

**Graduate School of Public Health
Educational Policies and Curriculum Committee
Meeting Minutes | January 11, 2018**

Present: Jessie Burke, Yue Chen, Mary Derkach, Ying Ding, Jim Fabisiak, David Finegold, Robin Leaf, MonaLisa Leung Beckford, Chantele Mitchell-Miland, Kimmy Rehak, and John Shaffer.

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

Increase to Credit Cap | Jessie Burke

Dr. Jessica Burke informed the committee on a school-wide effort to increase the maximum number of credits that can be taken in a semester from 15 to 16. Currently, only MHA students can enroll for 16 credits. Jessie explained that this increase would allow for more flexibility, so that, for instance, students could take additional elective courses or enroll in a certificate program. She explained that the HPM department had feared that a credit increase could lead to students overloading their schedule in order to graduate in fewer semesters, resulting in a loss of revenue. In contrast, she added that the Epidemiology department welcomed the increase in credits so that students could graduate in three semesters. Dr. Patricia Documet expressed concern about students' grades and/or quality of work that could result from an overloaded schedule, and Dr. Jim Fabisiak suggested that perhaps students could be prevented from overloading their schedule in their first semester or year of graduate school. The committee decided to allow such scheduling decisions to be made by departments and/or advisors.

ACTION: Dr. Jessica Burke will find out what details are needed from departments in order to prepare the paperwork for submission to the Office of the Provost.

Update on DrPH Program Curricular Revision | Jessie Burke

Dr. Jessica Burke explained that in response to CEPH's new DrPH competencies, the committee should expect to see applications for one new course and one modified course that are being designed to accommodate said changes in competencies. One class would be a DrPH "boot camp" that is comparable to the Foundations course that is being designed for the MPH curriculum and another one will be a modification of an HPM class. She explained that the classes are intentionally being designed to follow a cohort model to allow for interdisciplinary collaboration between BCHS and Epidemiology DrPH students, adding that HPM is considering the addition a DrPH degree program but that would not happen for some time.

ACTION: No action necessary.

Grade Student Unionization Update | Jessie Burke

Dr. Jessica Burke told the committee that a vote happened in December 2017, which would effect GSRs, GSAs, TAs and TFs should unionization occur. She said that there are resources available on how to talk to graduate students about a union (<https://provost.pitt.edu/faculty/faculty-guidelines-and-processes/guidance-faculty-and-staff-talking-graduate-students-about>), and that the status quo will remain in effect for the time being. Jessie also said that Nate Urban is engaging and reaching out to students, too.

ACTION: No action necessary.

Review of Fall 2017 Term Core Course Evaluations, All

Committee members reviewed three years of MPH core curriculum course evaluations. Evaluation scores from two years prior were also provided for background. Concern was raised over the overall effectiveness score for BIOST 2041 for fall 2017, a course that had a new instructor from the Department of Statistics/outside of PITT Public Health. The evaluation from this course was not unexpected, as the department was aware of issues raised by students earlier in the semester and had already taken steps to make changes for future iterations of this course.

The topic of administering informal, anonymous mid-term evaluations was raised in response to the topic of course evaluations so that other instructors can circumvent similar issues with future courses. Dr. Patricia Documet wondered whether tips for how to administer a mid-term evaluation and/or a bank of questions that can be used in mid-term evaluations could be posted on the EPCC webpage. Additionally, a suggestion of having faculty do peer observations to ensure that student concerns were being addressed was also made.

ACTION: Educational Programs staff members can compile information on mid-term evaluations and questions as well as how to administer OMET evaluations for the EPCC website.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Upcoming meetings:

February 1, 1:30-3:30pm, room 1149 Parran Hall | NOTE: Deadline for modifications to summer 2018 courses

March 1, 1:30-3:30pm, room 1149 Parran Hall | NOTE: Deadline for modifications to fall 2018 courses

April 5, 1, 1:30-3:30pm, room 1149 Parran Hall