

**Graduate School of Public Health
Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee
March 4, 2021 | 1:30-3:30pm**

Present: Andriy Bandos, Cindy Bryce, Jessica Burke, Michael Clark, Michael Dolinger, Thistle Elias, Jim Fabisiak, Eleanor Feingold, David Finegold, Tiffany Gary-Webb, Nancy Glynn, Robin Leaf, Josh Mattila, Susanna Qiao, Giovanna Rappocciolo, Kimberly Rehak, John Shaffer, Elizabeth Van Nostrand, and Yi-Chuan Yu.

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

New course BIOST 2068: *Introduction to Casual Inference*, Jiebiao Wang [vote required]

Dr. Jiebiao Wang presented an application for a new course created to fill a gap in the current biostatistics curriculum and introduce students to the concepts, reasoning, and statistical methods of causal inference. This course is intended for second year master's biostatistics students and PhD students across the School, especially Epidemiology and HPM students.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course provided that the typo in question #7 of the EPCC application was corrected so that "and familiar with programming" read "and be familiar with programming" and the prerequisite course number for BIOST 2038 is changed to BIOST 2037 in question #8c of the application.

UPDATE: EPCC application (and syllabus) received 3/5/2021.

New course HUGEN 2074: *Genome Bioinformatics Capstone*, Ryan Minster [vote required]

Dr. Ryan Minster presented an application for a new course intended to help students in the MS in bioinformatics program. This course will be held in the fall term of students' second year of the program as a means to prepare students for their theses. This capstone course will provide students with the opportunity to expand their repertoire of analysis and professional skills and communicate results of their internship to faculty and fellow students.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course.

New course PUBHLT XXXX: *Health Equity Research: Methods and Interventions*, Emma Barinas-Mitchell [vote required]

Dr. Barinas-Mitchell presented an application for a new methods course that is part of the Health Equity Certificate curriculum. Responsibility for the course was shifting from the department-level (Behavioral and Community Health Sciences) to the School-level.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course.

Modified course BIOST 2037: *Foundations of Statistical Theory*, Andriy Bandos [vote required]

Dr. Andriy Bandos presented an application for a modified master's-level course, which is moving from 3-credits to 4-credits by adding 15 minutes to each weekly lecture and a required lab/recitation. Not only were these changes recommended by student feedback, but they were also an opportunity to build practical work into course sessions.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course provided that Dr. Bandos fix the typo in the header of the syllabus that lists the class as BIOST 2137, reconcile discordances in the class time, and finalize the decision about whether the TA-led session is a recitation or lab.

New course BLOST 2022: *Capstone Prep*, Ada Youk [vote required]

Dr. Ada Youk presented an application for a new 1-credit course to prepare students for their capstone course. This course will be taught by 3 instructors who will rotate responsibility for the course.

ACTION: The committee voted to approve the course provided that Dr. Youk revise the language in question #7 Statement of the course for Course Inventory and the Course Summary on the syllabus.

UPDATE: EPCC application and syllabus received 3/5/2021.

Scheduling of special EPCC meeting sessions for BSPH approval, All

A special EPCC session to go through the proposals for the BSPH Tier 1 and Tier 2 courses is scheduled from 10-11am on March 12, 2021.

Opening Dialogues & Discussion from the Social Justice Action Leadership Committee, Tina Hershey & Brenda Diergaarde

Two members of the Social Justice Action Committee's curriculum group, Tina Hershey and Dr. Brenda Diergaarde, visited the EPCC committee to start a discussion on how to operational anti-racism into the Pitt Public Health curriculum.

As a first step, the curriculum group has contacted the University Center for Teaching and Learning's Office of Measurement and Evaluation of Teaching (OMET) to find what questions related to diversity and inclusion were already in their question bank. They found that the questions (below) did not directly address issues of anti-racism and social justice. The curriculum group and EPCC committee members suggested that 2-3 standards questions should be decided on and added to OMET surveys for all Pitt Public Health classes starting with the summer 2021 term.

Potential DEI questions to add to OMET surveys*

- I learned to think critically about difficult issues of diversity.
- I became more aware of multiple perspectives on issues of diversity.
- Writing assignments encouraged the inclusion of diverse perspectives.
- Reading assignments covered material from diverse perspectives.
- The course covered material from diverse perspectives.
- The instructor promoted meaningful discussions of issues of diversity.
- The instructor of this course showed respect for all students in the course.
- The instructor of this course encouraged me to respect points of view different from my own.
- The instructor was effective in handling multicultural issues and content.
- How might the course content be more inclusive of diverse groups?
- How might the course materials be more inclusive of diverse groups?

*Some questions may be more relevant to core courses.

The curriculum group also intends to do a systematic review of the core curriculum, but needs to establish what documentation is available from Dr. Noble Maseru's initiatives from his tenure as associate dean for diversity and inclusion. As the new associate dean of diversity and inclusion, Dr. Tiffany Gary-Webb said that she will follow up with Dr. Maseru to get documentation and check on the status of the project. However, since the focus of Dr. Maseru's MPH core curriculum reviews were not using an anti-racism lens, the SJAC curriculum group believes that a total curriculum review will be necessary and establishing the structure and expectations of how said review would be carried out would be both necessary and helpful.

Dr. John Shaffer inquired whether the EPCC committee should add additional questions to its application forms as a way to discern how new and modified courses would be addressing anti-racism, in addition to diversity and inclusion, in their course curriculum. Dr. Gary-Webb agreed that it would be a good addition as it is a means to be in touch with the current climate. Additionally, EPCC committee members discussed if the applications should ask for specific examples and, if so, whether it would be helpful to provide examples on the EPCC website.

However, whether the departmental syllabus review process would be a better time to check for specific anti-racism readings or assignments was also mentioned.

EPCC committee members wondered if Pitt Public Health's [syllabus statement for diversity and inclusion](#) should be revisited by SJAC and possibly EPCC, too (with social justice lens). Finally potential training sessions for how to deal with issues and questions that come up in class was raised as a possibility for the near future.

ACTION: The next step is that EPCC committee members and the SJAC curriculum group will come up with a list of potential mandatory OMET questions that inquire about inclusion and anti-racism issues in Pitt Public Health's classes.

Modified course, HUGEN 2053: *Application in Public Health Genetics and Genomics*, Andrea Durst

Dr. Andrea Durst presented an application for a modified course due to a change in credits from 2–3 credits. This change in credits was proposed to reflect the time required to complete the class and class assignments, allow for additional in-class discussion of topics, and more time for student participation and presentations because of higher enrollment numbers.

ACTION: The committee members voted to approve the course.

BSPH update, Eleanor Feingold, Mara Leff, and Jessica Burke

Mara Leff informed the committee that she is collecting curriculum components from various departments to finalize the proposal for the Bachelor of Science in Public Health program to be proposed and discussed at the special EPCC meeting on March 12. The names, prerequisites, and course descriptions for the Tier 1 and Tier 2 classes will be submitted with syllabi to follow at future EPCC meetings. The “cluster” Tier 3 classes and fleshed-out Capstone requirements will also be brought to the EPCC committee in the near future.

ACTION: No action needed.

Approval of February 2021 Meeting Minutes, All [vote required]

Due to lack of time, the committee will vote on the February 2021 minutes via an e-mail vote.

UPDATE: Committee members voted to approve the February 2021 minutes.

Reminder: Fall new course submission deadline, John Shaffer

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm.

Upcoming EPCC Meetings & Deadlines

- April 1, 1:30-3:30pm, Zoom
- May 6 (2nd Thursday due to University Holiday on 5/7), Zoom
- June 3, Zoom
- July 29 (for July & August combined meeting), Zoom