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May 4, 2018

Dr. Anthony P. Monaco  
President  
Tufts University  
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Medford, MA 02155

Dear President Monaco:

I am pleased to inform you that at its meeting on March 1, 2018, the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education considered the interim (fifth-year) report submitted by Tufts University and the report regarding its plans to offer a joint Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs degree with College of Europe and voted to take the following action:

that the interim (fifth-year) report submitted by Tufts University be accepted;

that the report be accepted and the joint Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs (MATA) degree with College of Europe be encompassed within the institution's accreditation, with an effective date of March 1, 2018;

that a visit to assess implementation of the joint Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs degree with College of Europe be scheduled for Fall 2018;

that the report prepared in advance of the Fall 2018 site visit include evidence of program approval by the Boards of both institutions and of accreditation by the Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders, and give emphasis to the institution's success in:

1. ensuring student advising and internship opportunities are sufficient to meet the needs of MATA students;
2. evaluating the effectiveness of the Joint MATA Committee to provide oversight of the program and develop relevant policies;
3. achieving the financial goals set for the MATA program;

that the comprehensive evaluation scheduled for Spring 2023 be confirmed;

that, in addition to the information included in all self-studies, the self-study prepared in advance of the Spring 2023 evaluation give emphasis to the institution's success in:

1. assessing the effectiveness of the new university-wide Faculty Senate in providing a voice for faculty in shared governance of the institution;
2. regularly evaluating the effectiveness of the institution's part-time and full-time (non-tenure track) faculty;
3. continuing to implement a comprehensive system of assessment of student achievement at the course, program, and institutional levels, demonstrating the use of results for program improvement.

The Commission gives the following reasons for its action.

The interim (fifth-year) report submitted by Tufts University was accepted because it responded to the concerns raised by the Commission in its letter of November 4, 2013 and addressed each of the nine standards, including a reflective essay for Standard 8: *Educational Effectiveness* on student learning and success.

We commend Tufts University, a premiere research university with world-class facilities and programs, for keeping student-centered support and attention as a primary focus and measure of institutional success. We note with favor that the University adopted new mission and vision statements to articulate its values and priorities, and that these statements served as the foundation for the institution's comprehensive strategic plan for 2013-2023, "Tufts: The Next Ten Years" (T10). Aligned with the priorities of T10, many new investments are well underway including the establishment of the Office of Budget and Planning, the Financial Aid Initiative that has raised more than \$90 million in scholarship support, the development of Bridge Professorships to foster interdisciplinary initiatives, and the creation of the position of Chief Diversity Officer and Associate Provost. We are also gratified to learn that communication and coordination between the School of Arts & Sciences (A&S) and the School of Engineering is facilitated by regular meetings (of the deans, and between the deans and the provost), and that the Executive Committee of the Faculty of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering "provides faculty leadership in the common work of the schools." Other major accomplishments include completion of the Collaborative Learning and Innovation Center and the Science and Engineering Complex, and the launch of a \$1.5 billion campaign to help fund strategic priorities identified in T10, including strengthening teaching and research and "advancing the university's capacity to translate brilliant ideas into practical solutions for global problems."

From its reflective essay, we are assured that Tufts University is developing a comprehensive system for assessing student learning. With the support of the Office of Institutional Research and Evaluation (OIRE), academic program reviews are routinely conducted in each school, with "83% of reporting departments hav[ing] completed at least one round of assessments" and "50% hav[ing] used their assessment data to implement program changes." Since 2013, Tufts University has also made steady progress in formulating and assessing student learning outcomes for general education, an effort led by the Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee (LOAC) in collaboration with the academic departments. We note with favor that, over the past ten years, the institution's undergraduate retention rate consistently has exceeded 95%, and the six-year graduation rate of first-time full-time students has remained over 90%. While, as acknowledged by the University, disparities in graduation rates among certain student groups continue to exist, we are pleased to learn that strategies such as the program on assessment for equity and inclusion have been effective in reducing the gap. In addition, licensure passage rates are "very high," and recent alumni survey results indicate that "almost 75% had pursued an advanced degree and that

90% were employed.” Tufts University’s graduate programs also collect information on the career outcomes of their graduates.

In addition, the report submitted by Tufts University was accepted and the joint Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs degree with College of Europe encompassed within the institution’s accreditation because the Commission finds the activity to be substantially in compliance with the *Standards for Accreditation* and relevant Commission policies.

Adding to Tufts University’s Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy’s portfolio of graduate programs in international affairs, the joint Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs degree program with College of Europe appears to be an ideal fit with the School’s mission to “educate students with an international outlook.” The joint program will provide students a unique opportunity to examine transatlantic relations from both U.S. and European perspectives, as they will spend time at Tufts University in the U.S. as well as at College of Europe’s campuses in Bruges, Belgium and/or Natolin (Warsaw), Poland. We understand that the two-year academic program, developed by a committee of faculty and administrators from both institutions, has been structured to include a transatlantic course during the first semester delivered via videoconference between the campuses, followed by a capstone project involving teams of students in the study of a transatlantic problem. In addition, an internship will be an “intrinsic” component of the program, and students will be required to write a thesis – jointly supervised and assessed by faculty of both institutions who are “top-level academics from the field” – on a transatlantic topic drawing on their experience at both schools. We note with approval that, to ensure consistent quality of the program delivered on two continents, both The Fletcher School and College of Europe will have an MATA Coordinator, and we appreciate that students will have access to library resources on all three campuses as well as Tufts University’s extensive collection of electronic databases. Using “jointly agreed upon admissions criteria,” initial enrollment has been capped at 20 students (five new students per institution per academic year) to enable a full assessment of the success of the concept.

In keeping with Commission policy, an on-site evaluation to assess implementation of the joint Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs degree with College of Europe will be scheduled for Fall 2018. A copy of the relevant procedural statement is enclosed for your information and use.

In the report prepared for the Fall 2018 site visit, as evidence that “[t]he board ... approves major new initiatives, assuring that they are compatible with institutional mission and capacity” (3.7), and that the institution “...has the necessary operating authority for each jurisdiction in which it conducts activities” (9.4), we ask that Tufts University include documentation that demonstrates program approval by the Boards of both institutions and of the accreditation received from the Accreditation Organization of the Netherlands and Flanders. In addition, the institution is asked to give emphasis to three matters related to our standards on *The Academic Program; Students; Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship; Organization and Governance; and Institutional Resources*.

As noted above, students in the Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs degree will be required to complete a 3-4 month “high-level” internship in either the U.S. or Europe related to transatlantic affairs. We understand that, by using the extensive support provided by the Career Offices on both campuses, including career management tools and alumni databases, students will be responsible for arranging their own internships. In addition, all MATA students will be assigned a faculty advisor. We anticipate being apprised, in the report prepared in advance of the Fall 2018 visit, of the University’s success in ensuring internship opportunities and student advising are sufficient to meet the needs of MATA students. Our standards on *The Academic Program; Students; and Teaching, Learning and Scholarship* provide this guidance:

The institution offers required and elective courses as described in publicly available print and digital formats with sufficient availability to provide students with the opportunity to graduate within the published program length (4.31).

The institution provides advising and academic support services appropriate to the student body. The institution's faculty and professional staff collectively have sufficient interaction with students outside of class to promote students' academic achievement and provide academic and career guidance (5.10).

The institution's system of academic advising meets student needs for information and advice compatible with its educational objectives. The quality of advising is assured regardless of the location of instruction or the mode of delivery (6.19).

Comprised of representatives from both Tufts University's Fletcher School and the College of Europe, the Joint MATA Committee is the "formal governing body" responsible for oversight of the program. Meeting at least three times a year via video conference, the Committee has been instrumental in establishing joint guidelines on the student selection process, internship and co-supervised thesis, grade conversion, and visa-related issues. In addition, the Committee reviews feedback received from students and the organizations that provide internships. As specified in our standards on *Organization and Governance* and *The Academic Program*, we seek assurance, through the Fall 2018 report, of the effectiveness of the Joint MATA Committee in providing oversight of the program and developing relevant policies.

... The institution's organization and governance structure assure the integrity and quality of academic programming however and wherever offered. Off-campus, continuing education, distance education, correspondence education, international, evening, and weekend programs are clearly integrated and incorporated into the policy formation, academic oversight, and evaluation system of the institution (3.14).

... The institution awarding a joint, dual, or concurrent degree demonstrates that the program is consistent with Commission policy and that the student learning outcomes meet the institution's own standards and those of the Commission (4.32).

While a summary of the revenue and estimated annual expenses for the joint Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs degree program was provided as part of the proposal, and we understand The Fletcher School budget will "absorb" many of the MATA-related expenses to include faculty and staff salaries, travel, materials, supplies, and administrative support, we ask that a multi-year revenue and expense budget for the program be provided as part of the report prepared in advance of the Fall 2018 visit to verify the University's success in achieving its financial goals for the program. Our standard on *Institutional Resources* supports this request:

The institution's multi-year financial planning is realistic and reflects the capacity of the institution to depend on identified sources of revenue and ensure the advancement of educational quality and services for students (7.6).

The scheduling of a comprehensive evaluation in Spring 2023 is consistent with Commission policy requiring each accredited institution to undergo a comprehensive evaluation at least once every ten years. The items the Commission asks to be given special emphasis within the self-study prepared for the comprehensive evaluation are matters related to our standards on *Organization and Governance; Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship; Planning and Evaluation; and Educational Effectiveness*.

The Commission is aware that, in addition to the structures of governance that exist in each school, the University-wide Faculty Senate met for the first time in April 2017. This body, created after a deliberate two-year planning process, is intended to ensure faculty are able to “give advice on any university-wide policy, initiative or issue that the administration is weighing,” as well as serving as a vehicle for faculty to raise institutional issues and concerns to the administration. We look forward to learning, through the Spring 2023 self-study, of the effectiveness of the Faculty Senate in providing a voice for faculty in the shared governance of the institution. We remind you of our standard on *Organization and Governance*:

The institution places primary responsibility for the content, quality, and effectiveness of the curriculum with its faculty. Faculty have a substantive voice in matters of educational programs, faculty personnel, and other aspects of institutional policy that relate to their areas of responsibility and expertise (3.15).

We understand that since the University’s comprehensive evaluation in Spring 2013, both the part-time and full-time (non-tenure track) faculty in Arts and Sciences have unionized and that faculty contracts and performance evaluations are now governed by their respective Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) in effect from 2017 through 2022. For part-time faculty on a one-year or one-semester contract, the CBA prescribes a regular annual appraisal by the “Supervisor” that may include a review of student evaluations and syllabi, an examination of assessment methods, and/or teaching observations. For full-time (non-tenure track) faculty, as input to the reappointment decision, a similar review is to be conducted by the “tenured faculty members and Senior Lecturers of the department or program, and any full-time lecturers or tenure-track faculty who have direct supervisory oversight of the program or have relevant subject matter knowledge.” Consistent with our standard on *Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship*, we ask that the Spring 2023 self-study give emphasis to the implementation and success of these procedures intended to ensure regular evaluation of the effectiveness of the institution’s part-time and full-time (non-tenure track) faculty.

Faculty are demonstrably effective in carrying out their assigned responsibilities. The institution employs effective procedures for the regular evaluation of appointments, performance, and retention. The evaluative criteria reflect the mission and purposes of the institution and the importance it attaches to the various responsibilities of, e.g., teaching, advising, assessment, scholarship, creative activities, research, and professional and community service. The institution has equitable and broad-based procedures for such evaluation in which its expectations are stated clearly and weighted appropriately for use in the evaluative process (6.10).

From the interim report, we note positively that General Education Learning Outcomes were approved by the faculty of A&S in 2015, and that all A&S departments and programs, with support from the Director of Assessment at the Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching, are now required to submit plans for assessing student learning in general education and the major each fall and to report on the results each spring. At the institutional level, a proposal to adopt university-wide learning objections will be reviewed by the Faculty Senate this coming fall. In addition, the Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee is expanding its charge to include “oversight” of the assessment of student learning in Arts and Sciences graduate programs. We welcome further information, in the Spring 2023 self-study, on the success of these and other initiatives designed to comprehensively assess student achievement at the course, program, and institutional levels, demonstrating the use of results for program improvement. We remind you of our standards on *Planning and Evaluation* and *Educational Effectiveness*:

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The institution has a demonstrable record of success in using the results of its evaluation activities to inform planning, changes in programs and services, and resource allocation (2.8).

Assessment of learning is based on verifiable statements of what students are expected to gain, achieve, demonstrate, or know by the time they complete their academic program. The process of understanding what and how students are learning focuses on the course, competency, program, and institutional level (8.3).

The results of assessment and quantitative measures of student success are a demonstrable factor in the institution's efforts to improve the learning opportunities and results for students (8.8).

The Commission expressed appreciation for the reports submitted by Tufts University and hopes their preparation has contributed to institutional improvement. It appreciates your cooperation in the effort to provide public assurance of the quality of higher education New England.

You are encouraged to share this letter with all of the institution's constituencies. It is Commission policy to inform the chairperson of the institution's governing board of action on its accreditation status. In a few days we will be sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Peter Dolan. The institution is free to release information about the report and the Commission's action to others, in accordance with the enclosed policy on Public Disclosure of Information about Affiliated Institutions.

If you have any questions about the Commission's action, please contact Barbara Brittingham, President of the Commission.

Sincerely,



David P. Angel

DPA/sjp

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Peter Dolan