

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

Present: Cindy Bryce, Jessica Burke, Mary Derkach, Ying Ding, Patricia Documet, Jim Fabisiak, Eleanor Feingold, Elizabeth Felter, David Finegold, Nancy Glynn, Robin Leaf, Karrie Lukin, Josh Mattila, Susanna Qiao, Kimberly Rehak, John Shaffer, Elizabeth Van Nostrand, and Yi-Chuan Yin

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

New Course, HUGEN 2072: Genomic Data Pipelines and Tools, Ryan Minster [vote required]

Dr. Ryan Minster presented an application for a new 3-credit course created as part of the core curriculum for the Human Genetic MS in Bioinformatics, although this course could also appeal to PhD and master's students interested in bioinformatics as it applies to human genetics, such as: biostatistics, systems biology, or epidemiology. The course will emphasize phenotypes and genetics and will feature an applied tools component.

The course incorporates specification grading to evaluate student coding skills and performance on five projects tied to the courses five learning objectives. Committee members agreed that a paragraph explaining the specifications grading in more detail should be added to the syllabus.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course provided that Dr. Minster adds an explanation of the grading system to the syllabus.

Review of New Program: MMPH/ MD

Dr. David Finegold presented for review a new proposal for a shared program between Pitt Public Health and the School of Medicine. The rationale for this proposal was to find a way to meet a currently unmet need and get medical students interested in public health to earn an MPH or PhD degree. In medical school applications, students can identify for their interest in public health, and Dr. Finegold said that Pitt Public Health should market the MMPH to medical students who express such an interest. From there, students can move to an MD/PhD program offered by various departments at the school. Dr. Finegold said that this proposal was presented to the curriculum committee at the medical school. Dr. Nancy Glynn stated that such a program should be marketed correctly and mentioned that the epidemiology department has wanted this connection between Pitt Public Health and the School of Medicine to happen for a long time.

Dr. Patricia Documet corrected that this is not a new program of study as no courses were listed, but rather a pipeline to get the MMPH as an option for medical students to work with interested departments and not solely the MMPH program.

ACTION: Dr. Patricia Documet will write a letter on behalf of the committee on behalf of the dean to endorse an expansion of the marketing of this shared program.

New Course: EOH #####: *Chemical Toxicology* [vote required]

Dr. Nesta Bortey-Sam presented a proposal for a new 3-credit course that is meant to provide hands-on experience for students interested in learning how to design safer chemicals to reduce environmental and occupational health diseases. While this course is primarily intended for EOH students, its appeal could extend to engineering students, as well. However, the cap is set for 30-40 students to allow for hands-on experience.

Dr. Jim Fabisiak mentioned that if the mission of the course is the design of safer chemicals and green chemistry, that information should be incorporated in the course title. Further, Dr. John

Shaffer recommended that the course description be made more general in order to future-proof it in the course inventory. Committee members also noted that the midterm was not included in the course schedule.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course provided that Dr. Bortey-Sam create a broader course description; by, for instance, removing specific prerequisite course information, consider changing the course title so that it reflects the focus on green chemicals and could help with student recruitment, remove instructions from the syllabus template, and consider adding the midterm information on the schedule listed on the syllabus.

Report from the MPH Committee

Dr. Martha Terry delivered the periodic report from the MPH committee, a formal sub-committee of the EPCC to the committee. She explained that the committee worked through the pivot to online in the spring, with discussions on: graduation requirements; completion of practica, including PSI and Bridging the Gaps; course needs, and open discussions on how best to deliver MPH core content in a hybrid Flex@Pitt model. She shared adaptations to fall course schedules, including adding EOH 2013 as fall course, and that the MPH committee was beginning conversations on starting a standalone public health certificate for external students and has been conversing about holistic admissions.

ACTION: No action necessary.

School GRE Requirement: Closing the Loop

Dr. Cindy Bryce and Karrie Lukin, director of admissions and recruitment, reported that they are still waiting for HPM's decisions regarding using the GREs as an admissions requirement. Elizabeth Van Nostrand said that the HPM department would impart their answer soon as the GRE requirement was on the agenda for the department's next curriculum meeting. Dr. Ying Ding asked for a definition of "optional" meant and Karrie said that means students can upload their scores if they want to.

ACTION: No action necessary.

Holistic Admissions: Discussion & Next Steps

Dr. Patricia Documet has that the school needs a clear system to rate applications, preferably in the form of a written rubric, to support its claim of adhering to a holistic admissions process. If necessary, the committee should consider helping to get the information or training that departments need to create a system that fits their needs. A potential coordination with the MPH committee should also be considered.

Dr. Jim Fabisiak asked if the departments were supposed to codify and/or make their processes the same. To which Dr. Patricia Documet said that it was something to think about as a school. Karrie Lukin, the director of recruitment and admissions, said that it is helpful to know what departments look at in applications and that is also fair and helpful for applicants to know expectations departments have and they are looking for, especially as this can be advertised on the Pitt Public Health website and in SOPHAS. Dr. Cindy Bryce echoed this sentiment and said that anything that departments can articulate to help student applications should be advertised on the website.

ACTION: No action necessary.

GPA Policy/ Requirement for Certificate Only Students [vote required]

Mary Derkach said that during an academic record review, she noticed a certificate student had a GPA is under 3.0. There was no guidance or policy on what to do with certificate-only students with a GPA under 3.0 in the University guidelines or regulations of graduate study.

Dr. Jessica Burke contacted the Office of Vice Provost who let the school decide under conditions certificate-only students would be handled. However, there must be a minimum GPA and all students will have to be treated equally. Jessie asked the committee members if the school wanted to set a minimum GPA for non-degree students in our certificate programs. Dr. David Finegold said that if the school does not set a standard, students who earn next 2 courses and complete certificate with GPA under 2.8.

ACTION: The committee will vote on the policy at a future EPCC meeting.

The open meeting was adjourned at 3:15pm for a closed session student record review.

Upcoming Meeting(s):

October 1

November 5

Important Procedural Items for September Meeting

Members Rotating Off Committee:

Patricia Documet & Ying Ding (as of August 2020) | ***Thank you both for your 6 years of dedicated service!***

New chair elected:

The outgoing EPCC chair, Patricia Documet, will call the September 2020 meeting to order and open the floor for nominations EPCC chair nominations, as the first order of business. An anonymous poll will be launched by EPCC staff in Zoom where all will vote. The staff will tally and certify the results. Patricia will announce the new chair who will then take over the meeting. The second order of business will be for the new EPCC chair to welcome the new committee members (faculty & students).