THE BASICS
The purpose of an Alumni Interview is to:

- personalize the application process, especially in the framework of our large and competitive applicant pool.
- answer an applicant’s questions about Tufts.
- gather information about an applicant that may not have surfaced in an application itself (i.e. motivations and interests, the overall match/fit with Tufts, etc).
- fill in gaps that may exist in an application.
- foster a candidate’s excitement about Tufts.

Alumni interviews should:

- last between thirty and forty-five minutes
- feel more like a conversation rather than a question and answer session
- take place in a public setting or in an office with the door open –do not conduct interviews in your place of residence (See TAAP Member handbook for official policy details)
- not include parents (you are welcome to speak to the parents briefly before or after the interview)

When interviewing:

- ask about why the students is interested in Tufts and how that interest has developed (i.e. through a campus visit, meeting an admissions officer at their school, through the web, through friends, etc.)
- focus on subjects that are of interest to the candidate
- set a relax and casual tone
- do not ask the applicants potentially embarrassing person questions
- do not ask students about other colleges or universities to which they are applying and do not compare other institutions
- topics to discuss: student and family background, academic background and interests, extracurricular involvements and interests outside the classroom

YOUR ROLE
As a TAAP member your role will be to accept the interview in TAAP Online once you are assigned it, contact the student to set up a time to meet and then meet with the student. After the interview, you will write an interview report that will be submitted to the undergraduate admissions office.
A good interview report can add depth to the student’s application for admission but they do not dictate or define an admission decision. We respect your opinions and value both the information you provide and the time you spend with these candidates. However, no single credential, including alumni interview reports, can dictate decisions to the admissions committee - either positive or negative. Just as an applicant will not be admitted or denied based on standardized test scores alone, neither will a student be admitted or denied based solely on the content of an interview report. It is important to understand that your input will not be treated as a recommendation but rather as a critical piece of information about an applicant’s attributes.

Please note that TAAP interviews are not required and the applicant opts-in to the TAAP interview process via the Tufts University Member page of the Common Application. If the applicant chooses to decline the interview when contacted by a TAAP member, they have the right to do so without penalty or judgment. If this happens please choose the “Contacted but not interviewed” option in TAAP Online and explain the circumstances. This will let your Chairperson and the admissions office know you attempted the interview and that the student declined.

LOGISTICS
Applicants to Tufts have a one-time opportunity on the Common Application to opt-in to the alumni interview. The applicant’s information is uploaded to TAAP Online and the corresponding committee TAAP Chairperson will assign the interview to one of their TAAP committee members.

Once an interview is assigned, an email is sent informing the interviewer of the assignment. The interviewer should then log into TAAP Online to accept (or decline) the interview assignment and view the applicant’s information. TAAP Online will provide the most accurate information we have about a candidate, including the student’s name, email, current address, telephone number, high school name, academic interests, and whether the applicant is applying to the School of Arts and Sciences or the School of Engineering.

The return date is a target date for completion of the interview and TAAP interview report. This is automatically set for three weeks after the interview assignment is generated. Contact the applicant as soon as possible after you receive the assignment and attempt to complete the interview in a timely fashion. If you must take additional time to complete an interview, or if you cannot complete an assigned interview, please make your TAAP Chairperson aware of the situation.
INTERVIEWING STUDENTS YOU MAY KNOW

TAAP volunteers should refrain from interviewing an applicant when that individual is related to the TAAP member or when a professional or personal relationship exists between the TAAP member and the applicant or the applicant’s family.

TAAP members who have a son or daughter in the applicant pool are encouraged to take the year off from interviewing, due to conflicting interests. If a TAAP member with a child in the applicant pool does continue to interview with the consent of the local chairperson and the admissions territory manager, they should not interview students from their child's high school. Please notify your TAAP Chairperson and the admissions office (admissions.taap@ase.tufts.edu) if you have a child or sibling in the applicant pool.

THE INTERVIEW REPORT

Your assessment of the student’s personality, maturity, warmth, sense of humor, command of the English language, knowledge of themselves, the community, and the world, and ability to communicate ideas are appropriate. Please offer any insights may otherwise not be available to the admissions office.

A TAAP report is most helpful when it highlights the conversation the interviewer has with the applicant and provides impressions or observations about the student and their potential contributions to the Tufts community. Reports listing activities or courses are unhelpful because the admissions officer will easily find this information elsewhere in the application. Information routinely received about each candidate from the application (such as a list of activities), the high school transcript, and standardized test scores should not be repeated in your report. In this spirit, please answer the following questions about the applicant.

1) Did the applicant seem excited about Tufts? Did the applicant express a connection to a part of the Tufts community, curriculum, vibe, or campus?

2) What portions of the conversation were particularly fascinating, interesting, or noteworthy?

3) Tufts has a vibrant and diverse community. How do you see this applicant adding to or interacting with academic and student life?

4) In most cases, the admissions officers don’t get the chance to meet our applicants. If you could tell us one thing about this applicant that could give us better insight into the student’s story (presence, attitude, intellectualism, passion), what would it be?
GENERAL NOTES ABOUT INTERVIEW REPORTS:

1. Please write your report as soon as possible after the interview has concluded. Try to write concisely and limit your report to a couple of paragraphs.

2. Your interview report is not a recommendation for admission, rather it is a report on a conversation. It is appropriate to note “fit” or “match” (i.e. “During our conversation this student’s awareness of the importance of global perspective in the classroom was quite apparent”). Please refrain from making comments such as “the student should be denied.”

3. Do not address an individual’s academic qualifications and chances of admission. If a student or parent asks for such information, suggest a call to the admissions office (617.627.3170).

4. Interview reports which describe students in physical, racial, religious, sexual or other stereotypic terms, or which mention that a student has a disability (unless the student has discussed it with you), will not assist the committee in reaching an admissions decision. Such comments are inappropriate and, at times, offensive.

5. Please be mindful of the admissions program the student has applied for (Early Decision round I or II or Regular Decision) and when these reports are due. EDI reports are due December 1; EDII reports are due February 1; and Regular Decision reports are due March 1. Prompt return of reports will permit their inclusion in the committee discussions. It is not useful for an interview to be conducted within days of the admissions notification. Each year we receive calls from students or parents who recognize that their interview would not be a factor in their application review because it happened so late in the process.

6. Interview reports must be submitted through TAAP Online (http://admissions.tufts.edu/taap).

NOTE: When a student enrolls at Tufts, the interview report will not be included in the student's permanent file.