



Medford City Council
Medford, Massachusetts

MEETING DATE

March 11, 2025

SPONSORED BY

Kit Collins, Council Vice President

AGENDA ITEM

25-040 - Resolution in Support of a Fair Contract for Tufts University's Full-Time Lecturers

FULL TEXT AND DESCRIPTION

Whereas, the 125 Full-Time Lecturers (FTLs) in the School of Arts and Sciences at Tufts have been unionized with SEIU 509 since 2016 and have been bargaining for their 3rd contract since April 2024, seeking a fair contract that allows for both livable salaries and manageable workloads; and

Whereas, FTLs at Tufts create and teach classes, grade exams, advise and mentor students, and perform essential services that keep Tufts running, including in the case of many FTLs coordinating academic programs, directing graduate admissions and degrees, and supporting extra- and co-curricular activities; and

Whereas, Tufts University prides itself on the high-quality educational experience provided to students, and valuing a quality educational experience means investing in teachers; and

Whereas, Lecturers' working conditions are students' learning environments; and

Whereas, cost of living has increased 21% since 2020 while the average FTL salary has increased only 13.1%, and salaries for FTLs at Tufts rank 12th out of the 13 universities among its institutional peers in the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS); and

Whereas, from 2019-2023, undergraduate enrollment in the School of Arts and sciences grew by 12.4%, while full time faculty growth was only 6.4%, leading to FTLs increasingly being overworked; and

Whereas, Tufts promises a student-faculty ratio of 9:1 and an average class size of approximately 20, while in reality many entry-level courses taught by FTLs have enrollments between 100 and 400 students, in which FTLs often serve as formal and informal advisors; and

Whereas, Tufts University charges undergraduates the highest college tuition in Massachusetts and fifth-highest in the country, and reported a \$34 million surplus in the School of Arts and Sciences in

AY2023-24; and

Whereas, Tufts leadership has continued to offer bargaining proposals that prioritize budget austerity over workers' health and livelihoods, and has continued to reject proposals to increase salaries and make modest improvements in the direction of a living wage without adding to the burden of already-unmanageable workloads; now, therefore:

Be it Resolved by the Medford City Council that we support the Tufts University Full Time Lecturers Union, SEIU 509, and call upon Tufts University to prioritize investing in teachers, because both livable wages and sustainable workloads are essential to workers and to the University more broadly.

RECOMMENDATION

FISCAL IMPACT

ATTACHMENTS

None