

**Graduate School of Public Health  
Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee  
May 6, 2021 | 1:30-3:30pm**

Present: Andriy Bandos, Cindy Bryce, Jessica Burke, Mike Dolinger, Jim Fabisiak, Elizabeth Felter, David Finegold, Tiffany Gary-Webb, Nancy Glynn, Robin Leaf, Karrie Lukin, Josh Mattila, Giovanna Rappocciolo, Kimberly Rehak, John Shaffer, Elizabeth Van Nostrand.

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

**Update on BSPH program: Jessica Burke**

Dr. John Shaffer recapped the actions taken on the Bachelor of Science in Public Health (BSPH) program proposal since the April 1, 2021 EPCC meeting. First, EPCC members voted via email to approve the BSPH proposal. After that, as committee chairperson, John sent an approval letter with a list of suggestions and concerns to the dean. Then, he presented the EPCC response to both the Faculty Senate and Educational Committee (FSEC) and the school Council. Concerns about the proposal raised at the FSEC and Council meetings spurred Dean Lichtveld to call for an “all-hands-on-deck” meeting to discuss the BSPH degree program.

Dr. Jessie Burke said that the feedback strengthened the BSPH proposal. Dr. Burke also shared the good news that the meeting with the Provost’s Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Programs (PACUP) went well. The PACUP advisory board provided encouraging feedback about the BSPH curriculum but did have some concerns with issues, such as advising and students transferring out of other programs at the university. The next step is to get the Provost to approve the program. In the meantime, the tier 1 BSPH classes are being planned and will be offered in the fall 2021 term. However, the BSPH program proposal might not be approved until spring 2022 or later.

Dr. Jim Fabisiak asked what would happen if no one registers for the bachelor-level courses in the fall. Dr. Burke replied that there are already students registering for the classes despite no messaging being released yet, so enrollment numbers might not be an issue.

**ACTION:** No action necessary. The school will move forward with offering tier 1 classes in fall 2022 and working to get program proposal approvals.

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion SOPHAS Statement: Cindy Bryce & Karrie Lukin**

Karrie Lukin, the director of admissions and recruitment, asked the committee if a question asking applicants how they could contribute to the diversity, equity, or inclusion at Pitt Public Health should be added to all applications or be required on a department-by-department basis and whether such a question should be optional or required. She added that departments would decide on how to use the answers for decision making processes, for instance, for acceptances or scholarships.

**ACTION:** The committee members voted in favor of requiring a question that asks how applicants would contribute to diversity and inclusion and social justice issues at Pitt Public Health. The exact language is to be determined.

**Discussion on OMET Incentives: John Shaffer**

Dr. John Shaffer raised an issue that was brought to him by a faculty member concerned other faculty are awarding extra points to students who complete an OMET course evaluation. This was concerning because the process of awarding extra points for OMET completion can be considered a violation of student confidentiality and university policy (since OMET evaluations cannot be incentivized). However, as there is already a university policy in place that states the OMETs are voluntary and participation is confidential, there was no need to make a separate policy for Pitt Public Health.

**ACTION:** Dr. Jessica Burke will meet with the OMET office to get more information about how other schools are dealing with the issue of low response rates and will report back her findings at next month's EPCC meeting.

### **Proposed updates to EPCC forms: John Shaffer**

Dr. John Shaffer asked committee members to consider proposed updates and/or to help to edit the question on the EPCC New or Modified Course Form that asks about diversity and inclusion. This is so committee members can examine how course addresses issues of diversity and inclusion more critically and using concrete examples.

#### ***Current Question***

Describe how this course addresses public health issues involving diversity (gender, race, ethnicity, culture, disability, or family status).

#### ***Proposed Updated Question***

Please provide examples of how this course addresses public health issues involving diversity (gender, race, ethnicity, culture, disability, or family status), equity, and inclusion.

[Note: All Pitt Public Health courses are expected to incorporate diverse perspectives and promote equity and inclusion within the context of the material covered.]

**ACTION:** The committee voted to accept the modified language for the EPCC form.

### **Proposed change to the required diversity statement for syllabi: Jessica Burke, John Shaffer**

Drs. Jessica Burke and John Shaffer proposed changes to the required diversity statement for syllabi. There were few changes because the statement was already strong. They added information about social justice and deleted a sentence.

#### **Current Diversity Statement**

The University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be a strength and critical to its educational mission. Pitt Public Health is committed to creating and fostering inclusive learning environments that value human dignity and equity. Every member of our community is expected to be respectful of the individual perspectives, experiences, behaviors, worldviews, and backgrounds of others. While intellectual disagreement may be constructive, no derogatory statements, or demeaning or discriminatory behavior will be permitted.

If you feel uncomfortable or would like to discuss a situation, please contact any of the following:

- the course director or course instructor;
- the Pitt Public Health Associate Dean for responsible for diversity and inclusion;
- the University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion at 412-648-7860 or

<https://www.diversity.pitt.edu/civil-rights-title-ix-compliance/make-report/report-form> (anonymous reporting form)

### **Proposed Diversity Statement | May 2021 – Effective Academic Year 2021-22 Syllabus Requirement**

The University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health considers the diversity of its students, faculty, and staff to be a strength and critical to its educational mission. Pitt Public Health is committed to creating and fostering inclusive learning environments that value human dignity and equity and promote social justice. Every member of our community is expected to be respectful of the individual perspectives, experiences, behaviors, worldviews, and backgrounds of others. While intellectual disagreement may be constructive, no derogatory statements, or demeaning or discriminatory behavior will be permitted.

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**ACTION:** The committee voted to accept the proposed changes to the required diversity statement for syllabi.

### **Discussion of new course deadline changes to match Registrar deadlines for scheduling classrooms: John Shaffer and Andriy Bandos**

This past year Pitt Public Health started to use the university's centralized software for scheduling classroom assignments. While the process has been fairly smooth, one hiccup relates to courses that are not in PeopleSoft when the registrar runs its algorithm as these courses not receive priority for scheduling in the Public Health building.

Dr. Andriy Bandos asked if departments could be informed on the regular deadlines for classroom scheduling so that anyone planning to submit an application for a new or modified course could plan ahead if they wanted to increase their chances of getting a classroom in the Public Health building. This is effectively having a priority deadline for classrooms in addition to the normal EPCC deadlines for new and modified courses. This would make the priority deadline for classrooms the June 2021 EPCC meeting for Spring 2022 course and the February 2022 for Fall 2022 class scheduling.

**ACTION:** The EPCC committee and chairs for department curriculum committees will work to spread the word about the new priority deadlines.

### **Approval of April 1 Meeting Minutes, All [vote required]**

**UPDATE:** Committee members voted to approve the April 1, 2021 minutes.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00pm.

### Upcoming EPCC Meetings & Deadlines

- June 3, Zoom
- July 29 (for July & August combined meeting), Zoom