What would an English major do with a master's degree in Health Communication? ..let’s ask Erica Hersh, MS’14

I always really loved writing and initially, I considered going to graduate school for journalism. When I was in high school, I also fell in love with biology and health, and during college, I worked in the communications office of a hospital. I enjoyed this work very much, and decided the Master’s in Health Communication (MS-HCOM) degree was the right combination of all my interests and a program that would be really useful to me.

Being an English major and a health communicator are both about interpretation. Whether it's analyzing what an author has written and conveying it through academic writing, or it's the assessment of health study results and conveying them in terms that are easy to understand. In any sort of communication, you are telling a story. There are jobs and tasks within the field of health communication, such as copywriting or creating personas, that are more or less creative writing exercises.

The MS-HCOM degree gave me the confidence and skills to interview employees throughout an organization, from CEOs to physicians to HVAC workers. It also taught me the importance of understanding your audience and how to develop a successful communication strategy. Knowing not just what information your audience might want, but also how it will be most receptive to that information, is important in all areas of health communication. The strategy skills I learned at Tufts will serve me well throughout my career.

Tufts University's Health Communication Program

You can find information on all of our educational offerings, which include a certificate program and professional development courses, on the website of Tufts’ Health Communication Program, Or contact Susan S. Gallagher, MPH, Director of the MS-HCOM Program at sue.gallagher@tufts.edu, or by phone at 617.636.3539 with any questions.