

The first step in understanding what the collateral field is to first understand just how expansive the major of Public Health is. The Public Health major is nothing like any other major at UMass; it is broken up into two different "tracks" (Science and Social Science) which each have their own requirements and areas of focus. But from each of what I call these "sub-majors" is the opportunity to develop a specific focus, which is where the Collateral field comes in. The Collateral field is designed to take all the general classes that we as Public Health majors must take, and focus that into a specific area of interest, because the topics talked about in our Public Health classes are so expansive, that having that concentration gives a lot more direction to the major.

The way to fulfill the collateral field really depends on from what angle you look at the field of Public Health. The way I did it was by taking a Public Health class, and pinpointing the part of the class that was really interesting me. The class I did this in was Public Health 129, a class that has covers many themes. It has health care from an economics perspective, a scientific perspective, even a sociological perspective. But what really struck me was the anthropological aspect. Learning about how the population healthcare system affected the individual was intriguing for me. And so it was from that discovery that I found my collateral field and am going to take classes next semester to fulfill it. Some people know right from the start exactly what their track will be; for others, it takes some time, but what is important is to always keep an open mind in this major, and never let any of these perspectives pass you by.

(Ben Chase, '13)