Graduate School of Public Health  
**Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes | November 13, 2014**

Present: Candace Kammerer, Patricia Documet, David Finegold, Marissa Kaplan, Robin Leaf, Mary Derkach, Wes Rohrer, Ying Ding, Jane Clougherty, Joyce Bromberger, Wes Rohrer, Anil Ojha, Elizabeth Rodgers, Varun Sharma, Eleanor Feingold

Guests: Gail Richardson, Emma Barinas-Mitchell, Tiffany Gary-Webb

Meeting called to order at 1:32 p.m. by Candace Kammerer, Chair.

Program Modification: Minority Health Certificate, Tiffany Gary-Webb (BCHS)

Dr. Tiffany Gary-Webb presented curriculum changes to the Minority Health Certificate program. She is looking to change the certificate’s requirements so that it more accessible to non-BCHS students. She hopes to make the cross-cutting component of the course a bit more flexible as well. Students will have the option of substituting the Methods course for the certificate with the Methods course from their home department. The certificate is structured around 10 required credits and 5 credits worth of electives. Dr. Gary-Webb was under the impression that only 3 out of the 5 elective credits could overlap with the student’s degree, but would be open to changing this requirement to allow for 100% overlap if it is allowed by the School and her department. Courses for this certificate are designed to be taken sequentially. If sequencing becomes too much of a barrier for students who try to start the certificate during the spring instead of the fall, Dr. Gary-Webb may need to reconsider/redesign the sequencing of courses for this certificate. The certificate will include a practicum experience. A practicum checklist will be provided to and completed by each student. Checklists will be reviewed and signed by an advisor.

**Action:** Dr. Gary-Webb will clearly outline prerequisites and course sequences in the certificate’s handbook, so that students understand exactly what is expected of them.

**Action:** Dr. Gary-Webb will try to arrange for 100% overlap of elective credits for this certificate with her department.

Diversity Summit Talking Points, Emma Barinas-Mitchell (immediate past FDC chair)

Dr. Emma Barinas-Mitchell shared her findings after attending the June 2014 Diversity Summit which focused on Diversity in Curriculum. Dr. Barinas-Mitchell told Committee members about some of the pipeline programs that help middle school students get into U. Pitt college programs (e.g. through the Swanson School of Engineering). She reiterated the fact that there are many resources related to diversity available online on the U. Pitt Web site and through the Faculty Diversity Committee. Participants in the Diversity Summit Student Panel expressed a need for a more diverse faculty body at Pitt and more resources for LGBTQ students and students with disabilities. Questions were raised about how students who are experiencing temporary disabilities
at Pitt Public Health are given access to help and whether there is a formal process for students to indicate they are in need of assistance. There was also a question as to what resources are available to them as they try to manage their schoolwork and their health. Elizabeth Rodgers commented that the Office of Disability Services may not be the best resource for students with disabilities as, according to personal experience, transportation services are limited and the Office does not address the counseling needs that students going through these situations might need. Further discussion on this topic is needed, but it was suggested that the Office of Disability and Counseling Services be invited to the Pitt Public Health Information Marketplace during Orientation. Even though this raises some concerns about information overload, it is clear that these services need to be publicized more aggressively to our students.

Course Modification: Pediatric Epidemiology (EPIDEM 2340) Gail Richardson (EPIDEM)

Dr. Gail Richardson presented changes to EPIDEM 2340, Pediatric Epidemiology. This course will not be offered until fall term 2015, but she hopes to get approval now to allow for adequate publicity of the course. The scope of the course has been broaden to include physical disorders (e.g. asthma, obesity) and touches shortly on prenatal. Dr. Richardson would like to keep the current course number and noted that this should not be a records keeping issue since the students who have taken this course have already graduated. Dr. Richardson shared a preliminary list of guest speakers who will correspond with each section of the course. Dr. Richardson noted that the order of the sessions may change depending on the availability of the speakers, but wanted to clarify that the learning object for the course will apply to each course session, regardless of the speaker. Dr. Richardson will give out her own course evaluations at the end of the term, in addition the OMET evaluations. This is why the evaluation deadline that is currently listed on the syllabus can be ignored. She would like to cap the number of students at 15.

**Action:** Dr. Richardson will flesh out the course syllabus, including learning objectives for each section/session of the course and examples of what students will be doing during those session. She can use examples from the original course if need be.

**Action:** Robin Leaf will make changes to the EPCC course modification form to include a space for instructors to list the changes they are making to their course. This is not apparent on the current form. Changes to the form can be made in January.

**Votes**

Dr. Kammerer proposed a vote to approve the Minority Health Certificate program modifications presented by Dr. Tiffany Gary-Webb. Dr. Joyce Bromberger motioned to approve the proposed changes. Varun Sharma seconded the motion. All were in favor. There were no objections or abstentions.

Dr. Kammerer proposed a vote to approve the modifications to the Pediatric Epidemiology course present by Dr. Gail Richardson. Dr. Bromberger motioned to approve the modification pending a few minor revisions to the syllabus. Dr. Patricia Documet seconded the motion. All were in favor. There were no objections or abstentions.

**Action:** Robin Leaf will send approval letters to Drs. Gary-Webb and Richardson.
Approval of October meeting minutes, Candy Kammerer
Dr. Kammerer presented the October EPCC minutes for approval. Mary Derkach requested a few minor changes. She wanted to clarify that she attended the “Counseling Minority Students” breakout session and that both her and Robin Leaf attended the general meeting. Dr. Kammerer proposed a vote. Varun Sharma motioned to approve the minutes pending the proposed changes. Elizabeth Rodgers seconded the motion. All were in favor. There were no objections or abstentions.

Action: Robin will update and post the October EPCC minutes.

Independent Development Plan Policy, Eleanor Feingold
Dr. Eleanor Feingold presented updates on the Independent Development Plan Policy at the University of Pittsburgh. There is no policy available for review at this time, but this issue will be discussed again in January. Current thinking is that students will have to review their IDP’s once a year and will be reviewed during prelims and comp exams.

Action: EPCC representatives were charged to bring this topic up in their respective departments, if they have not already done so.

Discussion of self-study text, Eleanor Feingold
Dr. Feingold reminded the EPCC that the Self Study is due soon and that Committee Members may be asked for help reviewing the text in the coming weeks.

Action: Members, particularly student representatives, were asked to send any additional comments on the text, comments about any positive things the School does that are not currently highlighted in the text (particularly things that relate to practice, service, or the assessment of educational programs), and comments on the overall strengths and weakness listed in the text to Dr. Feingold via email or to schedule a meeting with her as soon as possible.

Cross-Listing Courses, Patricia Documet/ How to make students aware of courses in other departments, Candy Kammerer
Dr. Patricia Documet wanted to clarify a few questions she has about the School’s policy on cross-listing courses. The consensus was that the School discourages cross-listing within the School, between departments. However, exceptions to this rule may be possible if the Department Chair mandates that a course be cross-listed with another Pitt Public Health department. Cross-listing with other schools outside of Pitt Public Health is allowed. Questions still remain about where funding for interdisciplinary courses comes from/is decided. These issues are to be discussed at a later date. Dr. Kammerer suggested that instructors make it clear that their course is open to students in other departments in their course descriptions and syllabi and that instructors talk with the departments they would have hoped to cross-list with in regards to publicity.

Action: This topic must also be discussed during an MPH Committee meeting.
Constructing syllabi, Candy Kammerer
Dr. Kammerer wanted to pass along a few tips for constructing syllabi. Ideally syllabi length will be minimal so that students have to look at CourseWeb for updates. A hyperlink should be included on syllabi so that students can access a real-time, up-to-date version of the syllabus on CourseWeb. Since a lot of students are now viewing course documents on their mobile devices, syllabi might need to be constructed in column format soon (columns are easier to read on a mobile screen).

December and January meeting agenda items – send in advance
Robin Leaf reminded members that items for the December and January EPCC meetings will need to be sent in advance due to the impending holiday breaks.

Action: Member must send agenda items for the December and January meetings to Robin Leaf as soon as possible.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m. The next meeting is December 4, 1:30-3:30 p.m., 110 Parran Hall.

Future items for discussion/ action at upcoming meetings: