

Graduate School of Public Health
Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee
December 2, 2021 | 1:30-3:30pm
Zoom Link: <https://pitt.zoom.us/j/93949705481>

Andriy Bandos, Kevin Broom, Mike Dolinger, Elizabeth Felter, David Finegold, Tiffany Gary-Webb, Muhammad Sohaib Khan, Josh Mattila, Ryan Minster, Aparna Ramani, Giovanna Rappocciolo, Kimberly Rehak, Samantha Runa, Elsa Strotmeyer, Ada Youk

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

Discussion on school-wide OMET questions, All [vote required]

Since the EPCC committee only approved the updated OMET questions for Pitt Public Health for fall 2021, the committee was asked to review and alter questions as necessary. Dr. Andriy Bandos mentioned that questions #12-21 were Lickert scale questions but might be better as open-ended ones. Committee members agreed it was better that any Likert scale question answered either “hardly at all” or “to a small degree” trigger an open-ended question for students to provide more information.

Samantha Runa offered a student’s perspective and said that question #9 (“What did the instructor do to help you learn?”) seems too general. The other committee members agreed and suggested the wording be changed to “What strategies did your professor employ that most helped you learn?”

Additional wordsmithing included adding the words in bold “the most effective **and/or worthwhile** about this course” to question #23 and “In my opinion” to the beginning of question #13.

Dr. Ryan Minster mentioned that questions #18 and #21 were pretty similar and suggested that #18 be eliminated. Dr. Andriy Bandos suggested adding back in a question asking if the Assigned work was appropriate to credits.

ACTION: EPCC members approved the suggested updates. Please see Appendix A for the approved list of questions.

Discussion of JEDI in the curriculum, All

Members from the Faculty Diversity Committee (FDC) and a few representatives who served on the now disbanded Social Justice Action Committee (SJAC) have been liaising with EPCC regarding JEDI issues in the school’s curricula. While there a standing discussion, it seems that most parties are unsure how to operationalize processes for curriculum evaluation and/or development beyond small, tangible actions, such as the review of OMET questions and updating of syllabus statements

Dr. Ryan Minster asked who else should be talked to or which references should be used to figure out next steps. The committee members decided to continue to liaise with the FDC members and share the SJAC action plan to reference any items related to curriculum.

ACTION: Committee members will read through the SJAC action plan document for future discussions.

New enrollment requirement for graduation, Mike Dolinger

Mike Dolinger, director of student affairs, asked the EPCC committee to revisit a GSPH policy that states students must be registered for one credit in term they are graduating. He mentioned the school's policy is stricter than the university's policy, which states students have to be registered for credit(s) in the year of graduation. suggest changing enrollment requirement from the semester of graduation to, perhaps, the semester before graduation. Dr. Elsa Strotmeyer countered that if students are working on their essay or thesis the semester they are to graduate, they are doing academic work. Therefore, they should be registered for a credit to indicate the faculty effort for supporting students, especially with the school's new budget model in mind.

ACTION: The EPCC committee will continue discussing this policy in the January 2022 meeting.

Schedule Spring meeting dates and times, All

Scheduling EPCC meeting for the spring 2022 term was complicated due to the fact Dr. Elizabeth Felter's having to teach a core class again during the meeting times. Committee members were asked to respond to a when2meet pool to establish what time works best for the group.

ACTION: The EPCC committee members will fill out the when2meet and Kimberly Rehak will send out January 2022 meeting details.

Other business, All

A faculty member had asked if there was a way for a student to graduate with under 3.0 average. In the GSPH policy (under "Probation and Dismissal Guidelines" on the page <https://publichealth.pitt.edu/academic-handbook/details>) lists a precedent for appeals to be brought to EPCC. Dr. Elsa Strotmeyer asked if students should be extended some grace due to the pandemic's impact on student learning. The committee suggested the student's department follow the policy for an appeal and that the dean will make the final decision.

ACTION: Appeals will be handled on a case-by-case basis and approved by Dean Lichtveld when appropriate.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm.

Upcoming EPCC Meeting(s)

TBD

Modifications

Fall courses- To the Registrar's Office (RO) February of that year, EPCC January of that year

Summer- To the RO November of the previous year, EPCC October of the previous year

Spring-To the RO September of the previous year, EPCC August of the previous year

New Courses

Fall courses- To the RO December of the previous year, EPCC November of the previous year

Spring- To the RO June of the previous year, EPCC May of the previous year

Summer- To the RO September of the previous year, EPCC August of the previous year

Appendix A

Graduate School of Public Health Teaching Survey Questions

Scale (Items 1 – 7): *strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neutral (3), agree (4), strongly agree (5)*

1. The instructor stimulated my thinking.
2. The instructor was enthusiastic about teaching the course.
3. The instructor presented the course in an organized manner.
4. The instructor maintained an environment where students felt comfortable participating.
5. The instructor maintained an environment where students felt comfortable seeking assistance.
6. The instructor provided helpful feedback.
7. Assignments contributed to my understanding of the subject.
8. Express your judgment of the instructor's overall teaching effectiveness.
(Scale: *Ineffective, Only Fair, Competent, Very Good, Excellent*)

Comments (Open ended response)

9. What strategies did your professor employ that most helped you learn?
10. What could the instructor do to improve?
11. Do you have any other information that you would like your instructor to know?

Graduate School of Public Health Additional Questions:

(Scale: *hardly at all, to a small degree, to a moderate degree, to a considerable degree, to a very high degree*)

12. Were there guest lectures in this course? (No/Yes)
 - a) If yes, Were the guest lectures/multiple instructors used effectively?
13. In my opinion, this course made a worthwhile contribution to my knowledge and skills in the subject matter.
14. The course content integrated current topics and examples.
15. The course content covered material from diverse perspectives and incorporated culturally diverse examples.
16. Class activities contributed to a collaborative learning environment (e.g. activities that encourage effective discussion and/or group work).
17. Class activities encouraged active learning (e.g. hands-on activities; student engagement and application with the material; student/instructor reflection; simulation/role playing)
18. In-class activities (e.g. lectures, discussions, group work) contributed to your learning of the course content.
19. Out of class activities (e.g. readings, homework, Canvas course content) contributed to your learning of course content.
20. Assigned work was appropriate for the credits.
21. The instructor welcomed, respected and valued all students and their perspectives in the learning environment.

Comments (Open ended response)

22. What did you find most effective and/or worthwhile about this course?
23. In future offerings of this course, what do you feel should be added or given more time or emphasis to improve learning? Feel free to suggest ideas which you think would improve the course.