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TCU Senate hosts transparency town hall with senior Tufts administrators

Shayna Levy
News Editor

The Tufts Community Union Senate hosted a Tuition Transparency Town Hall on Tuesday to break down how the university allocates its budget amid rising tuition costs. The event featured several senior university leaders, including Provost and Senior Vice President Caroline Genco, Vice President for Finance and Treasurer ad interim Thomas Malone, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences Bárbara Brizuela and Dean of Engineering Kyongbum Lee. Approximately 60 students attended.

“The goal of tonight is really to bring clarity and transparency to how tuition works at Tufts,” TCU President Dhruv Sampat, a senior, said. “We’d like to create a space that feels safe and open to talk about all your questions ... and bridge the gap between the students and administration.”

Malone opened with a presentation on Tufts’ \$1.32 billion operating budget,



LAUREN ALIOTTA / THE TUFTS DAILY

The Cabot Intercultural Center, the location of the Tuition Transparency Town Hall, is pictured on April 7, 2023.

outlining the university’s revenue sources.

“Tuition is sometimes considered the primary funding source, but here at Tufts, it is just one

component,” Malone said. “Net tuition makes up just about half of our revenue sources.”

He explained that approximately 18% of revenue comes from

sponsored research, 12% from clinical and other activities and about 16% from gifts and endowment income. Last year, Tufts received over \$240 million in sponsored research

funding, with the federal government serving as its largest funder.

Genco acknowledged that Tufts lost \$20 million in research grants between February and summer 2025 due to federal funding cuts but expressed confidence in future funding.

“We just got approval on a budget that was approved at an increased rate for federal funding for research,” Genco said. “We’re really confident that moving forward, we’re going to continue to see robust funding across all of our research portfolios.”

Malone shared a chart outlining how funds are allocated, noting that 32% of expenditures go toward instruction and 17% toward sponsored research.

“About a third of our costs are related to instruction,” Malone said, adding that instruction is supported primarily by tuition, as well as by endowment income, gifts and philanthropy.

The event then transitioned to a panel moderated by Sampat, who asked university leaders

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Graduate students complete first semester of new AI master’s degree, undergraduate student groups grow

Eli Brigham
Assistant News Editor

A group of students in the Tufts Graduate School of Engineering completed their first semester as the inaugural class of the Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence. The new program comes as student interest in AI continues to grow, sparking the creation of undergraduate student organizations.

Enrollment for the program exceeded expectations, according to Jeffrey Foster, the chair of the computer science department, who said it was made up of a diverse range of students. He also emphasized the diversity of the initial class as well as his hopes for the program to grow.

The program has also created opportunities for students in the health, security and education fields. Some students have reportedly found co-ops or are actively searching for research work related to AI.

“Some have already been funded as hourly students through the Human-AI Interaction Center,” Mattias Scheutz, a professor of computer science, wrote in a statement to the Daily. “The Tufts Institute for AI is currently accepting additional applications for their internship program.”

“Companies are really loving this [program], because they want people that have depth in AI,” Karen Panetta, the dean of graduate education in the School of Engineering, said.

Panetta added that the involvement of the Gordon Institute, Tufts’ engineering management school, distinguishes the master’s in AI for allowing students to focus on a variety of disciplines, notably business in the context of AI.

As faculty highlight the pre-professional benefits of this program, they also remain cognisant of the ethical concerns involved with AI, which the master’s program hopes to educate its students on.



NATALIE BROWNSSELL / THE TUFTS DAILY

The Tsungming Tu Complex is pictured on Oct. 4, 2022.

Scheutz said that his department was “actively addressing” the ethical questions surrounding AI through a course in the master’s program curriculum.

“[It’s about] teaching, from birth, children how to use [AI],

how to protect themselves,” Panetta said. “Whoever thought that you could see a video of someone and it could be so artificially manipulated that you believe that it is actually someone you love or someone you really know.”

In response to ethical concerns, new student groups have emerged, including the Tufts AI Safety Student Association. Senior Andrew Lawrence, the group’s director, described how

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