

**Graduate School of Public Health  
Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee  
Meeting Minutes | February 12, 2015**

Present: Candace Kammerer, Wes Rohrer, Patricia Documet, Ying Ding, Jane Clougherty, Joyce Bromberger, Wes Rohrer, Yue Chen, David Finegold, Cindy Bryce, Mary Derkach, Robin Leaf, Marissa Kaplan, Robert Coulter, Elizabeth Rodgers, Varun Sharma

Absent: Eleanor Feingold

Guests: Jeanette Trauth, Janice Zgibor, Todd Bear, Joanne Russell, and Alana DeLoge

Meeting called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Candace Kammerer, Chair.

**Course modification: BCHS 3004, Jeanette Trauth**

Dr. Jeanette Trauth presented a proposal to modify BCHS 3004, a required course for all BCHS doctoral students. Changes are being made to this course in attempt to avoid confusion amongst the students. The course originally covered two different topics (grant writing and manuscript writing) at two separate times, but the title for both sections of the course was the same. This course will focus on grant-writing, especially on the aims, significance, and innovation portions of a grant proposals and will help students prepare for their BCHS preliminary exams. Because the course is aimed at BCHS students who will subsequently take their preliminary exams, it is not open to students in other departments at this time. EPCC approved this course with minor suggestions.

**Action:** This course is graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Failure to complete assignments will result in a failing grade. EPCC recommended that Dr. Trauth clarify the grading/completion rubric in her syllabus.

**Action:** Robin Leaf will send an official letter of approval to Dr. Trauth.

**Course modification: EPIDEM 2920, Janice Zgibor**

Dr. Janice Zgibor presented a proposal to modify EPIDEM 2920. The course was originally designed to cover two topics in 14 weeks (grant writing in 7 weeks, manuscript writing in 7 weeks). Instructors and students alike found that the pace was too fast. The current course will focus solely on grant writing; manuscript writing will be covered in other courses. Students will have the opportunity to practice writing F-series (particularly F-31) grants that, by the end of the course, will be ready for submission and thus, may be used to fund part of their pre-doctoral research. This course is open to students in other departments. SAS is a pre-requisite, which means that students need to take SAS during their first semester of study and this course during their first summer of study at Pitt Public Health. The grant writing aspect of this course is being taught before the manuscript writing aspect of the course based on a suggestion that was made by the EPCC in the past. The course was originally taught to help student with their preliminary exams and the EPCC

thought that teaching grant writing first and manuscript writing second would be more helpful to students. EPCC approved the course with minor suggestions.

**Action:** Dr. Zgibor was encouraged to use different action verbs in the Course Objectives section of her syllabus that are be more descriptive and measurable.

**Action:** Dr. Zgibor will also remove the Innovation aspect of this course if it is not going to be covered in-depth.

**Action:** Robin Leaf will send an official letter of approval to Dr. Zgibor.

**Course modification: BCHS 3030, Patricia Documet and Todd Bear**

Drs. Bear and Documet presented a proposal to modify BCHS 3030. They proposed to increase the number of credits to two credits in response to student comments. They are also including two ungraded assignments, and more quizzes so that students will have obtain more feedback before their final projects are due. The class will be held on a weekly basis. EPCC approved the course.

**Action:** Robin Leaf will send an official letter of approval to Drs. Bear and Documet.

**Approval of November minutes**

The minutes were approved with no modifications.

**Action:** Robin Leaf will update the EPCC Course Modification form so that it includes a section where instructors can clearly list the changes they are making to their course.

**PUBHLT XXXX – Pitt in Bolivia, Joanne Russell and Alana DeLoge**

Ms. Russell and Alana DeLoge presented a proposal for a new Pitt in Bolivia study abroad course designed for upper-level undergrad students. As part of the new Title Six funding process, the Center for Global Health was charged to develop two undergraduate study-abroad courses. This course is a result of that agreement and is currently being housed under the Pitt Public Health Global Health department (as are a few other courses taught by the Center for Global Health). Similar courses have been taught in Ecuador in the past. Ms DeLoge stated that there will be a considerable hands-on aspect to this course. EPCC approved the course with minor suggestions.

**Action:** Ms. Russell was encouraged to use more description and measurable action verbs in the Course Objectives section of her syllabus.

**Action:** Ms. Russell will talk to Dr. Eleanor Feingold for guidance about choosing a course number.

**Action:** Robin Leaf will send an official letter of approval to Ms. Russell.

### **Plans for EPCC this semester, Candy Kammerer**

Dr. Kammerer proposed a minor change to EPCC protocol. From now on, instructors will be permitted to send a memo to the EPCC Chair for any minor course changes. The course instructors will then be permitted to proceed with the proposed changes. However, if the EPCC decides that the changes are not minor, the EPCC will contact the instructors and request them to submit a course modification proposal. Thus, the EPCC will still be aware of changes that are made, but the time and effort (of the EPCC and instructor alike) will be put to better use.

### **IDP policy, Robin Leaf and Candace Kammerer for Eleanor Feingold**

Robin Leaf and Dr. Kammerer presented a draft of the IDP policy. IDP are now required by NIH for all Ph.D. students funded on NIH grants. Dr. Kammerer presented an example of resource that might be of use to departments as they navigate the new IDP requirement: [myidp.sciencecareers.org](http://myidp.sciencecareers.org). It is a free online tool that guides students as they draft their IDP's online. The Web site also has a Career Exploration and Path Match feature that is available to students free of charge. Dr. Kammerer clarified that departments can still choose how they want students to complete their IDP's and where that information should be stored. They are not required to use this tool. The EPCC approved the IDP policy as written.

**Action:** The policy will be presented at the next GSPH Council meeting for approval.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:57 p.m. for student record reviews.

The next meeting is March 5, 1:30-3:30p.m., 110 Parran Hall.

#### Future items for discussion/ action at upcoming meetings:

Evaluation of Academic Programs; Course evaluations; Program Termination: Preparedness Certificate; Review of fall core course evaluations