Resolution on the Retirement of
Gloria Ascher, Associate Professor of German and Judaic Studies
May 16, 2018

Gloria Ascher came to Tufts in 1966 as an assistant professor of German with a PhD from Yale University. She was promoted to associate professor in 1972. Over five decades she has taught an unusual—and original—breadth of courses. In addition to German literature (18\textsuperscript{th} Century German Writers, Classical Goethe and Schiller), she has taught Scandinavian literature and several courses for Judaic Studies, including Jewish Women and Aspects of the Sephardic Tradition. In this latter capacity she is most known for teaching Ladino Language and Culture making Tufts the only U.S. college or university offering Ladino as a continuing language. In fact, Gloria has become a go-to person for Ladino across the country, a role facilitated by skype in which she has shared the fruits of her teaching with a wider constituency of students. Over the years, many students have consistently stated in their evaluations the positive contribution she has made to their intellectual and personal development—to the point where several have declared that they wish she could become a member of their family.

Gloria wrote her dissertation on Goethe and followed it with a book in 1972, \textit{“The Magic Flute”} and \textit{“The Woman Without a Shadow”: A Comparison of Two Operatic Works of Humanity}, and two articles on German literature. She has also published several articles on the Sephardic Tradition and teaching Ladino. Regarding the latter, she also translated two Ladino textbooks for use in her classroom, which have undergone several reprints. In addition, Gloria has written and published poetry in Ladino in multiple venues.

Gloria has also played a significant role in community outreach, hosting, for example, an annual “International Ladino Day” open both to students and the public. She has appeared on NPR and WGBH and has worked with the Massachusetts Foundation for Humanities and Public Policy as well as the Massachusetts Council on Folk Life and Ethnic Arts. She has spoken at many universities, including Wheaton, Ben Gurion University, Brandeis and Wisconsin as well as at a UNESCO conference and the Association for Jewish Studies.

At Tufts, Gloria has served on countless committees including—as chair or co-chair—Curriculum Committee, Committee on Committees and Grievance Panel. She was also a co-founder of the Judaic Studies Program and has served as its co-director since its inception. A member of the Phi Beta Kappa chapter at Tufts, she has served as both its President and Vice President and has been a core member of several interdisciplinary programs such as International Relations and Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies.

Professor Ascher has been an especially valued member of the Tufts community as teacher, colleague, scholar and mentor. She has inspired all of us with her hard work, exceptional enthusiasm and energy, and perennial good cheer. Few can match her in these capacities—and for such a long period of service. She will be sorely missed by us but her impact, particularly on her students, will always remain.

Submitted on behalf of the Department of International Literary and Cultural Studies
Greg Carleton, Chair