Frequently Asked Questions: Majoring in Community Health (CH)

How do I declare CH as my major?
Your first step is to select a CH faculty member as your advisor (See CH Advisors sheet on website or available from the CH office). Be sure to clarify that this advisor is accepting new advisees. The CH Department can also assign you to an advisor. Once you have an advisor, you must complete the CH “Information and Course Planning Form,” as well as the university’s blue “Declaration of Major” form from Dowling Hall. Meet with your advisor to review these forms and get appropriate signatures. The CH Department requires a copy of both of these forms. In addition, you must submit the original “Declaration of Major” form to Dowling Hall. You can download the “Information and Course Planning Form” from our website or pick up a hard copy at the CH office.

Can I choose/change my CH advisor?
Yes. We have a list of CH advisors with a description of their research and teaching interests and there is additional information about each advisor on our website. You may ask any of them if they are currently accepting new advisees. We can also assign you to an advisor. You may change your CH advisor at any time. However, we strongly encourage you to discuss this with the advisor with whom you were originally working.

When do I declare CH as my major?
CH follows university guidelines encouraging students to declare by the end of the sophomore year.

How many majors can I have?
Tufts University does not limit the number of majors a student selects.

How many courses do I need to take for the major in Community Health?
Twelve.

Of these twelve courses, how many are required and how many are electives?
Seven are required and five are electives. See the Course Requirements for details.

Can one course satisfy more than one requirement?
Yes, however you still need 12 credits in total.

How many courses can I double-count toward two or more majors or minors?
As written in the Tufts Bulletin (http://ase.tufts.edu/bulletin/liberal-info.html) "no more than half the courses used to fulfill the requirements for one concentration may be used to satisfy the requirements for a second or subsequent one." Therefore, six courses may overlap (or be “double counted”) for CH and another major or minor.

When should I take CH 1 (Introduction to Community Health) and CH 2 (Health Care in America)?
It is best to take these introductory courses as early as possible. We recommend that you take CH 1 in the fall of your first year, and CH 2 in the spring of your first year. We strongly encourage you to take both of these introductory courses by the end of your sophomore year.

Can I complete CH 180 (Internship) any time?
You can complete your internship anytime after the fall of your junior year, and after you have completed CH 1 and CH 30 (Community/Public Health Research Methods). You must sign up in advance and as early as possible for your preferred semester (fall, spring, or summer) for CH 180. Be sure you are in the local area the semester prior to your internship so that you can identify potential internship sites, interview for positions, and find the best fit for your internship experience. While you may change the semester during which you plan to conduct your internship, you must first receive approval from the CH office. Internship experiences that you initiate on your own (separate from CH 180) will not count toward your formal internship.

When do I sign up for my internship?
Select the semester you wish to complete your internship when you declare the major in CH. There are a limited number of spaces, so be sure to sign up for a semester when you turn in your major declaration paperwork. It is possible to change the semester of your internship with approval from the CH office. We strongly encourage students to begin planning for the internship the semester prior to taking CH 180 (CH Internship).
Can I do my internship outside of the Boston area?
We are committed to serving our local host communities and to ensuring that you have the support of faculty and staff to ensure that your internship is a good learning experience. As such, your internship must be based at a local agency, organization, health facility, school, or other site in the Boston area.

Can I go abroad and complete the primary major?
Yes. However, going abroad will require careful planning on your part. You will need to carefully outline your course selections with your advisor. Do not plan to do your CH Internship the semester you return from abroad, as you will have adequate time for planning, as noted above.

If I take a course abroad, will it count toward the major?
You can petition to have a course taken abroad count for CH credit. However, courses taken abroad may not substitute for any of the seven required CH courses. To receive approval for credit for a course taken abroad, the course must first appear on your Tufts transcript indicating that the credit has successfully been transferred to the university. Next, you must bring all course information with you upon your return (syllabus, papers, readings) and complete the CH “Petition Form” (available online on CH website). Discuss this with your advisor. Some courses have already been approved and do not need an additional petition. Discuss this plan with your CH advisor before you leave.

What is the final grade I must receive for a course to count toward the major?
You must receive a grade of C- or above for any course that you wish to count toward the major. The one exception is the internship (CH 180), which requires that you achieve a final grade of B- or better.

Can I take any courses pass/fail if I am pursuing the major?
No. The twelve courses toward the CH major must be taken for a letter grade. Any additional CH courses (taken over and above the 12 credits required for the major) may be taken on a pass/fail basis.

Can I take CE/CH 154 (Epidemiological Methods) instead of CE/CH 54 (Fundamentals of Epidemiology)? What if I already did?
Only students enrolled in the bachelors/MPH program can apply CE/CH 154 toward the major. All others are required to take CE/CH 54.

Can I complete an honors thesis in CH?
Yes. To do this, you are strongly encouraged start planning for your thesis in the spring or summer of your junior year. Narrow your area of interest and identify one or more faculty members who may be willing to work with you on your research. You are strongly encouraged to register for the CH Thesis Seminar (CH 197) in the fall of your senior year, as this will provide you with support as you develop your proposal. If you would like your honors thesis to count toward majors, this can be arranged. However, while the thesis counts for two credits toward your Bachelors degree, it will only count for one credit toward the major.

Does the thesis count toward the Research requirement?
Yes.

Can I complete a thesis in another department and count it toward the CH major?
As long as there is a member of the CH faculty on your thesis committee and your thesis has a strong CH component, you may request to have it approved for CH.

Who signs my University Degree Sheet and CH Checklist for graduation?
Your CH advisor and the Department Chair must sign the “Declaration of Major” Form and the CH Checklist. You should then deliver both to Dowling.

What sort of careers do CH graduates pursue?
CH graduates have a wide range of opportunities after graduation. While a number of CH majors go on to pursue graduate degrees in public health or other health-related fields, the majority find employment in health care institutions, community-based organizations, governmental agencies (local, state, federal), private consulting firms, or academic/research settings.