

Graduate School of Public Health
Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee
Meeting Minutes | February 18, 2016

Present: Robin Leaf, Mary Derkach, Quinten Brown, Yue Chen, Patricia Documet, Eleanor Feingold, Nancy Glynn, John Shaffer, Jane Clougherty, Ying Ding, Julia Driessen, Melanie Callahan, David Finegold

Absent: Hristina Denic, Cindy Bryce

Guest: Steve Fine, Robert Krafty

The meeting was called to order at 1:30pm by Dr. Patricia Documet, Chair.

GSPH Writing Course Discussion, Steve Fine

Steve Fine, who is an undergrad professional writing instructor at the University of Pittsburgh, was a guest at the February EPCC meeting. Using a combination of his public relations background and writing skills, Mr. Fine also teaches writing fundamentals to companies all across Pittsburgh.

Mr. Fine was introduced to EPCC by Joan Anson, Director of Career Services in Pitt Public Health. The committee welcomed Mr. Fine to be a guest at a meeting, to discuss possible solutions to helping students with writing issues. Mr. Fine's thinking was this: Intelligent people still have a lack of awareness related to what a well written document entails. Mr. Fine's plan to help the students of Pitt Public Health is to acknowledge student's bad writing habits, and help them create better habits moving forward. Mr. Fine was focused more on proper professional writing techniques, which may not be exactly what Pitt Public Health is looking for.

Mr. Fine has had limited experience with instructing non-native English speakers, so the ELI (English Language Institute) may be the better option for that group of students. The committee understands that it is vital that these writing course opportunities are presented as an opportunity to improve, not a punishment or requirement.

Mr. Fine's visit to EPCC helped move this discussion along, and all should anticipate this discussion continuing at a later time.

Action – Eleanor Feingold will reach out to Mr. Fine to ask some follow-up questions, and will also reach out to ELI to explore our options more carefully.

EPCC Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), Patricia Documet and Robin Leaf

EPCC Web Form, Robin Leaf

Typically, meeting agenda items are not grouped together in the meeting minutes, but these two items share a connection – streamlining the process in which things are submitted to EPCC. The SOP document outlines what course changes need to be brought to EPCC. This document

provides a clear explanation/expectation of what needs to come past EPCC. It is important to note that the SOP document is not a permanent document. The committee welcomes its creation, but will edit the document as the opportunity arises.

The discussion of the EPCC web form is similar to that of the SOP document. The web form will serve as an efficient way for faculty to submit new courses, course modifications, etc. The document distributed to the committee is the general idea of what will be included on the web form, as well as how it will work.

Action - Robin Leaf will continue to work with the Dean's Office IT team to create a working prototype to demo to the committee.

Intro to BIOST Class, Robert Krafty

To continue the discussion regarding potentially underprepared Pitt Public Health students performing poorly in BIOST math classes, Robert Krafty, Visiting Associate Professor, served as a guest during the February EPCC meeting. Dr. Krafty was able to bring the perspective of the BIOST Curriculum Committee to EPCC.

There is a new BIOST course being created, which will be a revision of BIOST 2041. The hope is that this course will better serve a population of students that might not need the material covered in BIOST 2011 or BIOST 2042. This means that BIOST 2041 and 2042 will be split. BIOST is also proposing holding BIOST 2011 during the spring. These changes will open an elective spot for our students, and will allow our students to find the best BIOST fit for them.

Action – Eleanor Feingold will reach out to Program Directors to discuss long-term scheduling implications.

Continued Syllabus Template Policy Discussion, All

During our most recent CEPH Accreditation, one aspect that CEPH felt our school needed to improve on was the consistency of our syllabi. Robin Leaf has taken on the task of updating our school's syllabus template, which was first created in 2013. The committee reviewed the template, and offered suggestions for edits.

Action - After the suggested edits are made, Robin Leaf will electronically distribute the syllabus template to the committee for a vote.

Approval of February Meeting Minutes

Julia Driessen was omitted from the list of committee members in attendance at the February meeting. With that edit suggested, the minutes were approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm.

The next meeting is Thursday, March 17, 2016, 1:30-3:30 p.m. in room 110 Parran Hall.

Future items for discussion/ action at upcoming meetings:

Mapping Course Learning Objectives to Course Activities/Lectures

New Course Flyer Template