Present: Jessie Burke, Mary Derkach, Ying Ding, Patricia Document, John Fabisiak, Nancy Glynn, Summer Haston, Robin Leaf, Giovanna Rappocciolo, Emily Russell and John Shaffer

The meeting was called to order at 1:33pm by Dr. Patricia Documet, chair.

New course: HPM XXXX
Dr. Kevin Broom, HPM, presented a new zero credit course, HPM Professional Development Seminar, to the committee. The proposed course is designed to prepare HPM students to enter into the health industry workforce. The course would be a requirement for all HPM students in the MHA and MPH programs. The course would be added to the first year curriculum and, as presented to the committee, would be taught as a 0-credit, pass/fail course. With a zero credit course there would not be any changes made to the overall number of required credits for either degree program.

The course would provide students with skills to assist them in securing internships and future job opportunities. It would also expose them to the breadth of health industry professions, and expand the current pattern of alumni working mostly in the hospital sector. The course learning objectives are based on other high ranking CAHME accredited schools, of which the MHA program is accredited by. The course was designed not to have exams, projects, or case studies but instead to focus on professional development and an overall exposure of health professions. The course will have a self-reflection component which will allow students to reflect on their future professional goals. Student attendance and participation are also a key component to this course. At least two other schools at Pitt, Law & GSPIA, have courses like this for their students.

The committee raised the question of why the course was not split into two separate courses, as the content is different between the terms. Having the presented course be split would assist in tracking completion of both components for graduation. The Committee expressed the concern that if the course was to be offered as one catalog number, where students would register for the course twice, it could become confusing for them who start in the spring term or for students who might need to take a leave of absence. Mary Derkach, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, informed the committee that a yearlong course, longer than one semester is not feasible at the University. The outcome was that this course would need to have two separate classes that you have to complete in sequential order.

The Committee discussed the zero credit component of this proposal and noted that throughout the school there are other zero credit courses, departmental seminars and Grand Rounds. Dr. Jessica Burke, Associate Dean for Education noted that she has been in touch with the Provost’s Office and is currently having the discussion with them on whether a zero credit can still be offered at the University. The first step was to move through EPCC, while Dr. Burke discusses the larger component of the credits associated with the course. She will update Dr. Broom and the committee on the outcome. As part of this discussion, the committee brought up the potential issue for programs to have multiple zero credit required courses and whether there should be a limit to them.

The Committee requested that Dr. Broom modified the 7th learning objective on the syllabus to a measurable verb, i.e. commit to lifelong learning by engaging in activities of a professional organization.
If the credits are changed, then there would need to be a larger evaluation of the course content.

The committee recommended to:
- Separate the content into two courses over two terms with two different course numbers (i.e. Prof Dev 1, Prof Dev 2). Dr. Broom needs to two proposals, with separate syllabi, for courses. He will receive this feedback via formal letter from the committee chair, and once Dr. Burke receives an update from the Provost’s Office she will follow-up with Dr. Broom and the committee.

**ACTION:**
The committee will defer to vote on the course(s) to the March meeting, while Dr. Burke has the conversation with the Provost’s Office.

**Modified course: EPIDEM 2920**
Dr. Nancy Glynn (EPIDEM) presented the modified course, *Grant Writing*, on behalf of Dr. Lisa Bodnar as she is currently on sabbatical. The proposal is to increase the course credits from two to three. This course has been evolving over the past years since Dr. Bodnar took over as course director. This course was last taught during the spring 2018 term, and it is now being moved to the fall term. The shift of the timing will better assist students in EPIDEM as they will have prepared their specific aims, as part of the program requirement. The course then will assist students in drafting the components required for a K or other grant. Also, the didactic material and the out of class deliverables of this course now equate to three credits.

**ACTION:**
The committee voted to approve the course with minor changes, no need to come back to EPCC. The changes are: Include a complete grading scale in the syllabus (with D and F as potential); and remove the pre-requisite of the EPIDEM 2185 Introduction to SAS course as the skills gained within that course are not needed for the modified course.

**Vote on GRE Summary & Proposal**
The committee revisited the potential to remove the GRE as a requirement for admission, due in part to a recently published article and the announcements made by Pitt's School of Medicine and Graduate School of Public and International Affairs to both drop the requirement of GRE scores. This discussion was a continuation from September 2018, and a prior discussion on testing bias which began in March 2017.

At the core of this issue were the two Pitt schools dropping the requirement, the trend of test optional admissions, and the discussions on whether removing the GRE as a requirement would increase diversity of applicants and students.

Each committee member went back to their departments to report on this discussion that spanned months, and they each brought back comments to the committee. We confirmed that all Pitt Public Health departments now use a holistic admissions process in reviewing applications, which the literature recommends.

During the past months, we learned that the “aspirational” schools of public health have not dropped the GRE requirement. We also learned that a sizeable proportion of admitted applicants who are in underrepresent categories do not matriculate. Attracting them would help us increase diversity.
**ACTION:**
The committee voted to recommend that the school maintain the GRE admission requirement, as there is not a compelling reason at this time to drop it.

Dr. Documet as committee chair will draft a letter to accompany the compiled report. The draft letter will first be circulated among the committee for approval. Following approval, the letter and report will be sent to the Dean to be presented at an upcoming Council meeting.

Prior to completing the report, Dr. Documet will follow-up with Dr. Cindy Bryce, Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Office of Student Affairs for clarification, in appendix B, in the report out of their office.

The report will contain a literature review with a complete bibliography, a list of the departmental/program decisions regarding the GRE requirement, and appendices containing the report from Dr. Bryce and Student Affairs, as well as all of the articles reviewed.

The letter will also note that the committee recommends discussing the current trends and the needs of the school every two years, unless otherwise needed prior to that date. It will also contain the recommendations to increase diversity, some of which Student Affairs is already implementing.

The January 2019 meeting minutes were approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:19 pm. The next EPCC meeting is March 7 at 1:30pm in room 1149.

The April EPCC meeting scheduled for the first week of the month has been moved to Thursday, April 11 at 1:30pm to meet in room 1149.