DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH
FACTS ABOUT THE INTERNSHIP

1. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE INTERNSHIP?

The Internship (CH 180) is an integral part of the Department of Community Health and offers the opportunity for “hands-on” experience working in diverse settings related to health/health care/health policy. It is designed to enable both you and the organization to benefit from the experience. As an intern, you are expected to make positive contributions to the organization and its needs. In return, the placement can offer you valuable opportunities of working and interacting with diverse professionals in the field. Community Health students provide services such as: client advocacy and outreach, health screening, constituent services, policy analysis, health education, data collection and analysis, research design, program development and evaluation, client interaction and intervention, community engagement, and more. Internships are generally located in state and federal government agencies, non-profit organizations, hospitals, community health centers, clinics, schools, and volunteer organizations. *For more important details, read through your copy of the Internship Handbook.*

2. WHEN CAN I DO MY INTERNSHIP?

- **SPRING** semester of your junior year
- **SUMMER** between your junior and senior year
- **FALL or SPRING** semester of your senior year

CH majors must have successfully completed CH 1 and CH 30 before enrolling in the internship.

3. WILL I GET MY FIRST CHOICE OF SEMESTERS TO DO MY INTERNSHIP?

When you declare the major in CH, you should also request a spot for your internship. The sooner you make your request, the more likely it is that you will get your choice of semester. Be sure you choose a semester that works with your course load, study abroad plans, etc.

4. HOW LONG IS AN INTERNSHIP?

The internship involves 150 hours of work at the placement site during one semester. Each semester, internships begin the first week of classes and continue through the last week of classes. During the fall or spring, the semester is approximately 14 weeks long. During the summer session, internships last for 12 weeks.

To reach 150 hours of onsite work, students work approximately 11 hours per week during fall or spring semester, and about 14 hours per week during the summer semester. All work hours occur at the placement site. In addition, students attend individual and group meetings with Department of Community Health faculty/staff throughout the semester on the Medford campus. Check the schedule for specifics to avoid conflicts.

5. CAN I CHOOSE A SITE WHERE I ALREADY HAVE A JOB / INTERNSHIP?

Generally, this is not recommended. It is possible to stay at the same site only if you work on a different project or have different responsibilities than in your current role. Your internship is an opportunity for you to try something new, meet new people, gain new skills, and work in a new environment. In the Department of Community Health, we encourage you to have a variety of exposures to the health field. Choosing to stay at your current site limits your opportunities.

6. CAN I GET PAID FOR MY INTERNSHIP?

Yes, however few internship placements offer payment. Resources may be available through the Tufts Career Center (summer), the Tisch College (for fellows), Undergraduate Research Fund, or with T passes or stipends from internship sites.

7. I AM AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT. IS THERE ANYTHING MORE I SHOULD BE AWARE OF?

Yes. Visit the International Center for information and important paperwork.
9. DOES THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH FIND AND ASSIGN MY PLACEMENT SITE?

No. Students search for and select their placement sites, and can meet with the Internship Administrator at any time for assistance. Note: we detail this process at the Mandatory Internship Meeting and also in the Internship Handbook.

10. HOW DO I FIND A PLACE TO DO MY INTERNSHIP?

Start your search 4-6 months before your internship semester to explore your interests, ideas, and concerns about where you would like to work and what type of work you would like to do. Review the database and binder of previous internship sites (located in the CH office). You may access it Monday-Friday from 9-4 p.m. Conduct research on your own, visit the Career Center for ideas, or speak to CH students who have completed their internships. Make several choices which best match your professional and personal interests and needs. For more guidance, meet with Pamela Schoenberg Reider, Internship Administrator. Once you have identified several potential sites, send an email to the contact person to introduce yourself, inquire about internships, and set up interviews. Bring a copy of your resume (Career Services can help you update this) to the interview. Sometimes students find that a site will agree to the internship; occasionally a supervisor will suggest that another placement might be a better fit. Some sites are competitive and fill openings early or request multiple interviews.

11. CAN I SET UP MY INTERNSHIP WHILE I AM AWAY FROM THE BOSTON AREA?

It is very difficult to secure an internship while away from Tufts. Being in the Boston area the semester before your internship will allow you to complete a thorough search and find the best fit. Many supervisors expect in-person interviews. Additionally, visiting a site in person will give you a sense of the office culture, specific tasks/projects, transportation options/costs, and whether this mentor and site would be a good fit for you.

12. WHAT IMPORTANT DETAILS SHOULD I CLARIFY WHEN INTERVIEWING?

Find out where you are working at the site, and when you will meet for the hour of supervision each week. Ask about additional learning opportunities (grand rounds; conferences; project or team meetings; lectures; trainings). Find out what you must do before you can start work (documentation, clearance procedures, trainings, CORI, etc.). Ask whether they offer assistance with parking or T passes, and factor in these costs and transportation time. If you have limited time/funds for transportation, choose a site near Tufts. Finally, be sure to inform the interviewer if you are considering other sites or conducting interviews elsewhere so they do not incorrectly assume that you are accepting an offer.

13. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I FIND A PLACEMENT AT A NEW SITE?

If your site has not had CH interns before, speak to Pamela Schoenberg Reider to clarify details and forward documents. In the past, students have been frustrated at some new sites which were not well-equipped for students (working from a “home-office”; working in an isolated environment with little interpersonal contact; having limited on-site exposure or not enough supervision time). Pamela must contact new supervisors to communicate such issues.

14. HOW DO I CONFIRM THE PLACEMENT?

Complete the Internship Contract. This form is available on our website, and should be signed by you and your supervisor. Additionally, you must complete site-specific trainings/documentation/clearance procedures before the start date.

15. CAN I DO MY INTERNSHIP OUT OF STATE OR OUT OF THE COUNTRY?

You must do your CH internship locally, (Boston and surrounding towns). The Department of Community Health is committed to serving its host communities. In order to have consistent supervision with CH and for us to maintain contact with supervisors, internships are based locally. Additionally, CH180 includes class meetings throughout the semester, as well as individual supervision meetings with the Internship Coordinator. Any additional internships (at other locations or at different times outside of the “required” internship) do not count for CH 180.

16. DO I RECEIVE ACADEMIC CREDIT AND A GRADE FOR MY INTERNSHIP?

You will receive three SHUs and a letter grade for the Internship practicum (CH180). You may not take this course pass/fail. You must receive a B- or better in the Internship (180) to get CH credit toward the major. Your grade is based on performance, attendance, the quality of your work, the supervisor’s written evaluation, and attendance/assignments for the class meetings.