

A Landmark Agreement with the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

December 22, 2015

Dear Members of the Tufts Community,

We write with some exciting news about a possible new venture that could dramatically enhance arts education at the University by making the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (SMFA) part of Tufts University.

Tufts University aspires to excellence across broad and well-balanced curricula. We believe that the fine arts are a critical component of a liberal arts education. We are proud of our 70-year relationship with the SMFA, which is currently part of one of the country's great art museums and cultural institutions, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Founded in 1876, the SMFA is among the premier art schools in the United States. For decades, SMFA undergraduate and graduate students have taken many of their required liberal arts courses at Tufts, and the SMFA has relied on Tufts to grant Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts degrees to SMFA students. In turn, the SMFA has provided Tufts students with courses in studio arts, mostly on the Tufts Medford/Somerville campus. A dual-degree program allowing Tufts students to earn both a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in five years has also been an important part of the Tufts-SMFA relationship.

We now have an opportunity to make our long and rich partnership even stronger. For some months, Tufts has been in exploratory discussions with the SMFA and the Museum of Fine Arts about the SMFA becoming part of the School of Arts and Sciences at Tufts, while maintaining its location and strong relationship to the museum. This would make Tufts one of a very few universities offering an arts program affiliated with a major museum and would provide exciting new curricular and programmatic opportunities for our students and faculty.

Faculty and staff across the Medford/Somerville campus have been exploring the many dimensions of this opportunity in areas including academics, student services and student life, facilities and operations, admissions, finance and legal affairs. At the end of last week, the trustees of both the Museum and the University approved a memorandum of understanding stating that—subject to continued study and review and final approval during the Spring by both institutional boards—the SMFA would become part of Tufts on June 30, 2016.

This would be an exciting step for Tufts and the SMFA. Though there are still many details to address, we are confident that this new relationship would provide significant long-term benefits to Tufts, the MFA and SMFA and our communities.

We are pleased to be able to share such positive news as the year ends and look forward to updating you as further information is available. Meanwhile, we wish you all a happy and healthy holiday season.

Best wishes,

Tony Monaco, President
Jim Glaser, Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences

Read *Boston Globe* article:

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/arts/2015/12/21/school-museum-fine-arts-will-run-tufts-university/ALnjFmIjcuJqCeyyGPxyjM/story.html#comments>