife with blatant falsehoods constitute a breach of the University’s academic integrity policy. The film stigmatizes Club members with intolerance, corruption, bigotry, and homophobia. The damages that will result from this film, if permitted to spread, are substantial and their extent is currently being investigated by the Club.

For its false and damaging accusations, the Tufts Republicans Club seeks the immediate cessation of the showing and distribution of this film, and will consider each distribution a separate act of libel. ###