

**Graduate School of Public Health
Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee
July 8, 2021 | 1:30-3:30pm**

Present: Andriy Bandos, Jessica Burke, Cindy Bryce, Michael Clark, Michael Dolinger, Jim Fabisiak, Elizabeth Felter, David Finegold, Tiffany Gary-Webb, Nancy Glynn, Robin Leaf, Josh Mattila, Giovanna Rappocciolo, Kimberly Rehak, John Shaffer, and Ada Youk.

The meeting was called to order at 1:32pm by Dr. John Shaffer, chair.

1. Welcome & Flow of Meeting, John Shaffer

Welcome and here for BSPH classes

2. Tier I BSPH Course Introduction, Mara Leff [1:35pm]

a. Review of BSPH Competency Coverage

Mara Leff explained that the BSPH instructors have been attending group meetings and discussing competency distribution throughout the curriculum. The program will take a comprehensive approach to competencies but are working to ensure that courses are unique so students are not getting the same information over and over throughout the program. She also explained that it will be good to revisit master's content to check for potential overlap, but that this is an ongoing process.

b. Review of questions pertaining to course contribution to the BSPH program and how each course involved diversity, equity, and inclusion

Mara Leff raised the question on whether language on BSPH syllabi should be standardized. Additionally, she mentioned that while the syllabi have not been reviewed by the diversity and inclusion committee, but they intend to do so in the near future.

3. New Course: PUBHLT 0100 Fundamentals of Public Health, Mara Leff

Mara Leff presented an application for a new bachelor's-level 3-credit course meant to serve as an introduction to new students and/or transfer students in the bachelor of public health degree program. The course is to incorporate various low-stakes assessments and guest lecturers from different disciplines, a week-long Hackathon for group work, public speaking and presentation skills, and two weeks' worth of class time was reserved for the course's service learning component. Mara mentioned that the goal for the service learning component is to have a curated calendar from the Pitt SERVES calendar, with instructor approval.

EPCC committee members expressed concern for undergraduate students not having transportation to and from service learning events. Alternative ideas were to have working on teams for the service learning components or have students participate in the Pitt SERVES service days, too. Dr. Elizabeth Felter suggested the syllabus use less passive language in the syllabus, and Dr. Andriy Bandos mentioned the course schedule was incomplete.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course after Ms. Leff resubmits the syllabus and provides information about the logistics of the service learning component, including expectations regarding out-of-class time commitments and transportation to locations off-campus, and proofreads the syllabus and consider revising language written in passive voice.

New Course: PUBHLT 0110 *Genes, Cells, and Communities: Introduction to Public Health Biology*, Jeremy Martinson

Dr. Jeremy Martinson submitted a request for a new 3-credit course intended to provide a basic overview of the most pressing global public health challenges of the 21st century. This is a required, Tier 1 course for the BSPH program that will have weekly quizzes to ensure that students are keeping up with the course content. Dr. Martinson explained that Dr. Firoz Abdoel

Wahid, the primary instructor of the course, has reviewed the content. Although Dr. Abdoel Wahid might rearrange a few classes, the overall content will remain the same.

EPCC committee members were confused by the language in the late policy on page 4 of the syllabus. Dr. Jim Fabisiak suggested that the course instructors take into consideration how to include pathogenic processes of disease in with the other course content.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course after Dr. Martinson resubmits the syllabus after clarifying the language regarding no extra penalties for weekly quizzes beyond their own point value, removing one of the duplicate paragraphs explaining the quiz policy, and taking into consideration how content on the basic pathogenic processes of disease, systems biology, and inflammation can be included within the proposed schedule of topics.

New Course: PUBHLT 0120 *Essentials of Health Equity: Exploring Social Structural Determinates of Health*, Andre Brown

Dr. Andre Brown presented an application for a new 3-credit, required, Tier 1 class for the BSPH degree program. Dr. Brown explained that he and Dr. Jamie Egan used a life course perspective to arrange the course topics. This means that after some basic, foundational topics are shared, the subsequent weeks will cover health equity topics that come about at various points through the lifespan.

Dr. John Shaffer explained that the learning objectives #4 and 5 did not use measurable verbs. Dr. Elizabeth Felter expressed concern that there was a disconnect between the course description and the learning objectives, because the course description was intended for a much higher-level course on this topic. Dr. Brown explained that they were in the process of updating the course description to reflect the learning objectives that incorporate lower-level skills and processing. Dr. Giovanni Rappocciolo asked if the grading scale would have plus and minus grades or whether that should be consistent through all the BSPH course syllabi.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course after Drs. Brown and Egan resubmit the syllabus after ensuring that all learning objectives have measurable verbs, such as those from Bloom's Taxonomy, clarifying if pluses and minuses will be used for course grades, and submitting the new course description for inclusion in the University course catalog.

New Course: PUBHLT 0300 *Introduction to Community-Based Approaches to Public Health*, Sara Baumann

Dr. Sara Baumann presented an application for a new 3-credit, required course for the BSPH degree program. She explained that this course was created to introduce students to theories around community-based participatory research and community-based interventions. The syllabus incorporates diverse examples and focuses on health topics in different backgrounds.

Dr. Jim Fabisiak suggested that if students are doing work in the communities, it would be beneficial to talk to students about informed consent. Dr. Baumann mentioned that she had been considering adding an ethics lesson to the syllabus.

Dr. John Shaffer inquired about the attendance/sick policy, not only for this class only, but Pitt Public Health courses in general, and whether alternative ways to make up missed activities need to be added to this syllabus.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course after Dr. Baumann resubmits the syllabus after adding an alternative plan for students who have excused absences to make up the points for in-class activities and considering adding a section on ethics in community-based research.

UPDATE: Dr. Baumann resubmitted the syllabus on July 19, 2021.

New Course: PUBHLT 0330 *Introduction to Epidemiology*, Tom Songer

Dr. Tom Songer presented an application for a new 3-credit, required course for the BSPH degree program. He explained that he has taught a course similar to this one for 18 years for College of General Studies at the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Songer's plan is to combine the sections that he is teaching for CGS/SHRS and Public Health into one section.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course after Dr. Songer resubmits the syllabus after ensuring that all learning objectives have measurable verbs, such as those from Bloom's Taxonomy.

New Course: PUBHLT 0310 Introduction to Biostatistics, Ada Youk

Dr. Ada Youk presented an application for a new 3-credit, required course for the BSPH degree program. She explained her approach for making this course different from the graduate-level statistical courses, including using more simulations and group work as well as focusing on interpretation and meaning of statistical results. Additionally, she explained that there will not be exams but rather a number of quizzes and knowledge checks that students can re-take if necessary.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course.

OMET Questions

EPCC committee members were asked to check their email for a vote on and an explanation for changes to school-level OMET questions.

UPDATE: Committee members voted to approve changes to the questions for fall 2021 only.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:26pm.

Upcoming EPCC Meetings & Deadlines

- July 29 (for July & August combined meeting), Zoom