Present: Jessica Burke, Mary Derkach, Ying Ding, Patricia Documet, Julia Driessen (call in),
David Finegold, Summer-Rae Haston, Robin Leaf, Kimberly Rehak, Josh Mattila, Emily Russell,
John Shaffer.

The meeting was called to order at 1:34 PM by Dr. Patricia Documet, chair.

Confirmation of messaging to students who receive EPCC academic communications | Mary Derkach
Mary Derkach shared an updated communication strategy to inform students of academic
performance issues. The plan moving forward is for students to receive an email with subject
line “Response required: academic performance memo,” a memo copy and pasted into the body
of the email and attached in pdf form, and a call to action in the first sentence of the email body
requiring students to reply to the email to confirm its receipt. The committee discussed who
should receive a copy of this email. Presently, the chair of the student’s department, the
department student services representative and the EPCC representative are copied on the
memo; and the student services representative forwards the email to the student’s advisor. The
committee decided it was more prudent for Mary and her staff to figure out who the student’s
advisor was and copy them on the original email.

ACTION: Mary will follow the communication strategy as detailed above.

Review of fall term 2018 core course evaluations | All
The committee reviewed the core course OMET evaluations for the summer 2018 and fall 2018
terms. Members discussed strategies of changes that have been implemented to help
courses/instructors with lower scores improve and commended the improvements from past
semesters for other classes.

ACTION: No action necessary.

Continued discussion of GRE requirement | All
The committee revisited its discussion on whether or not to require the GRE as an admissions
requirement at the school level. Individual departments can still require the GRE test if they
choose to do so. Dr. Cindy Bryce, associate dean for student affairs, provided the committee
with a report from the admissions perspective, which included possible disadvantages of
dropping the GRE and possible alternatives to dropping the GRE. Possible disadvantages
include: difficulty for staff in processing additional applications and the loss of an admission
criterion for the 3+2 program and the judging of Dean’s Scholarship awardees.

Polling responses from the various departments: the Biostatics and Epidemiology departments
voted to keep the GRE with the latter concerned that dropping the GRE requirement could
negatively impact the competitive reputations of its programs. The Human Genetics, Behavior
and Community Health Sciences (BCHS), Health and Policy Management (HPM) and Infectious
Diseases and Microbiology (IDM) departments reported that their departments had mixed
opinions regarding whether to keep the test at the school level, with Human Genetics and HPM
representatives reporting that both of their departments would be willing to relax the requirement at the school level if need be. In particular, Dr. John Shaffer said that some in Human Genetics felt like “the writing is on the wall” and with biomedical schools dropping the requirement, his department might have to drop the GRE test requirement to remain competitive. However, for now, the department wished to retain the requirement. This could also be a concern for the IDM department, in the future.

The EPCC will write a report for the dean with its decision after they vote on this issue at the February 2019 meeting. The report will contain the advantages of and concerns with dropping the GRE requirement and the committee’s recommendations from previous meetings, such as: advertising the school’s holistic admissions on its Web site, offering $1000 scholarship incentives to accepted applicants in underrepresented groups, providing quicker responses to admissions decisions and faster replies to inquiries from prospective students, and providing financial aid information and guidance within acceptance packets. The report will also emphasize the need to revisit this issue periodically, in a proactive manner. If many public health schools drop the GRE requirement, we will need to follow suit to be competitive. That time is not now.

**ACTION:** The committee will vote on whether to abandon the GRE requirement at the school level during the February 2019 EPCC meeting and receive comments on the list of actions to increase enrollment of disadvantaged students.

**Revisit of Open Source discussion | All**
The committee revisited a discussion about switching expensive required textbooks to Open Source replacements in an effort to save students money. As most departments reported that their classes do not require textbooks or fairly inexpensive ones for their classes, the committee decided this was a non-issue for the school and closed this discussion.

**ACTION:** No action necessary.

**Approval of December Meeting Minutes | All**
The committee approved the December 2018 minutes provided that the student name in the first agenda item be redacted and a change in the January meeting date from 9 to 10.

**ACTION:** The committee approved the December minutes.

**Closed session: Fall 2018 Term Student Record Review (open only to voting members)**
The meeting was adjourned at 3:28 PM.

**Upcoming EPCC Meeting Dates | Spring 2019:**

February 7 [1:30-3:30 p.m.] – A521 Crabtree
March 7 [1:30-3:30 p.m.] – 1149 Pitt Public Health
April 4 [1:30-3:30 p.m.] – 1149 Pitt Public Health
May 2 [1:30-3:30 p.m.] – 1149 Pitt Public Health