

**Graduate School of Public Health
Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee
October 1, 2020 | 1:30-3:30pm**

Present: Andriy Bandos, Cindy Bryce, Jessica Burke, Jim Fabisiak, Eleanor Feingold, Elizabeth Felter, David Finegold, Tiffany Gary-Webb, Nancy Glynn, Robin Leaf, Susanna Qiao, Giovanna Rappocciolo, Kimberly Rehak, John Shaffer, Lu Tang, Elizabeth Van Nostrand, and Yi-Chuan Yu.

The meeting was called to order at 1:31pm by Dr. John Shaffer, chair.

New Course: EOH XXXX: *Occupational Hygiene*, Nesta Bortey-Sam [vote required]

Dr. Nesta Bortey-Sam presented an application for a new 3-credit course on occupational hygiene and workplace safety—a need that was discovered after surveying former EOH students. The class will be open to both undergraduate and graduate students and coursework will include lectures, discussion, and hand-on practice. Dr. Bortey-Sam believed the class could also appeal to students in engineering and chemistry departments.

Committee members questioned about the experience of Dr. Emanuele Cauda from NIOSH, listed as the co-instructor, because their teaching percentage was higher than the primary instructor's. After which, Susanna Qiao asked for clarification about exams given on lecture days and recommended renaming the exams. Dr. John Shaffer mentioned that the syllabus still has the template directions listed on it and that students might want to know how the group presentation and class participation will be configured as are currently lumped together as one grade.

ACTION: The committee members voted to approve the course provided that Drs. Bortey-Sam and Cauda revisit the committee to present changes to the course syllabus at an upcoming EPCC meeting. Changes include removing the directions from the syllabus template for the final version of the syllabus, adding the exact text from the course inventory write up to the syllabus, clearly indicating how the group presentation and participation grades will be combined to comprise a percentage of the grade and/or separate them into two different grading categories with separate percentages, and providing more information regarding the teaching qualifications and commitment of Dr. Cauda, the co-instructor for this course.

Modified Course (title change): BIOST 2086: *Applied Mixed Models*, Jong Jeong [vote required]

Dr. Jong Jeong presented an application for a modification to a course involving a name change from *Applied Mixed Models* to *Mixed Models*. The name change reflects the more theoretical approach with the subsequent updates and new textbook.

Dr. Elizabeth Felter mentioned that the university had released a new schedule for Spring so the dates in the syllabus would need updating. With the course being held in the Spring 2021 semester under the Flex@Pitt model, Elizabeth Van Nostrand asked if the course meetings would be synchronous or asynchronous, and Dr. Jeong answered that it would be a mix of both teaching styles. Then, Dr. John Shaffer inquired about the remote-only status to which Dr. Jeong replied that an in-person option is preferable and in-person classes would be reinstated as soon as COVID-19 pandemic mitigation strategies changed.

ACTION: The committee members voted to approve the course provided that Dr. Jeong adjust course schedule with updated Spring 2021 calendar dates.

Modified Course (title change): BIOST 2056: *Introduction to Diagnostic Test Evaluation and ROC Analysis*, Andriy Bandos [vote required]

Dr. Andriy Bandos presented an application for a course modification involving a name change for a decades-old course. Due to a shift of the emphasis in data science and Biostatistics' curricular changes, the department's desired to widen the scope of the course in the title and course description.

Dr. Jim Fabisiak asked whether students would know what "classification markers" were, and Dr. Bandos said that they used that term as it was less specific than biomarkers. Susanna Qiao asked what software would be used in the course and mentioned that software information could be included in the course description. Additionally, Susanna asked if SAS was the only software prerequisite or if an equivalent would suffice.

ACTION: The committee members voted to approve the course modification provided that Dr. Bandos adjusts the schedule to the new academic calendar for Spring 2021, considers updating the title to reflect the biomedical or public health dimension of the course, clarifies whether "or equivalent" in regard to the pre-requisite software packages includes software other than SAS, e.g., R, and considers specifying the software that students will use in the course to the course description, unless this may change year to year.

Modified Course (credit & title change): HPM 2123: *Advanced Topics in Decision and Cost-Effectiveness Analyses in Healthcare*, Hawre Jalal [vote required]

Dr. Hawre Jalal presented an application for course modifications including a change from 3 to 2 credits credit and a title change. The course was originally targeted as an introduction to decision analysis and intended for doctoral students, but Dr. Jalal explained that the course materials had been updated to be geared towards a broad spectrum of students from different backgrounds and include simulations, decision models, and tools for modeling dynamics.

Committee members noted that the syllabus did not include learning objectives, the required syllabus statements, or the most recent spring schedule.

ACTION: The committee voted to have the course proposal be resubmitted as an application for a new course due to the significant changes to the content, title and credits. Additionally, the committee requested the addition of measurable learning objectives using active verbs from Bloom's Taxonomy to the syllabus and for Dr. Jalal adjust the course schedule to the new academic calendar for Spring 2021 and ensure that the syllabus had the most up-to-date syllabus statements.

New Course: HUGEN 2073: *Genomic Data Visualization and Annotation*, Ryan Minster [vote required]

Dr. Ryan Minster presented an application and updated version of the evaluation and grading page for a new 3-credit course meant to show students the guts of doing genomic data analyses, including visualization and integration/annotation as reflected in the course title. Coursework includes the completion of up to 6 projects. The course would employ specifications grading.

Committee members wondered what the grading process would be if students completed 6 out of 6 projects and only 1 visualization. Because specification grading is a relatively new approach, committee members also recommended that information about the grading system be explained as clearly as possible in the syllabus and to the class. Also, committee members expressed that providing more rationale for using the specification grading approach would help in said explanation process.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course provided that Dr. Minster adjust the schedule to the new academic calendar for Spring 2021 and clarify the process for grading in which, for instance, students complete 6 out of 6 projects and only 1 visualization.

Discussion on Creating New Special Studies Course, All

Committee members discussed the matter that some departments have a special studies course number for students to use for essay/thesis work, while others did not have a designation like PUBHLT 2019. Specifically, Dr. Nancy Glynn asked if there were some way to get a placeholder number for this purpose and what the process would be to get approval for such a special students course number.

Dr. Jim Fabisiak said that departments have used these numbers in different ways but should consider the number of credits that get attached to these courses, so as not to be detrimental to students with a low GPA. Dr. Elizabeth Felter said it would be a good idea to get the same sequence/process for each department.

ACTION: Dr. John Shaffer, acting as chair will be able to approve the course for the Epidemiology department to fast-track the process for Spring 2021 as there is little course information to review.

Update & Discussion on EPCC Bylaws, All

The EPCC bylaws were updated with minor updates on the language concerning student members and future proofed by taking out specific titles. These changes will be voted on by Council.

ACTION: Ex-officio membership and potential voting rights for ex-officio members are matters for future discussion.

Update on the Office of Student Affairs, Jessica Burke

Dr. Jessica Burke provided updates from the Office of Student Affairs. To begin, she reminded the committee members of the Student Self Care day on October 14 and stressed that no teaching should take place on that date. She also said that there would be 2 Student Self Care days in the Spring 2021 academic calendar.

Dr. Burke then informed committee members that 4 staff from the Office of Student Affairs had recently retired and that restructuring in the office was underway, including hiring for 2 newly-created positions: Student Services Director and Student Services Specialist. In the meantime, the Student Services division in the Office of Student Affairs, could be reached via stuaff@pitt.edu.

ACTION: No action necessary.

Approval of September Meeting Minutes, All [vote required]

The committee voted to approve the minutes via an e-mail vote. Giovanna Rappocciolo's name was added to the list of attendees.

The open meeting was adjourned at 3:29pm.

Upcoming Meeting(s):

Meetings will be held from 1:30 – 3:30pm on the following date(s):

November 5
December 3