



SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

Associate Dean of Undergraduate Advising,  
Director for Health Professions Advising

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## Dear Parents and Families,

Hello from the Hill. By the time you read this, it will be a few short days before spring break – a time to hit the refresh button for all of us, and perhaps a time for you to see your student before they return to campus for the final push of the spring semester. I have had the pleasure of working with Tufts students for thirty years and have held a variety of different roles at the University, including my current role as an [Associate Dean of Undergraduate Advising](#). But the common denominator has always been my work with students interested in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, and the range of other rewarding health professions. I'm writing today wearing my [Pre-Health Advising](#) hat, and I'd like to share some of the ways Tufts supports students interested in pursuing health professions. Whether your student is already on a pre-med track or is wondering what it means to pursue a health profession, we're here to help them [explore their options](#), [prepare for professional study](#), and [guide them through the application process](#).

Tufts is a great place to be a Pre-Health Advisor. I often say I have the best job in the world. It's also a great place to be a pre-health student. My associate Stephanie Ripley and I work with highly motivated, intelligent, and dedicated students who want to make a difference in the world. Tufts students are well-prepared for their future studies because they have excellent teachers who push them to think critically about science and understand the world through its history, its art, and its literature. Tufts faculty welcome students into their biochemistry laboratories, cognitive psychology experiments, community-based public health projects, and other opportunities -- which means our students head into their post-undergraduate studies with both the intellectual tools and the practical experience they need to succeed. In the Office of Pre-Health Advising, we support this development and help ensure that students are acquiring [academic](#) and [experiential](#) preparation for their intended health professions during their time as Tufts undergrads.

So what does it take to be a competitive applicant to a medical, dental, or veterinary school, or to one of the many other graduate programs in the health professions? More and more, health professions programs are looking for broadly-educated, curious, mature students. That's why we encourage our pre-health students to [major in biopsychology, but also music, history, or economics](#). That's also why we encourage them to study abroad in Chile or Copenhagen or Hong Kong. We advise students to take on leadership roles like being Africana Center Peer Mentors, First Year Assistants, or FOCUS Orientation Coordinators. We encourage them to share their talents by tutoring high school students through the [Peer Health Exchange](#), writing for [TuftScope](#), or serving in [TEMS \(Tufts Emergency Service\)](#). We also encourage our students to play on varsity teams, sing in musical ensembles, and act in theatrical productions. The richer your Tufts experience, the more you bring to the table as an applicant to any health profession.

Many of you probably know that Tufts has its own [School of Medicine](#), [School of Veterinary Medicine](#), and [School of Dental Medicine](#). The University also has an internationally-renowned [School of Nutrition Science and Policy](#), a nationally-respected [Department of Occupational Therapy](#), and a wonderful [Public Health program](#). Our undergraduates are able to meet professional students, volunteer in clinical settings, and engage in research in all of these various schools and programs. All of these schools also offer special opportunities for Tufts undergraduates, including [Early Assurance Programs](#) with the medical, dental, and veterinary schools that allow top sophomores the opportunity to receive an acceptance two years before regular applicants. A [Combined Degree program](#) with Tufts' Public Health program also awards two degrees in five years, and our undergraduate applicants to both the Department of Occupational Therapy and School of Nutrition enjoy the benefit of having their GRE exams and application fees waived. You might ask why our graduate health professions schools afford Tufts undergraduate students these kinds of opportunities? It's because they understand how amazing our students are.

If your student is interested in a health profession, please encourage them to [make an appointment](#) with our office, and tell them to [sign up for our newsletter](#) and explore our [Pre-Health Blog](#). I meet with students every day, and I always enjoy hearing about their backgrounds, asking them what got them interested in a health profession, and helping them decide if a career in medicine is the right direction for them. I also love to talk with them about their intellectual interests and academic plans. Students come to me to share their doubts, fears, and hopes, and then we make a plan

and agree to circle back in a semester to talk about their progress. I'm here to help push students to really explore healthcare as a possibility, and to help them answer that all-important question: "Why?" -- Why do they want to pursue a particular health profession? In my experience, once students can answer that question for themselves, I can help answer the rest.

I hope you, your student, and your family are able to enjoy some rest, relaxation, and time together in the coming weeks. If the Office of [Pre-Health Advising](#) can ever be helpful to your student, please encourage them to be in contact with us.

Sincerely,

**Carol Baffi-Dugan**  
**Associate Dean of Undergraduate Advising**  
**Director for Health Professions Advising**