



Tufts Alumni Admissions Program



**TAAP Member Handbook
2012-2013**

<http://admissions.tufts.edu/taap>
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Additional resources available at <http://admissions.tufts.edu/taap/training/>:

- ❖ TAAP Activity Calendar
- ❖ College Fair Training Module
- ❖ Interviewing Training Module
- ❖ Congratulatory Calling Training Module

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Tufts Alumni Admissions Program (TAAP) supports the recruitment efforts of the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and extends the University's outreach into local communities across the country and around the world. Through representing Tufts at college fairs, fall programs, and as interviewers, TAAP volunteers are a face and voice for the University. TAAP exists to enhance both the human connection between Tufts and its applicants and to provide meaningful records of applicant interviews that add depth to their consideration for admission to Tufts. The personal contact between applicants to Tufts and University alumni is a powerful public relations tool. TAAP is an essential component of Tufts' admissions effort, and accordingly the admissions staff is committed to increasing the size and range of the program, and supporting it as effectively as possible.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Each admissions officer is responsible for a geographic territory where he or she will potentially travel and ultimately from where he or she will review and evaluate applications. TAAP members are organized into regional committees which are directed by a local alumni chairperson. This regional organization of the admissions office fosters high-quality communication and superior working relationships with TAAP chairpersons and local high school counselors. Admissions officer territory assignments can be found on our website at <http://admissions.tufts.edu/contact-tufts-admissions/admission-officers-by-state-an/>.

The chairperson and members of the committee work with the territory manager from the admissions staff to develop effective ways to recruit compelling candidates from their area. Soliciting college fair volunteers and alumni interviewer activities are directed by the chairperson of the TAAP committee in close consultation with the admissions staff.

MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

TAAP members provide an avenue for prospective students and applicants to learn more about Tufts and make a personal connection with a member of the Tufts community. TAAP members are recognized as representatives of Tufts and its admissions office. Be mindful of the fact that TAAP members may be the sole representative of Tufts a prospective student and/or family encounters; therefore we hold our volunteers to a high standard.

TAAP members are expected to:

- Maintain up-to-date knowledge about Tufts and its application process. Key information is available through the *TAAP Member Handbook*, the admissions website (<http://admissions.tufts.edu/>), the monthly *TAAP Tuesdays* (updates emailed electronically from the TAAP Coordinator the second Tuesday of every month), *The Bulletin of Tufts University* (<http://ase.tufts.edu/bulletin/>) and on the TAAP website (<http://admissions.tufts.edu/taap>).
- Be helpful and interested; exhibit good judgment.
- Keep communications professional, personable, and appropriate in person, over the phone, and via email when communicating with prospective students. Be mindful that communications should remain in the scope of your role as a representative of Tufts University.
- Represent Tufts at local college fairs when available.
- Participate in local TAAP committee meetings or training events.

- Communicate time constraints, extended travel away from the area, and existing relationship to any applicant to the committee chairperson to allow the chairperson to plan accordingly.
- Recuse him or herself from interviewing during an application cycle when they have a child in the applicant pool at Tufts.
- Promptly communicate with applicants to reduce frustration and anxiety.
- Conduct 4-6 interviews during the interview season (October through February). This number may be more or less depending on committee size, the size of the applicant pool in that area and the individual interviewer's availability.
- Conduct interviews in a public setting in accordance with University policy (see below).

Applicants for first year admission to Tufts University are often under the age of 18. For the safety of our applicants and our TAAP interviewers, and in order to comply with the Tufts University Policy to Protect Children and Prevent Abuse, TAAP interviewers cannot have unmonitored contact with applicants. Interviews must be conducted in public settings in open sight of other people, such as in coffee shops or libraries. Interviews should not take place behind closed doors, even in public settings; if you conduct interviews at your workplace, for example, your office door should remain open. Interviews must never be conducted in private settings, and especially must not be conducted at your personal residence. Similarly, TAAP members should refrain from transporting applicants to or from the interview, and TAAP member should be mindful of being professional in their email and telephone communications with the applicants. Interviewers who do not comply with this policy will be asked to resign from TAAP.

RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES- COLLEGE FAIRS

Each year the admissions office is invited to send representatives to hundreds of college fairs so students can learn about a number of colleges and universities during one program. Usually, it is not possible for a member of the admissions office to be present at these events but well informed alumni can successfully represent Tufts and therefore expand our reach into the local community. College fairs typically are organized by a high school, school district, or special interest group. They may cover the student population in more than one school; some include the entire community. Most will include parents as well as students.

The territory manager on the admissions staff will determine which fairs will be staffed by TAAP members and will then share that list with the local TAAP chairperson, who will then secure volunteers from their committee.

Please see the College Fair Training Module for college fair responsibilities and tips which can be found at: <http://admissions.tufts.edu/taap/training/>

RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES- FALL PROGRAMS

In various cities across the country and around the world, the admissions office hosts approximately 50 programs for prospective students and their families, such as *Tufts on Tour* or *Who Gets In and Why: The Selective College Admissions Process*. *Tufts on Tour* events are intended to encourage greater interest in and understanding of Tufts and its admissions process. As gatherings, *Tufts on Tour* events are an effective way to meet with a large number of students and families in one geographic area while also allowing potential applicants to meet successful Tufts alumni in their communities. *Who Gets In and*

Why is a program designed not only for students interested in Tufts, but any student, parent, or high school counselor interested in how the admissions process unfolds after an application is submitted. The goal is primarily to provide transparency in the admissions process and Tufts process is used as the model.

Personal invitations to these programs are sent to students on the admissions mailing list via email and general invitations are sent to local high schools. These events are also publicized on the admission website. Notice of the events will also be sent to all active TAAP members in the area if the venue allows. These programs can serve as an excellent update for members preparing for college fairs and the next season of interviewing.

Tufts on Tour or *Who Gets In and Why* programs are organized by the admissions staff. Details regarding these programs will be distributed to TAAP committees as needed early in the fall. Members of local TAAP committees may be invited to attend, and sometimes asked participate. Meeting involvement for volunteers may include:

- Greeting students and parents upon their arrival.
- Assisting with attendee check in.
- Sharing thoughts about your Tufts experience.

TAAP ONLINE

Accessible from the TAAP website (<http://admissions.tufts.edu/taap>), *TAAP Online* is the information management system that facilitates the interview assignment process. Your username and password will be included in the first fall TAAP mailing. After logging into your *TAAP Online* account, you will be able to view assignments, submit interview reports, view admissions decisions and access password protected resources.

When you are assigned an interview by your Chairperson, you will receive an email making you aware of the assignment. The email will contain the name, city, state, high school, phone number and email address of the student you are assigned to interview. You can view additional information about your interviewee through the *TAAP Online* assignment form which includes the student's contact information, activities and academic interests. After you conduct the interview, you will submit an interview report via *TAAP Online*. We recommend you create the report in the word processing program of your choice, save it and then cut and paste it into the online interview form. The electronic interview report then becomes part of the candidate's electronic record and the admissions staff will access it when reading the applicant's file or during admissions committee. It is in the best interest of the applicant to write and submit the interview report promptly so the interview is fresh in your mind.

In *TAAP Online* you can track your progress through an interview on the interview assignment form, which you can access by clicking the name of an assigned student. From the interview assignment page you can first "accept" or "decline" the interview. If you are unable to conduct the interview this allows you to alert your chair and provide a reason, for example, the assigned student plays soccer with your son or you are traveling for two months. After accepting the interview, a drop down menu will appear on the interview assignment form that will allow you choose "contact initiated", "interview scheduled", and "interview competed." The interview status will automatically switch to "done" when you submit the interview report. The option to track your progress was designed to assist chairs in managing the

interview load and we encourage you to use it. If you contact a student who then declines the interview or does not show up for their interview, choose “contacted by not interview at the bottom of the form.

Help screens are available at various points on the site to answer any questions you might have. Under the Help tab in *TAAP Online* you will find screen shots and instructions to assist you in navigating the site. If you have additional questions or issues related to *TAAP Online*, please feel free to call us here in Bendetson at 617-627-3170 or e-mail admissions.taap@ase.tufts.edu.

INTERVIEWING

PURPOSE OF THE INTERVIEW

TAAP volunteers have the face-to-face opportunity to meet and interact with Tufts applicants allowing interviewers to engage applicants in a way that both excites them about Tufts and enhances the depth of their candidacy for admissions. The purpose of an 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 the application itself (i.e. motivations and interests, how/why they’ve become involved in various activities, the overall match/fit with Tufts).
- fill in gaps that may exist in an application.
- highlight certain parts of the applicant’s experience.
- foster a candidate’s excitement about Tufts.

ROLE OF THE INTERVIEW

Through the interview process, TAAP members provide the admissions office with a better understanding of the ability, achievement and personal characteristics of applicants. Interviews generally last between forty and forty-five minutes, and should feel like a conversation rather than a question and answer session. Please note that TAAP interviews are not required and the applicant opts into the TAAP interview process via the Tufts Supplement. 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.

After the interview is completed, an interview report should be composed and submitted to the admissions office. Requesting alumni interviewers to submit reports implies that the interview report influences admissions committee decisions. While good interview reports provide information that can add depth to an application for admission, 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.***

Alumni must also trust the admissions staff; admissions officers have the perspective gained by reading an entire application and through exposure to the complete applicant pool consisting of over 16,000

candidates. Do not be discouraged if admissions decisions run counter to your interview experiences. The admissions staff chooses the most qualified students based on a variety of factors, some of which will not be available to you at the time of the interview.

The admissions process is as much an art as a science. While we are very concerned with a student's course selection, grade point average, rank-in-class, and standardized tests scores, we also are interested in a student's initiative, ingenuity, motivation, and achievements in school and in the community. Not only do we seek the most academically qualified group but also a first-year class that is diverse geographically, politically, ethnically, and socio-economically. In essence, we strive to assemble a class of students who will make the most of the Tufts experience and add to our community both in and beyond the classroom.

Applicants more often than not present very well in their TAAP interviews. Unfortunately, some applicants who appear very impressive in conversation do not have the academic power or extracurricular depth to stand up in the competition of the entire applicant pool. You may or may not agree with every decision made by the admissions committee, but we hope you will understand the volume of information considered when decisions are made. Because we accept about one in five applicants, we are not able to admit every qualified student. Please do not be discouraged if the students you interview are not admitted. Even in these cases, your efforts are important and appreciated. There is great value in a positive interview experience even when we are unable to admit the student. The impression the candidate has of Tufts when they leave their interview will likely outlast the disappointment of not being admitted. With that said ***the success of a TAAP year should not be measured in the number of interviewees accepted, but rather by the energy and excitement you helped generate about Tufts.***

Please see the Interview Training Module and Sample Interview Reports which can be found at: <http://admissions.tufts.edu/taap/training/>.

IMPACT OF THE INTERVIEW

The role the TAAP interview plays in the admissions process at Tufts exists on two levels. First, the information gleaned from TAAP interview reports enhances the admissions committees' ability to evaluate applicants both in the context of their respective communities, and as a fit for Tufts. Second, those applicants who are fortunate enough to enjoy a TAAP interview have an additional opportunity to personally connect with Tufts and are more likely explore the University to greater depth. Please note that TAAP is not a tool for judging candidates as either admissible or inadmissible. Instead TAAP exists to promote the Tufts experience and to create opportunities to know our applicants in a more complete and personalized way.

In 2011-2012, over 3,750 TAAP volunteers completed over 8,200 interviews (over 16,300 applicants). Data shows that admitted applicants who request and receive a TAAP interview are more likely to enroll than those who are not interviewed. Given this fact we remain committed to working with individual chairs and committees to recruit new members and continue progress toward interviewing as many applicants as possible.

YIELD ACTIVITIES- TAAP CONGRATULATORY CALLING
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At the completion of both Early Decision I (EDI) and Early Decision II (EDII), alumni interviewers will be able to access the admissions decision for every candidate interviewed via *TAAP Online*. Chairs of TAAP

committees are able to view all decisions for applicants assigned to their committee, while members are only able to view decisions for applicants they interviewed. Early Decision candidates are either admitted, deferred to regular decision, or denied. EDI applicants will be notified of their decision in mid-December and EDII applicants will be notified in mid-February. We ask that you contact your interviewees who were admitted through EDI or EDII to welcome them to the Tufts community. If you are unable to call the admitted students whom you interviewed, you may wish to write a brief note or email following the same guidelines.

In late March or early April, Regular Decision candidates will be notified of their admissions decision, either admit, waitlist or deny. You will receive an email when these decisions become available to you through *TAAP Online*. TAAP members are encouraged to call the admitted students they interviewed to offer congratulations and to encourage their matriculation to Tufts. Contact with admitted students and their parents following the announcement of admissions decisions is an important means of encouraging the enrollment of the university's top candidates. You may be asked by your committee chair to call and congratulate students your committee was unable to interview.

Please see the Congratulatory Calling Training Module which can be found at: <http://admissions.tufts.edu/taap/training/>.

YIELD ACTIVITIES- SPRING RECEPTIONS FOR ADMITTED STUDENTS

In many locations, spring yield receptions for admitted students and their parents are organized by the admissions office. Yield receptions are attended by members of the admissions staff, recent Tufts graduates, and admitted students and their families and are held in the homes of Tufts alumni. If the venue allows the inclusion of the local TAAP committee, you will be invited by the admissions staff. At these receptions, University representatives recognize the abilities and talents of admitted students and encourage their enrollment at the University. In many instances, students attending these receptions already have decided to enroll, and the reception will serve to reassure the students and their parents of their decision. For other students, they are in the final stages of deciding where they will enroll and the information and interest demonstrated at these gatherings will assist them in determining if Tufts is the right choice for them.

THE SELECTION PROCESS

It is the goal of the admissions office to craft a class of compelling and qualified students through a thoughtful and equitable process. Tufts seeks to enroll a class that is diverse geographically, ethnically, socially, politically and economically. There are no established minimum qualifications for class rank or test scores, as all available information will be considered by the admissions committee. There are no "quotas" for the number of students admitted from a school or geographical area.

To complete an application to Tufts, students must submit the Common Application and the Tufts Supplemental Form. The student will opt-in to the interview process on the Tufts Supplement. Once that is submitted confirming the interest in an interview, the data from this form will be used to populate the *TAAP Online* interview form (this data includes academic interests, activities, legacy status, etc.).

The writing components of the application included one short answer question and two short essays found on the Tufts Supplement and a personal statement found on the Common Application. A completed file will also include the high school transcript, a resume or list of extracurricular activities and jobs recommendations and standardized test scores. Specific essay questions from the Tufts Supplement can be found online at <http://admissions.tufts.edu/apply/essay-questions/> and you can view PDFs of the Common Application at <http://admissions.tufts.edu/apply/first-year-students/printable-forms/>.

When an application is complete, it is reviewed by one or two admissions officers. The high school transcript is among the most important documents as it reveals the academic setting in which the student was educated, the rigor of the curriculum selected and the performance over time. Standardized test scores are a measure to compare academic achievement in conjunction with the high school transcript. A counselor recommendation assesses the student within the context of the school, and a teacher recommendation assesses the student's scholastic attributes and participation in the classroom. Appropriate supplemental recommendations will be also considered.

The Tufts Supplement questions are valuable in a number of ways. They help us to assess the “fit” or “match” and allow the student to provide a more personal description of who they are and to provide context to their lived experiences. The Common Application essay provides the admissions committee with a sample of the student’s ability to express thoughts and ideas in a concise, cohesive manner. A list of extracurricular activities, summer and community activities reflect the student’s sustained participation in the activities of choice and any leadership positions held.

Interview reports help to personalize the application. Your assessment of the student’s intellect, enthusiasm, knowledge of their community and the world is helpful in selecting the most interesting students.

The admissions committee also considers special talents that a student may bring to the university community, such as strength in the arts or athletics. Sons or daughters of alumni are given special attention by the admissions committee. We recognize the importance of a strong tradition of interest and support to the university, but an alumni relative will not be the sole reason for admission. The percentage of alumni relatives admitted is typically above the general acceptance rate. Special care is taken to assure that no qualified student is overlooked and that all constituencies receive fair treatment in the admissions selection process.

Once the file has been read, the admissions committee will review candidates and select those who are most compelling.

FINANCIAL AID

All financial aid awarded at Tufts is based on need. Need is the difference between educational expenses (tuition, room and board, books, fees, and personal expenses) and the university’s estimate of the parents’ and student’s financial resources. Students are encouraged to apply for aid because each family circumstance is unique. **Income alone does not establish financial need.**

Incoming first-year students apply for financial aid by submitting the College Scholarship Service (CSS) PROFILE, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and other required information. More information is available in the financial aid instructions found in the application packet and on the

admissions website at <http://admissions.tufts.edu/tuition-and-aid/applying-for-aid/>. Aid decisions are announced shortly after admissions decisions are released.

Financing a quality education is a major concern of parents at almost all levels of income. Tufts, too, is concerned that considerations of financing may affect planning for college, specifically whether Tufts is an affordable option. Students should not hesitate to apply to Tufts for lack of financial resources as Tufts guarantees to meet the demonstrated need of the family as determined by the Financial Aid Office using the documents named above. Tufts will strive to bridge the gap between a reasonable expectation from available resources and the cost of the Tufts education. An estimate of the family's expected need may be obtained through the financial aid calculator, accessible here: <https://npc.collegeboard.org/student/app/tufts>. Please note the estimate provided is only as accurate as the information provided. It should be used only as a guide and not as an official calculation of need and potential financial aid package.

A typical financial aid package may be composed of self-help (campus job and loan), and grant money, which is not repayable. Students at Tufts are eligible for a full range of financial aid in the form of university, state, and federal grants; long-term Perkins, Stafford, and Tufts loans; and campus employment available through the federally subsidized work study program (FWS).

Tufts recognizes that some excellent students may be undecided about seeking admission in the belief that they will have difficulty in financing their education. These students should investigate local, state, federal, and private sources of aid and apply for the financial assistance that Tufts offers.