

Tufts Professor Bruce Boghosian to Lead American University in Armenia This Fall

By Daphne Kolios
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MEDFORD, MA - Professor of Mathematics Bruce Boghosian, former chair of the Department of Mathematics, left Tufts University this September to become the president of the American University of Armenia (AUA).

Boghosian's ties to Armenia and AUA are long-standing. He initially became acquainted with the university through colleagues who had worked there and visited the school while in Armenia, Boghosian told the Daily in an e-mail. Several years ago, Boghosian was elected to serve as a foreign member of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences.

In an e-mail to the Daily, Boghosian praised AUA. "Each time I've been [in Armenia], I've visited the American University of Armenia, and I met faculty there, I met students, and I was impressed with the school and with the dedication of all

of the faculty and administrators of the school," Boghosian said.

Boghosian said he does not know when he will return to Tufts.

"[The position] is a bit open-ended - I'm taking an extended leave of absence from Tufts, so it will be at least a few years," Boghosian said.

In a nationwide search, Boghosian beat out a sizeable field of candidates for the position. "I would estimate there were no less than 30 candidates, filtered down to around 10 for interviews with the committee," Edward Avedisian, a member of the subcommittee, told the Daily.

The selection committee itself was composed of representatives from the University of California system and members of the AGBU. Both have a strong affiliation with the university.

Carol Aslanian, a member of the AUA board of trustees, said the traits the subcommittee members looked for in candidates included

the ability to adapt the university to reflect the dynamic social and economic climate within Armenia.

"We looked to someone who was not tied to the past but could look for and use information that would help him and his colleagues move the institution well into the next decade with the types of programs and services that the Republic of Armenia needs," Aslanian told the Daily.

At Tufts, Boghosian brought numerous changes to the mathematics department as chair, Professor of Mathematics Boris Hasselblatt said.

Hasselblatt praised Boghosian for his work. "He really has exerted innovative and forceful leadership and has taken a more proactive role in seeing where the department should be going, beginning to think about the future rather more prominently than the present," Hasselblatt said.

Hasselblatt has succeeded Boghosian as the new department chair.

With Boghosian as chair, the department implemented an external departmental review, which allowed

members of peer institutions to evaluate and examine the department, allowing for faculty members to get feedback and suggestions for improvement.

"[I hope to] align [AUA's] offerings and its activities with the needs of the Armenian government," Boghosian said of his tenure as president.

He emphasized the need for highly trained professionals in a variety of fields including medicine, law and business.

Many AUA graduates work within industries crucial to the country's development, such as government, technological companies and banking, AUA Vice President of Development and Government Relations Bruce Janigian told the Daily.

"The university has basically facilitated Armenia's emergence as a global partner in the world," he added.

Janigian said the impact of the university extends outside of the borders of Armenia, allowing stu-

dents of neighboring countries to receive an American-accredited education without coming to the United States.

"We're bringing students in from a wide swath of geography beyond Armenia. It's going to be an educational institution that will be having an impact on a much broader region," Janigian said.

Boghosian's goals as university president include the expansion of AUA's offerings to grant more types of degrees. At the moment, the university confers only masters' degrees. "The university is contemplating the idea of adding undergraduate programs, and it will take some time to figure out whether we ought to add a Ph.D. program," Boghosian said.

Boghosian also said he would like to expand the geographical diversity of the AUA student body. "We have some, but we'd like to attract even more students from the Middle East and Asia in general," Boghosian said.