For Students Who Entered the Public Health Science Major Prior to Fall 2015

The PHS major requirements changed in Fall 2015 for all new PHS majors. New PHS majors is anyone who declared their major after May 15th, 2015. PHS majors who entered the major prior to Fall 2015 have the choice to stay in their current social science or science track or change to the new requirements. Regardless of the track you pursue, you will receive a Bachelor of Science in Public Health Sciences. Please read below for more information about the new requirements and what it means for you.

Why are there new requirements for the Public Health Sciences Major?
- The new requirements combine key components of the social science and science tracks. Students will graduate with a more well-rounded understanding of the field of public health and be better prepared for working in the field.

What do these changes mean for me?
- As a student who entered the PHS major prior to Fall 2015, you can choose to stay in the science or social science track that you are currently in OR you may opt to switch to the new requirements. You do not need to do anything if you want to stay on your current track.

Will the new requirements take me longer to graduate?
- The new major requirements require 68 credits instead of 65 credits for the social science track and 66 credits for the science track. Please refer to the PHS Requirements Fall 2015 and Later for the course requirements. The form can be found on the PHS website.
- You are encouraged to review and plan out each track with a Peer Advisor or Program Advisor to see which one fits the best for your needs and expected graduation date.

What do I need to do if I would like to switch to the new major requirements?
- If you would like to switch to the new major requirements, you can do so by completing a Request for Change in Requirement Term form. You can submit the form off at the Program Advisor’s Office (305 Arnold House).

Can I switch back to the social science or science track once I declare the new Fall 2015 and later requirements?
- No. If you choose to declare the new Fall 2015 and later requirements, you will not be able to switch back to either the science or social science track.
What does the new Fall 2015 and later major requirements prepare me for?

- The new requirements will better prepare you for a wider range of public health careers and/or graduate schools.
- For students who are pre-physician assistant, pre-med, pre-dental, or pre-nursing, the combined track allows you to complete your pre-requisites while also completing the social science courses that more schools are starting to look for.
- For students interested in community health education or health policy and management, you will take courses that not only prepare you for this role but also that introduce you to the fundamental concepts of other public health professions, such as biostatistics and environmental health.
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Where do I submit the Request for Change in Requirement Term form?

Please submit the form to:
Megan Griffin
Public Health Sciences
305 Arnold House
715 North Pleasant Street
Amherst, MA 01003

If you have any questions, please contact me via email (megiffin@schoolph.umass.edu) or phone (413-545-2523).