

Starting a College Search: Tip #1

RACHEL BROWN [Inside Admissions](#) Tufts Admissions Blog February 3, 2021

Dear juniors!

This year – 2021 – is the year you become a senior. This is the year you’ll hear one question over and over and over again...what are your plans for next year?

Maybe you’ve already started brainstorming and making post-high school plans, or maybe you’re just beginning the thought process. Regardless of that, we’re sharing our top three tips for college searching. Read on for tip #1, with #2 and #3 to follow in the coming weeks.

Tufts Admissions College Search Tip #1: **Ask yourself what YOU want out of a college or university.**

A college search should put you at the center. You are searching for a place and community that you’ll call home for your undergraduate experience, so it should be a place where you find growth, joy, fulfillment, support, and inspiration. In your search, it’s so important to reflect internally on what you want, and actively seek that out for yourself. There are hundreds of incredible college options, but not every single one will check the boxes on YOUR list, and that’s okay! Below are some questions to get you started, and we suggest starting a google doc, bullet journal entry, or file folder to keep information about the colleges that intrigue you. Bonus for you - we filled in the answers for Tufts!

Question	Tufts University
What size school am I looking for, and what's my ideal campus vibe?	Tufts is home to ~5,800 students, spread across three undergraduate programs, making for a tight-knit community where you’ll see familiar faces crossing campus, form close relationships with professors in small seminar-style classes, and learn from the different lived experiences of your peers in residence halls, classrooms, and extracurricular activities.
What words do I want to use to describe my campus community?	Current students and alumni of Tufts will frequently use the following words: kind, collaborative, intellectually playful, inclusive, globally minded, and civically engaged.
What setting am I looking for? Rural, urban, suburban?	Tufts is located just about 5 miles from downtown Boston, which is about 30 minutes on public transportation. It’s close to Davis Square, a fun hub of restaurants, a movie theater, and a bowling alley. The campus has a classic New England feel, and you can experience the magic of all four seasons. The SMFA campus is on the Fenway, very close to the Museum of Fine Arts!

What do I want to study? Do I want a certain major or minor? Do I want a more singular focus, or an interconnected education?	Tufts has three undergraduate programs – Arts & Sciences, Engineering, and Fine Arts. There are over 150 majors and minors , and students have time to explore options before declaring. Many students will study more than two things, and students are encouraged to take classes outside their majors to create an interdisciplinary education.
What do I want to do outside of the classroom? Sports, research, internships, community service, pre-professional activities?	Tufts offers 300+ student groups , so there's something for everybody, from our DIII varsity sports to our dozens of community service organizations to our a cappella groups. Tufts is consistently rated as one of the most friendly institutions for undergraduate research , so you can get started as early as your first year. And our Career Center can link you up with some great professional opportunities, in Boston and beyond!
What supports do I anticipate needing, and what supports would be nice to have just in case?	Tufts is staffed with many, many people who are passionate about helping students thrive. From mental health services to the Center for STEM Diversity , subject tutoring to accessibility accommodations , academic advising to allergy or dietary restrictions , Tufts has you covered.
How do I want to grow in college?	With so many pathways through Tufts, it can be hard to predict just exactly how students will develop. But with its emphases on civic engagement, innovative problem-solving, and student-faculty collaboration, it's almost guaranteed that you will depart 'the Hill' empowered to make the world a better place.

Those are just a few questions to get you started, but it's a solid place to begin your reflections. Stay tuned for more information and more tips in the future!