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Tufts University to hire 'bridge professors' to try to connect academic departments, schools

Posted by Matt Rocheleau November 25, 2013 10:47 AM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Tufts University plans to establish a new program to hire, over the next five years, as many as 10 "bridge professors," senior-level faculty who will work to build relationships across traditional disciplines, connecting at least two academic departments or schools at the university.

Campus officials said the effort, a component of Tufts 10-year strategic plan, will bolster the university's approach to interdisciplinary education.

Schools and departments on all three of Tufts' campuses working to develop and submit proposals for "Bridge Professorships."

The program is "a mechanism to incentivize us to seek out and hire those scholars and researchers whose work resonates deeply with more than one school, department or discipline," David Harris, Tufts provost and senior vice president, said in a statement.

"And the program acknowledges what we already know—that many of the challenges we are pursuing as an institution do not align solely with one department or one school," he added.

Bridge professors will be either associate or full professors and will be tenured in schools that offer tenure, university officials said The provost's office will cover one-third of the compensation, benefits and start-up costs over the first five years of each position.

Tufts expects to begin a search for the first two bridge professors in the spring with the hope of having them start their work with the university by the fall of 2014.

"This initiative helps provide a bridge that will take Tufts where a university of this caliber needs to go," Harris said.

Matt Rocheleau can be reached at mjrochele@gmail.com. Looking for more coverage of area colleges and universities? Go to our [Your Campus pages](#).

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