

How to Use the Additional Information and Community Disruption Questions

INDIGO NAAR [Inside Admissions](#) Tufts Admissions Blog **October 11, 2023**

Admissions Counselors get different versions of this question all the time: I couldn't _____ (join a club, take a class, do a summer internship, etc) because of _____ (the pandemic, course conflicts, family responsibilities, finances, etc), how will that effect my application?

Situations like this are exactly what you might enter into the additional information or the community disruption section when you apply to Tufts. The additional information and community disruption questions are generally included in the writing section of the online application and are entirely optional.

We read holistically, so we're always thinking about your context when we read your application. You don't exist in a vacuum, and neither do your extracurriculars, grades, or essays. **When we look at your transcript, we're not just looking to see how you did in your courses, but we're also thinking about what courses your school offers and how you've challenged yourself in their curriculum.** When we look at your extracurriculars, we're thinking about what kind of opportunities you have to engage with your community—this can be through a club, through your family, or a part-time job.

However, we can't make assumptions about obstacles or unique circumstance unless you've shared them with us—if it seems like you could've taken AP Physics and you chose not to, and you've submitted an application to the School of Engineering, we're going to have some questions. The answer to that question might be as simple as: "AP Physics was cancelled at my school this year due a lack of interest—I'm going to try to take it online instead." But if you or your school counselor don't tell us that, then we have no way to know!

One of the best ways to include this kind of context is through the additional information section and/or the community disruption section, if that's a more accurate characterization of the context. If you're unsure, you can always email us!

In the case of additional information, it also doesn't have to be about an obstacle or issue that's come up—it can also be a place to elaborate on something that you haven't had space to talk about—maybe you founded a club at your school, and you want to share a little bit more about what that club is. This section is meant to be a catch-all for anything that you would like us to know that isn't already detailed in your application. You don't, however, need to copy and paste your resume in—your extracurricular list is more than enough for us to get a sense of your involvement!

The community disruption question is meant to address how a situation that has affected your community more broadly (such as the pandemic, or a natural disaster) has affected you as an individual. Therefore, your answer doesn't need to focus as much on the disruption to your community, but rather on how that impact has been felt by you and led to any context that we should be aware of.

An important last note: We won't be reading the answers to these questions to get a sense of your ability to write beautiful prose! You shouldn't be treating these extra questions as an opportunity to write a whole second personal essay—rather, **get straight to the point and let us know anything that is relevant to your application that you haven't had the chance to tell us about.** A couple of sentences should do it in most cases, but you can write as much as you need to!