Graduate School of Public Health
Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee
September 5, 2019
1:30-3:30pm
1149 Public Health

1.   Welcome to a new year, Patricia Documet, EPCC Chair

2.   Review of member terms of service, Patricia Documet

3.   Accreditation Update, Eleanor Feingold, Executive Associate Dean

4.   Enrollment Initiatives, Eleanor Feingold

5.   GRE Updates, Patricia Document and All

6.   Report from the MPH (formal EPCC sub-committee), Martha Terry, MPH Committee Chair

7.   Review of summer core course evaluations, Patricia Document

8.   Approval of June Meeting Minutes, All

CLOSED SESSION:
1.   Student academic record review for the summer term, Mary Derkach

Upcoming Meeting(s):
October 3, 2019 – 1:30-3:30 p.m. (1149 Public Health) | Deadline for spring 2020 course modification proposals

November 7, 2019 – 1:30-3:30 p.m. (1149 Public Health) | Deadline for spring 2020 new course proposals

December 5, 2019 – 1:30-3:30 p.m. (1149 Public Health)

Member Terms of Service | Updated August 2019

Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee		DEPT	Representative Name	1st Term Expiration Date (AUG)	2nd Term Expiration Date (AUG)
EPCC: primary representatives	Chair	BCHS	Documet, Patricia	2017	2020
		BIOST	Ding, Ying	2017	2020
		EOH	Fabisiak, James	2019	2022
		EPID	Glynn, Nancy	2018	2021
		HPM	Van Nostrand, Elizabeth	2022	
		HUGEN	Shaffer, John	2018	2021
		IDM	Rappocciolo, Giovanna	2021	
EPCC: back-up representatives*		BCHS	Hawk, Mary		
		BIOST	Bandos, Andriy		
		EOH	Opresko, Patricia		
		EPID	Haggerty, Catherine		
		HPM	Barron, Gerald		
		HUGEN	Urban, Zsolt		
		IDM	Mattila, Joshua		

*Please check with your department and/ or back-up representative that they are available to serve in this capacity, by attending and voting on behalf of the department. Back-up representatives are not held to the same voting or nomination process as primary representatives, per committee bylaws.

EPCC: student representatives	Master's	*to be named*	2020
	Master's alternate	*to be named*	2020
	Doctoral	*to be named*	2020
	Doctoral alternate	*to be named*	2020

Student are eligible to serve a one-year term.

A Case for Equity: SPH Drops GRE Admission Requirement

POSTED ON: July 30, 2019

TOPICS: diversity, education, inclusion, master's degrees, public health education

Beginning with the 2019-2020 application cycle, the School of Public Health will eliminate the GRE as an admission requirement for its graduate programs for a pilot period of three years.

This decision reflects the school's commitment to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion among its student body. A range of scholarship indicates that the GRE is costly, biased, and a poor predictor of academic success.

"Diversity of all kinds is fundamental to a rewarding educational experience," says Sandro Galea, dean and Robert A. Knox Professor. "The school aims to remove any structural barriers that interfere with recruitment and retention of diverse students."

After consulting with the SPH Governing Council and program directors, Galea says that the evidence and overwhelming support for this idea "gives confidence that this is the right move at the right time."

The GRE has become a financially burdensome hurdle to many test takers, particularly for potential students from under-privileged backgrounds. The current cost of the general examination is $205, and it costs an additional $27 per school or program to send scores. GRE preparation courses can cost thousands of dollars.

The exam has also been shown to disadvantage women and minority students, particularly in STEM fields. Evidence shows that standardized tests in general have been systematically biased, with test scores associated with socioeconomic status, race,

and gender. The Educational Testing Service, which administers the exam, reports that women score on average 80 points lower than men, and African Americans score 200 points lower than whites.

Data also shows that the correlation between GRE scores and academic success in graduate school is weak. A meta-analysis of over 1,700 studies reported weak correlations between GRE scores and measures of success in graduate programs. Similarly, analysis of data from MPH students at SPH has shown no significant differences in mean GRE component scores between first-year students who failed to achieve an overall 3.0 GPA and those who did not.

Over the three-year pilot period, Galea says the school will evaluate the quality and trends of applications in comparison to peer schools. SPH will also track outcomes for graduates to ensure that the school continues to meet its employment goals. During this period, applications for the school will include program-specific questions to ensure that the admissions committees have sufficient data to select the right students for the right programs.

"We have faculty and staff who work hard in admissions to evaluate applicants holistically and to identify those that elevate our mission and values," says Lisa Sullivan, associate dean for education. "I am very optimistic that eliminating the GRE is the right move for us and I am proud to be part of a school that takes this position."

Apply here.

RELATED PROFILES:

Sandro Galea

Lisa Sullivan

2 comments

So your evidence provided here that the test is biased is:

1. An NEA article about how standardized testing has some racist origins, which is irrelevant to this case.
2. A column from Nature that mentions that certain groups have lower scores, but does not try to elaborate why that might be.

It is remarkable to me how lazy we get about our science in cases like this. The correlation = causation fallacy is particularly rampant when it comes to trendy social causes, indulged in by scientists who should know better.

Reply

In Asian country In fact IELTS is a money making exam for Cambridge, and majority of the students are struggling with that , so it would be a great burden to those people who belong a under-privileged country. I

appreciate the initiative

Reply

Post Your Comment

Name*

Email*

Comment (view guidelines)

Submit Comment

Semesters Offered | Overall teaching effectiveness OMET score

Core Course & Instructor	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Summer 2017	Fall 2017	Spring 2018	Summer 2018	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Summer 2019
BCHS 2509	4.2 Thistle Elias	4.47 Martha Terry	5 Martha Terry	4.11 Thistle Elias	4.74 Martha Terry	4.25 Martha Terry	4.24 Thistle Elias	3.89 Martha Terry	5 Martha Terry	4.5 Thistle Elias	4.13 Martha Terry	4 | 4.5 Martha Terry
BIOST 2011	3.37 Ada Youk			*not evaluated* Ada Youk	4.74 Jenna Carlson			3.81 Shyamal Peddada			4.74 Jenna Carlson	
BIOST 2041	4.56 Sally Morton			3.55 John Wilson			3.01 Laurel Chiapetta			4.4 Jenna Carlson		
BIOST 2042		---------------- Stewart Anderson										
EOH 2013		3.65 Aaron Barchowsky			3.66 Aaron Barchowsky			4.08 Aaron Barchowsky			3.95 Aaron Barchowsky	
EPIDEM 2110	3.77 Tom Songer		---------------- Tom Songer	4.04 Tom Songer		4.27 Tom Songer	4.22 Tom Songer	3.32 Thomas Songer	3.92 Thomas Songer			3.71 Thomas Songer
HPM 2001	4.25 Everett James	4.18 Everett James		4.58 Everett James	4.48 Everett James		4.55 Everett James	4.58 Everett James		4.74 Alton James	4.54 Julie Donohue	
PUBHLT 2011		4.11 Jeremy Martinson			4.12 Jeremy Martinson			4.32 Jeremy Martinson			4.19 Jeremy Martinson	4.19 Jeremy Martinson
PUBHLT 2014	2.88 Gerry Barron			*not evaluated* Gerry Barron								
PUBHLT 2015	4.42 Jeremy Martinson		4.67 | 5 Jeremy Martinson | Ryan Minster	4.65 | 4.29 Jeremy Martinson | Ryan Minster		4.33 | 4.17 Jeremy Martinson | Ryan Minster	4.79 | 4.58 Jeremy Martinson | Ryan Minster		4.75 | 4.63 Jeremy Martinson | Ryan Minster	4.47 | 4.68 Candace Kammerer | Jeremy Martinson		4.9 Jeremy Martinson
PUBHLT 2033										4 Jessica Burke	4 Wendy Braund	
PUBHLT 2034*										3.8 | 3.89 Eleanor Feingold 2.33 | 2.5 Steven Fine	3 | 2.57 Steve Fine	4.2 Cyndy Salter
PUBHLT 2016/PUBHLT 2035*	3.2 Candy Kammerer	2.31 | 3.43 Candy Kammerer	4 | 3.86 Elizabeth Bjerke | Ryan Minster	3.1 | 3.62 Candy Kammerer	3.86 | 3.25 Candy Kammerer	no data Candy Kammerer	3.6 | 3.7 Candy Kammerer	3.59 | 3.35 Elizabeth Felter	4.29 | 4.43 Candace Kammerer | Ryan Minster	4.05 | 3.35 Elizabeth Felter	3.23 | 4 Cyndy Salter | Mara Leff	3.78 Cyndy Salter

* multiple sections

Data available from Fall 2011

OMET Question	**Instructor's overall teaching effectiveness**
Express your judgment of the instructor's overall teaching effectiveness
Scale 1-5

<u>Present:</u> Jessica Burke, Mary Derkach, Ying Ding, Patricia Documet, Jim Fabisiak, Nancy Glynn, Robin Leaf, Giovanna Rappocciolo, Kimberly Rehak, and John Shaffer

The meeting was called to order at 1:31PM by Dr. Patricia Documet, chair.

New Course: BIOST XXXX Introduction to Health Data Science | Ada Youk

Dr. Ada Youk presented an application for a new 2-credit course on behalf of Dr. Saumyadipta Pyne. This course is intended for the curricula of the new Biostatistics areas of concentration. Ada said that the department had been working in close conjunction with Dr. Paul Cohen from the School of Computing and Information in development of the course, so that it addresses public health content missing from ones offered at the School of Computing and Information while also avoiding as much overlap as possible. This course will be intro-level to data analysis, data cleaning, data wrangling, and visualization and primarily use R but also expose students to SQL and Python as those languages will be used in higher-level Biostatistics courses.

Committee members suggested making the fact that the course will utilize public health data more apparent on the syllabus.

<u>ACTION:</u> The committee voted to approve the course provided that Dr. Pyne update the disability statement to the most recent version. They also suggested that Dr. Pyne find opportunities to reinforce that this course will use public health data as a way to distinguish this data science course from those offered at the School of Computing and Information. Committee members suggested adding "public health data" to the course title, course description, the learning objectives, or any combination of the latter to help make that distinction.

New Course: BIOST 2038: Foundations of Statistical Data | Andriy Bandos

Dr. Andriy Bandos presented an application for a new 3-credit course designed for terminal Biostatistics master's students. Rather than take the one-year theories sequence (BIOST 2043 and BIOST 2044), which has oftentimes proved a bit too advanced for master's students, this course will feature similar material at a more introductory level but advanced enough to allow for success in the qualifying exam.

Dr Ying Ding questioned whether the BIOST 2043 and BIOST 2044 would be required if a student takes this new course but then decides to pursue a PhD. The answer was "yes."

<u>ACTION:</u> The committee voted to approve the course provided that Dr. Bandos updates the academic integrity statement to the most recent version.

Review of course evaluations from spring term core courses | All

The committee reviewed the quantitative data course evaluations scores from the core courses. Scores for PUBHLT 2035 and PUBHLT 2034 were a bit lower than average. The committee is particularly interested in comparing scores for the communications after the fall semester, when it will be taught by a single professor. Additionally, the committee gave kudos to Dr. Jenna Carlson for the outstanding scores she received for BIOST 2011.

<u>ACTION:</u> No action needed.

Update from Provost's Office on GRE in graduate admissions | All

The committee briefly discussed a May 29, 2019 memorandum from the Provost's Office entitled "Use of the GRE in graduate admissions." The memo served as a reminder that the GRE is not a requirement, that schools should have conversations about requiring it for admissions purposes, and that use other considerations should also be utilized when admitting students.

The committee briefly discussed point #4 in the memo: *"Programs requiring the GRE should strongly consider processes by which this requirement could be waived for students for whom taking and reporting the test would represent a financial hardship."* Dr. John Shaffer questioned which processes were available for applicants unable to afford the GRE due to financial hardship and whether or not there should be a waiver process for the GRE as well as the WES.

Dr. Patricia Documet also asked that the GRE expirations be put on the School's Web site.

ACTION: Dr. Jessie Burke will follow up with the Provost's Office to see if the University has any recommendations or if other accommodations have been waived and what other schools have been doing with regards to the GRE.

Approval of May Meeting Minutes | All

ACTION: The committee approved the May meeting minutes.

Closed session: Spring 2019 Term Student Record Review (open only to voting members)

The meeting was adjourned at 2:47PM.