1. Committee reports
   a. Recruitment and retention for online and traditional MPH
   b. Academic Committee decision on waiving GRE requirement for Certificate students with a 3.0 GPA. Academic Committee has approved this in concept and has been reviewing correlations of GPA pre and post MPH program participation. Approval is anticipated shortly.

2. MPH Faculty Chair/Director of Steering Committee

3. Formation of Standing Committee
   a. Student Progress Committee: Reviews student progress and, in consultation with departments, makes recommendations regarding academic probation and dismissal; provides guidance on academic integrity issues. Membership to include one rep from each department and internship director, chaired/facilitated by Assistant Dean for Student Affairs. Committee to meet at established times immediately following posting of grades each semester to ensure expedited review of student progress. Additional meeting schedule to be set to ensure opportunity to discuss other pressing academic issues that occur throughout the academic year.

4. First Year experience update on topic, scope of pilot (who does what) and preliminary discussion on evaluation plan.

5. Math Boot Camp reflections

6. Meeting schedule
   a. Monthly meetings for the MPH Steering Committee with suggested for establishing a more frequent meeting schedule but of shorter duration (1 hour) due to pressing issues in curriculum, academic standing, pilot study evaluations and accreditation gear up.

7. Other pressing issues
In Attendance:
Mary Gallant, Lenore Gensburg, Hyunok Choi, Perry Smith, Dayna Maniccia (via phone), Caitlin Reid, Katrina Chamberlain, Punkin Stephens

Unable to attend: Diane Dewar, John Paccione, Yuchi Young

Committee Reports

Admissions
Caitlin Reid reported that 365 MPH applications were received; approximately 200 were admitted; 61 enrolled in the MPH program in Fall 2012. An additional 15 students who had paid an enrollment deposit withdrew prior to the start of the fall semester. A survey of these withdrawn students and all declined to enroll students was conducted to identify the reasons for declining to enroll. 57% cited financial reasons for not attending, many of whom received funding from another institution after initially accepting our offer of admission. An additional 10 students deferred enrollment to a later semester.

Online MPH
Dayna Maniccia reported that 23 students are currently enrolled in the online MPH program; 4 additional students have been accepted but have deferred to a later semester. A total of 17 applications were accepted for the Fall 2012 semester. 12 opted to enroll, 1 declined and 1 deferred. An additional 5 were either referred to the certificate program or to non-degree study because they did not meet the minimum requirements.

The projected enrollment for the Online MPH is 90+ students by 2019. Effective and aggressive marketing of the program is essential to meet this target. Additional challenges include the requirement that applicants have at least 3 years of public health experience. Consideration is being given to eliminating this as a hard requirement. The committee discussed whether elimination of the requirement would compromise quality of the program and questioned why there is a move away from the original target population of the working professional. Dayna indicated that removing the prior public health experience requirement would expand the pool of potential applicants and that online MPH students can still apply for a waiver of internship credit if they have prior experience, which is consistent with the traditional MPH. Several items were raised for consideration:

1. If the Online MPH is parallel to the regular program, will this reduce enrollment in the regular MPH program?
2. What about switching from one format into another? Dayna stated that students would NOT be allowed to switch from the Online MPH to the traditional program, but the question was asked whether traditional students could switch into the online program. This issue has not been previously discussed, but efforts are underway to reduce the competition between the two programs.

3. It was clarified that the online degree is strictly online, not blended, thereby not permitting students enrolled in the online program to take any in class courses.

Mary Gallant asked whether the Public Health Practice title for this program/concentration will be reconsidered with elimination of the 3 years of public health experience requirement. The original target population was working professionals who were expected to have public health experience prior to entering the program and thus were already working in public health practice. The elimination of this requirement will mean that priority needs to be placed on ensuring the internship requirement is met as well as building skills working as a team. There was discussion that the PH Practice track is currently used by PMRs, as it provides greater flexibility for this population and PMR students have the internship requirement waived based on their clinical rotations. A suggestion was made to consider reducing the prior public health to 1-1.5 years rather than 3 years.

Dayna reported that international students are not currently being accepted into the Online MPH unless they are residing in the US for the full duration of their study. The long-term goal is to enroll international students but the program simply does not have the staff resources to support international students and international internships at this time.

**GRE Requirements**

Caitlin reported that the Academic Committee has reviewed the proposed GRE policy for Certificate students who wish to enter the MPH program. The proposed policy states that Certificate students who have a 3.0 GPA or better with no grades of C are not required to submit GRE scores for admission into the MPH program. The Academic Committee has reviewed correlations of GPA pre and post MPH program participation and is expected to formally approve this policy shortly.

**Steering Committee Structure**

Caitlin distributed the section of the SPH Bylaws describing the MPH Steering Committee and opened a discussion about the current structure of the committee and the appointment of a faculty member to chair the committee. The current bylaws state that the MPH Steering Committee should be chaired by a faculty member who is also the MPH Program Director. In addition to the Bylaws, documentation of a recommendation approved in 2006 regarding the establishment of an MPH Program Director was distributed (see attached).

The committee agreed that a faculty member should chair the MPH Steering Committee, but did not agree the chair should serve as the MPH Program Director and that the role and reporting structure needs to be clearly delineated. Committee members asked what the official
role of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs is if a faculty member chairs the committee. Does the chair report back to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs to implement decisions? Who brings the primary issues to the committee? It was agreed that the MPH Steering Committee should be a collaborative body where issues are brought forward from all subcommittees and individuals who oversee academic, student affairs, and internship activities, and that the Faculty Chair would facilitate the meetings and report back to the Associate Dean. The committee members also asked how the chair would be selected.

Discussion followed about membership on the committee and whether a new DOH representative needed to be selected considering that Punkin Stephens is no longer employed at DOH.

Subcommittees:

Student Progress Subcommittee
Caitlin presented a proposal to establish a standing Student Progress Committee. The committee would be comprised of one member of each department/concentration, Director of Internships, and the Assistant Dean for Students Affairs, who would serve as committee facilitator, and charged with the following:

Review MPH student progress and, in consultation with departments, make recommendations regarding academic probation and dismissal, and provide guidance on academic integrity issues. The committee will meet twice per year, at a minimum, to review the progress of students at risk. Department chairs and advisors would be invited to participate in the discussion of individual students. Additional meetings will be held as needed to discuss student conduct and internship issues. Following discussion, a letter summarizing the recommendations regarding academic probation, dismissal, etc, will be drafted for the review and signature of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Note: Post meeting discussion with Diane Dewar and Phil Nasca: Academic probation and dismissal letters will be signed by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Assistant Dean for Student Affairs.

Policies regarding the length of academic probation need to be established, ie how long can a student remain in the program while on academic probation?

Additional Standing Subcommittees
It was agreed that the MPH Admissions Committee and the MPH Internship Waiver Committee should be considered standing committees of the MPH Steering Committee, and should report to the Steering Committee on a regular basis regarding their activities.

It was recommended that the First Year Experience Subcommittee become a standing subcommittee to evaluate the experience and continue implementation of curricular changes and integration.
**Composition of Subcommittees:**
It was agreed that each member of the MPH Steering Committee must serve on at least one of the subcommittees. Each subcommittee must have representatives from all departments, which may require that additional faculty be asked to serve on the subcommittees.

Dayna Maniccia volunteered to serve on the Student Progress Committee
Norma Tavakoli is a member of the MPH Admissions Committee
Hyunok Choi is a member of the Internship Waiver Committee
Lenore Gensburg is a member of the First Year Experience Committee

The final membership of the Student Progress Committee is to be determined.

**1st year experience**
Lenore Gensburg reported that a group of faculty representing the core courses selected diabetes at the theme to illustrates how each discipline looks at disease from a different lens.

- a. STA 551 – Lenore Gensburg: use of data set;
- b. EPI 503 – Elizabeth Grubert: diabetes principles (public health approach versus clinical approach); Elizabeth
- c. EPI 501 - Elizabeth Grubert: Epi class (articles); Louise Ann McNutt: 2 different study designs;
- d. BMS 505 - Martin Tenniswood: how body manages fructose;
- e. EHS 590 – Michael Bloom: environmental results that give higher risk to diabetes;
- f. HPM 500 - Yuchi Young: policy surrounding risk factors for diabetes;
- g. SBCH was missing from meetings: HPM 525 Carolyn and Gerry Fishman.

How will this be evaluated? Will the student’s experience of the curriculum as a whole be evaluated? It was suggested that a short survey be administered at the end of the semester, in class, to gather feedback from students on their experience and perception of the integration of the common theme into the core classes.

Lenore stated that the theme may continue for a two-year period to improve upon the integration and avoid faculty having to develop lectures for a new theme each year.

It was suggested that a featured speaker could be invited to come in and discuss diabetes, not in classes but campus-wide.

**Math Boot Camp**
Lenore reported that the math workshops were held over two days, with four different 2.5 hour modules. A survey was conducted as part of the orientation experience survey and 69% of respondents who stated they had attended workshops indicated they had a positive experience of the workshops.
The assessment was divided into four sections, and students who missed one answer on a session were placed into the workshop for that particular area. One student passed all four sections; 40-50 students attended the workshops. Lenore reported that she is seeing fewer math errors and students are writing the order of operation on tests, so it was clear they are paying attention. Anecdotal comments from students include “got cobwebs out” “got me in school mode before classes began”.

Lenore stated that the math workshops can be held in one day next year and suggested that a writing workshop be scheduled as well. There was agreement among the committee that including plagiarism in the writing session, as well as thinking culturally, would be positive. It was agreed that further discussion of a language/writing boot camp needs to be held, and that all students, regardless of degree, should be included in this boot camp.

**Meeting Schedule**

Caitlin reported that Diane would like to hold more frequent meetings to address many of the issues and activities which are ongoing. The committee discussed the scheduling of the regular monthly meeting and agreed on the 2nd Thursday of every month, with the next meeting to be held October 11 from 2:30-4:00pm.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00pm.
MPH Steering Committee Meeting  
October 11, 2012

Present: Diane Dewar, Mary Gallant, Perry Smith, Yuchi Young, Caitlin Reid, Lenore Gensburg, Norma Tavakoli, Hyunok Choi, Punkin Stephens

Unable to Attend: Katrina Chamberlain, Dayna Maniccia, Lindsay Ruland

The minutes from the September 20, 2012 meeting were reviewed and approved with the following amendments:

1st Year Experience: Mary Gallant added that SBCH is incorporating the diabetes theme by discussing how behavioral issues are related to diabetes management.

Math Boot Camp: Lenore Gensburg asked that the number of respondents who indicated they had attended the workshops needed to be corrected (check survey...)

Committee Reports

Diane Dewar reported that the Academic Committee approved a GRE waiver policy for certificate students. The exact language of the policy was provided after the meeting, and is as follows:

“ In general all MPH applicants must submit GRE scores. MCAT scores may be substituted for this requirement. However, MPH applicants have diverse past educational and career experience that may affect this requirement. The following circumstances will generally obviate the need to submit GRE scores, although the admissions committee may still require GRE scores in individual circumstances.

- Graduation from the applicant’s most recent higher education degree program in a US institution more than 10 year before, as long as the applicant had an overall GPA of at least 3.0;
- Completion of other public health related training (e.g. fellowships, CDC’s Epidemic Intelligence Service) with strong letters of recommendation from relevant supervisors;
- Strong performance in the School’s public health certificate program, with at least a 3.0 average in at least 3 course.”

Diane reported that Dayna is working with the School of Education and other UAlbany schools to identify management and professional business electives that online MPH students can take to broaden the training provided in the program.

Diane stated that there is a need for more faculty to teach the online courses and encouraged committee members to provide names of colleagues who can teach behavior, science and policy courses. The faculty in the online MPH program are primarily contract faculty, paid per course.

Norma Tavakoli asked about the admissions requirements for the online MPH program, and it was stated that the criteria is the same as that for the traditional MPH program.

Mary Gallant asked whether the online MPH Admissions committee should be a subcommittee of the MPH Steering Committee, and all agreed that it should.
Diane opened up a discussion about the need for a faculty member to be chair of the MPH Steering Committee. Members wanted to know what the plan was for the title of Director of MPH program. Diane stated that the long-term plan would align with the SPH Bylaws, providing a course buyout, and the Director would oversee operational and evaluative function. The Steering Committee would oversee governance and policies and would provide a system of checks and balances.

The floor was opened for nominations. Perry Smith agreed to chair the committee, starting in January 2012, for a two year term per the bylaws. A motion was made to nominate Perry Smith. The motion was seconded and Perry was approved to be Chair of the MPH Steering Committee, effective January 1, 2012.

It was suggested that a co-chair be established in year 2 of the term to be a chair elect and provide for continuity in leadership and governance.

Diane asked the committee members for suggestions for the MPH Program Director, who would oversee curriculum development, evaluation protocol, development of new tracks/concentrations, preparation for CEPH accreditation, and course sequencing and staffing. There was a suggestion that the MPH Program Director would also assist with data collection relevant to the MPH Steering Committee, as program directors are responsible for data reporting.

Yuchi Young expressed concern that one course buyout would not be sufficient to address all of the issues and responsibilities of the MPH Program Director. Diane stated she would write up a job description to share with the committee and discuss how to allocate responsibilities. It was stated that when the MPH program was established in the 1990s, there was a Director of Professional Education, but this position was eliminated when the program was decentralized to the departments. At that time, the MPH Steering Committee was established and the role of the MPH Program Director was described, but the position was never filled with a faculty member.

Formation of Student Progress Committee

Caitlin Reid described the structure and charge of the proposed Student Progress Committee. Diane stated that this committee serves a very important role and there is a need for teaching faculty to have an active role in the review of academic cases. There is also a need to formalize academic probation policies, which this committee will review.

There was a question about academic integrity issues and at what point these issues come before the Student Progress Committee, since university policy give faculty considerable discretion on how to address individual cases of violations of academic integrity. Does an academic grievance go to the MPH Student Progress Committee or does it go to the SPH Academic Committee?

Punkin Stephens raised a concern that there is no formal ombuds program. Caitlin stated that the SPH Bylaws and the charge and membership of the Student Affairs committee need to be finalized in order to move forward with this.

Policy on Conditional Admits

Lenore expressed concern about conditional admits and the poor math skills of some of the students. Caitlin stated that students should actually be admitted non-degree and required to meet the
conditions before actual admission into the program. In earlier cases, students who admitted into a program, told they had to obtain a certain grade or rectify a certain deficiency. Failure to obtain the grade or rectify the deficiency would then result in academic probation or dismissal, which was not often enforced. Caitlin suggested that statistics for non-majors be held in the spring so that the students could complete an undergraduate math course in the fall.

Diane stated that schools and colleges are being asked to consider conditionally admitting international students sponsored by their government. SPH needs to develop guidelines for conditional admits and asked for a work group to identify the various issues:

- Require a minimum GRE?
- Math preparation?
- English language skills?
- Other?

There was some discussion of what the logistics might be for requiring completion of an undergraduate math course in the fall, as this would impact scheduling and staffing, as well as student travel between the uptown campus and the East Campus.

Another suggestion was to have an extended math workshop that would overlap with the statistic course in the fall.

It was agreed that the MPH Admissions Committee would review standards and develop guidelines. Discussions will need to include the core course instructors to ensure that appropriate requirements are established.

There was some discussion about developing a writing/thinking workshop. Diane asked for more information from Lenore about this.

Punkin requested that there be consideration of alternate time frames for courses, such as short courses.

Meeting adjourned at 4pm.
**MPH Steering Committee Meeting**  
**January 10, 2013**

**Meeting Notes**

**In attendance:** Katrina Chamberlain, Lenore Gensburg, Perry Smith, Caitlin Reid, Hyunok Choi, Mary Gallant, Dean Nasca, Diane Dewar

**Unable to Attend:** Punkin Stephens, Norma Tavakoli, Dayna Maniccia, Yuchi Young

**Committee Planning for 2013:**
Diane Dewar opened the meeting and explained that, as decided previously by the committee, she was stepping down as chair and Perry would take over chairing meetings. The purpose is to increase faculty involvement and leadership of the Steering Committee and decrease the amount of Committee direction coming from the Dean’s office.

Dean Nasca joined for the first part of the meeting. He thanked the committee for its hard work and stressed that the MPH program is the backbone of the School. The Steering Committee is critical to its success. He then outlined four issues for Committee consideration this year:

1) **Recommendations for what to do about the First Year and Capstone Seminars.** Neither seminar has been positively received by the students who have reported that the purpose of the seminars is not clear, and that they involve a lot of time and work that is not productive. This is a long-standing issue and not a reflection on the current seminar instructors. The Dean requested that the Committee discuss the seminars and make recommendations. He offered one possible option: eliminate the First Year Seminar and change the Capstone Seminar into a 3 credit, rigorous course, with meaty content.

2) **Recommendations on MPH degree requirements.** Because of the increase in the number of schools of public health, the competition for students has increased nationally. In this time of very tight academic resources, with little likelihood of major increased public support, the health of the School depends even more on being competitive in attracting students. The 51 required credit hours for our MPH degree is high and perceived as a deterrent to attracting students. The Committee should reconsider our MPH degree requirements by reviewing what other schools require and make suggestions for possible change. For example, these might include decreasing the total number of required credits and/or decreasing the number of internship credits.

3) **Reinstituting Principles of Public Health as a required course.** Informal comments from both students and faculty suggest that students are completing their MPH requirements without a solid grounding in the principles of public health. Should this course be reinstated as a required course, and if so, what should it replace as required?

4) **Improving recruitment of students.** Currently the School of Public Health has about 417 enrolled students. The University has university-wide goals for increased student enrollment in the next few years, which may translate into a goal for enrollment of about 450 students. The Dean feels that we are doing pretty well with recruitment but would like ideas for how to further attract students, especially with limited funding that translates into limited assistantships and limited faculty/staff growth.
Dean Nasca then asked for the Committee’s ideas about other areas for consideration. The following were discussed:

**Boot Camp Training.** Lenore reported that she felt that the math boot camp was very successful and helped the students greatly. She plans on giving it again this fall. Discussion centered on whether to require it of all students, make it totally voluntary, or somehow select those for whom it would be required. The need for a one-day writing boot camp was discussed. The Dean suggested that the Committee write a policy regarding boot camp requirements.

**Approval of Internships.** There continues to be ambiguity about the process of internship approvals despite the Committee having made recommendations on this issue in the past. One point of confusion is whether the advisor needs to approve (sign off on) internships. Currently, approvals are not being done consistently. The Dean and Diane Dewar felt that this type of procedural issue could be determined by the Committee without the need for higher review and approval.

**Biology Admission Requirement.** The biology admission requirement for the HPM-concentration MPH was dropped several years ago, but is still required for the undergraduate public health major program. Also, MPH students are required to take BMS and Environmental courses, which assume some knowledge of biology. Should biology be required or strongly recommended for all entering MPH students?

**Grievances.** There is some confusion about how student grievances should be handled. The Dean’s Grievance Committee handles both academic and non-academic issues. Caitlin noted that the new Student Progress Sub-Committee has handled some academic probation and dismissal issues. A recommendation is needed from the Steering Committee regarding which committee should handle academic grievances.

**Certification Program.** This program currently lacks an organizational home within the School. It does not fall under the MPH Steering Committee and does not have an oversight structure. This issue falls outside the responsibility of the MPH Steering Committee and will be addressed by the Dean’s office.

**Increasing the Sense of School Community.** There is a feeling of a lack of school cohesiveness, which probably stems from a variety of factors. Also, students have reported feeling intimidated to bring up suggestions for change. Some ideas for fostering greater school community and rapport included developing a library on the east campus, encouraging greater faculty attendance at school activities, soliciting more student input on issues, including inviting two students to join the MPH Steering Committee, and inviting the Dean to informal meetings with students, such as “Teas with the Dean”. The Dean welcomed attending any such activities.

Diane suggested that the Committee come up with several options to address issues under consideration, with pros and cons, rather than making one recommendation. There seemed to be agreement by the group.

The Dean and Diane Dewar left near the end of the meeting and the Committee then made some detailed plans for the coming year:
Decisions Made:
- Ask Dorcey Applyrs to prepare minutes of each Committee meeting if her schedule permits;
- Include “Decisions Made” and “Action Steps” in the minutes;
- Before each meeting, circulate minutes of the prior meeting and the current agenda a few days before each meeting so that attendees can come to meetings briefed and prepared for discussion;
- Try to set up the agenda for each meeting such that sub-committee updates and announcements are covered in the first 30 minutes, and the last 60 minutes are reserved for detailed discussion of one issue with the goal of reaching consensus on recommendations;
- Consider better ways to increase communication of MPH Steering Committee actions to faculty;
- Develop a list of past issues, the Committee’s recommendations, and what happened in follow-up, so that the Committee can see its progress (or areas without progress);
- Develop a timeline for the Committee to address issues in 2013;
- Topic for in-depth discussion at Feb. meeting: Recommendations regarding required credit hours for MPH, what to do about the seminars, and whether to re-institute the requirement for Principles of Public Health

Action Steps:
- Prepare minutes of Jan. meeting (Perry, to be supplemented by Caitlin and Katrina)
- Check to see if Dorcey can prepare minutes in future (Caitlin)
- Circulate minutes and agenda before each meeting (Perry)
- List of past issues and their resolution (Perry, to be supplemented by Caitlin and Katrina)
- Develop timeline for 2013 (group decision at Feb. meeting)
- Prepare a summary of the Internship Approval Issue for future Committee discussion (Katrina)
- Invite two MPH students to attend the Steering Committee Meetings (Caitlin and Katrina)
- Collect information on other Schools’ MPH programs to discuss at our next meeting (Caitlin)
- Note: at our Dec. meeting, Dayna and Huynok volunteered to develop draft recommendations on the first year seminar. If this is done, the draft should be part of our discussion at the Feb. meeting.
MPH Steering Committee Meeting
February 14, 2013

Meeting Notes

In attendance: Katrina Chamberlain, Lenore Gensburg, Lauren Howland, Dayna Maniccia, Caitlin Reid, Perry Smith, Punkin Stephens, Norma Tavakoli

Unable to Attend: Yuchi Young, Hyunok Choi, Mary Gallant

Review of January Minutes:
A number of edits were made to the draft minutes, and they were approved. Discussion of the minutes engendered several comments:
- Under the “Increasing the Sense of School Community” discussion item. Dayna suggested the student body be included in future conversations about building a sense of community on the East campus.
- Caitlin mentioned that the Student Affairs Committee is discussing how to increase the sense of school community.
- Katrina sent out a survey to find out if school-related information is being delivered to students effectively. Students’ responses indicated that information has been effectively communicated.
- Lauren suggested using the new student orientation to promote a sense of community.
- Lenore expressed a need for a culture of academics. There is no library in which students can study on the East campus. Student and faculty members are unable to interact in a physical location. Not having a physical space for faculty and student engagement contributes to a lack of community.
- Students were not included in the student lounge remodeling efforts.

Academic
Perry discussed a note from Diane Dewar who wrote that the First Year MPH Experience Sub-Committee is meeting next week on progress this semester and that they are continuing with diabetes as the first year topic. The committee is also doing school-wide planning for courses and staffing to enhance planning among all programs.

Subcommittee Updates:
MPH Student Progress Committee-Caitlin Reid
-The Student Progress Committee met in January for the first time. The purpose of the meeting was to develop a system to make appropriate recommendations for student dismissal and academic probation. The committee will meet twice per year minimally and on an as needed basis.
- Recommendations should come from the Steering Committee that all academic grievances go through the Dean's Grievance Committee.
- Once the grievance procedures have been approved, they will be included in the Graduate Hand Book.
- Dayna mentioned that students have expressed being uncomfortable talking about issues to faculty members.

**Internship Director- Katrina Chamberlain**
-In a couple of weeks there will be new members joining this committee. [Katrina, we missed what else you said. Add anything?]

**Online MPH Director-Dayna Maniccia**
-There are thirty-one (31) students enrolled in the program. Of the 31, thirteen (13) are not taking classes at this time.
-So far, there are 35 applicants to the program this year.
-The “prior work experience” requirement has been removed from the online MPH eligibility criteria. Dayna believes removing this requirement helped to increase the number of students applying to the program.
-Dayna mentioned that students were underestimating the time commitment. In the future, Dayna will be more transparent with prospective students about the program time commitment and expectations.
-Dayna would like to interview students who are discontinuing enrollment in the program to gain a better understanding of why students are not completing the program.
-Course sequencing has been an issue. The committee is working on how best to sequence the program.

**MPH Internship Waiver Committee (no update)**

**First Year MPH Experience sub-committee (no update)**

**MPH Admissions Committee- Caitlin Reid**
-Norma is no longer on the admissions committee.
-The admissions committee is currently processing its first round of MPH applications.
-Roughly 315-320 applicants have either completed or are near completing the application. These numbers are comparable to last year’s.
-The application deadline was moved to February 1, 2013.
-It was brought to the committee’s attention that certificate students are being told by the SUNY Albany Graduate Admissions office that their applications are incomplete without a GRE score. There is no GRE requirement for students who complete the certificate program and apply for the MPH. Caitlin will look into this matter.

**Committee Planning for 2013:**
-Perry suggested the committee review the report and discuss what has been done and what needs to be done. The table on pages 22 and 23 of the report were reviewed and discussed. The status of the following Report Recommendations is as follows:

- Remove Epi 503 from Common Core (completed)
  - This recommendation was implemented. However, committee members felt that this course should be added back to the common core. Committee members suggested Dr. Grubert’s syllabi and course materials be
packaged and disseminated to professors teaching EPI 503. Each professor would have the option to adapt Dr. Grubert’s course material; however, core elements will have to be maintained.
  - Audio-visual aids could be made available to make it easier for rotating faculty to teach this course.
  - It might be appropriate as a 4-6 week course.
  - Dayna suggested that the course be taken out of the department of Epidemiology and rotated throughout all School of Public Health departments.
  - Caitlin indicated that data would be needed to support the recommendation of reintroducing this course to the common core.

- Remove BMS 505 from Common Core (not completed)
- Add required 1 credit course in Public Health Biology (not completed)
- Have public health bio competency assessed through exam in 1 credit PHB course (not completed)
- Add required 1 credit course in Writing and Communication (not completed)
- Add required 1 credit Public Health Capstone Course (completed)
- Return 6 credits of coursework to MPH departments (completed)
- Reduce Required Internship Credits from 12 to 9 (completed)
- Waive 9 internship credits only in selected circumstances requiring department and waiver committee approval; 3-6 credit waivers remain norm (completed)
- Do away with concentration requirements for internships (completed, but subsequently reversed)
- Revision of internship seminars to include 4-6 weeks of “Intro to Public Health System” (not completed)
- New requirement of only one internship presentation by students, 15:00 seminar-type presentation, in addition to one poster required (sort of completed - a poster presentation can replace an oral presentation)
- Students taking the full 9 credits or internships must do them in 2 different organizational settings (completed)
- Keep overall degree credits at 45-51 (completed)
- Provide MPH internship waiver committee decision back to departments for review (not completed)
- Create new MPH Program Director position from full-time faculty, chair of revamped MPH Advisory Committee (not completed)
- Creation of MPH mission statement and program aims (completed)

Decisions Made:
- Action items should be reflected in meeting minutes. The minutes should be sent to Perry at least a week before the next MPH Steering committee. Perry will send the meeting minutes to the entire committee before the subsequent meeting.
- The MPH Steering committee will be held twice a month instead of once a month.

Meetings will be held on the following dates:
  - February 28, 2013
  - March 14, 2013
- March 28, 2013
- April 11, 2013
- April 25, 2013

- Recommendations should come from the Steering Committee that all academic grievances go through the Dean’s Grievance Committee.

- The committee decided it would select realistic MPH Committee recommendations (from the 2006 MPH Review Committee report) to work on. Perry with input from the entire committee indicated the committee does not have the resources to research and address each recommendation.

- The following current issues need further committee consideration:
  
  - **Credit Hours and Internships for MPH**
    - Finances have been a barrier for students taking advantage of summer internships. Should internships be required during the summer?
    - Are internship credit requirements too high?
  
  - **First year and Capstone Seminars**
  
  - **Specific Recommendations for Reinstating Requirement for Principles of Public Health Course**
    - Caitlin indicated that data would be needed to support the recommendation of reintroducing this course to the common core.

**Action Items:**

- Caitlin will map out a sample curriculum so that students are aware of expectations.
- Caitlin will look into the matter of the SUNY Albany Graduate Admissions office telling certificate students that their applications are incomplete without a GRE score.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 28, 2013
MPH Steering Committee Meeting
February 28, 2013

Meeting Notes

In attendance: Katrina Chamberlain, Mary Gallant, Lenore Gensburg, Lauren Howland, Casey O’Brien, Caitlin Reid, Perry Smith, Punkin Stephens, Hyunok Choi

Unable to Attend: Yuchi Young, Dayna Maniccia, and Norma Tavakoli

The meeting was called to order at 2:30pm.

Review of February 14, 2013, Minutes:

Revised meeting minutes with Katrina’s edits were provided at the meeting and approved.

Announcements-Perry

- There are no designated NYSDOH representatives on the steering committee since both Punkin and Perry have retired. Dr. Dewar will recruit a NYSDOH representative.
- The question was asked, “How should recommendations come from the committee?”.
  Responses from the committee included:
  - Meeting minutes for minor issues
  - A separate document with history, recommendations and a rationale should be developed if the recommendation concerns a major policy issue.
- The committee felt that decisions related to the first-year seminar, the number of credits for MPH internships, and re-instituting the Intro to Public Health course should be presented to the Dean’s office as a written package with background and rationale included.

Subcommittee Updates:

MPH Student Progress Committee-No Activities to Report

Internship Director – Katrina Chamberlain

- Planning the internship program is underway for the summer.
- CDPHP has decided not to partner with the School of Public Health as an internship host. Katrina has scheduled a meeting with CDPHP to discuss their reasons for not participating in the internship program this year.

Online MPH Director-Caitlin Reid reported in Dayna’s absence

- Thirty-eight(38) applications are in progress.
- There are a total of 45-50 applications for the fall. This will help with enrollment.
- Casey will be assessing the student satisfaction experience and will summarize findings in the form of a report.
**MPH Internship Waiver Review Committee- Katrina Chamberlain**

- Applications are due on March 15, 2013.
- Ten applications have been received for the spring semester.

**First Year MPH Experience sub-committee- No Activities to Report**

**MPH Admissions Committee- Caitlin Reid**

- Three hundred and fifty (350) MPH admission applications have been received. However, not all are complete.
- The committee has acted on 44 applications.
- A total of 55 individuals have been admitted.
- Two hundred (200) applications are awaiting decisions.
- The number of admission applications received this year has exceeded the number from last year.

**Committee Discussion**

- The committee should review what has already been written for course descriptions for capstone, EPI 503 and seminar to determine if there are key things that should be retained.
- The current Steering Committee will review the 2006 committee report and provide a reaction in response to the content relevant to courses such as capstone, EPI 503 and seminar.
- The committee should evaluate the implementation of the courses and whether they are being implemented as intended.
- Committee members should review the course curricula of the Capstone and First Year Seminars and of Epi 503, discuss their rationale, the purpose of the courses, and what the courses are missing.

**Capstone**

- A quick scan of programs revealed that schools of public health generally have a capstone course.
- Some committee members reported that several students have commented that the first year seminar is spread thin and the course content is not helpful.
- One member reminded the Committee that Dean Nasca had suggested that one option was a three credit capstone course that could replace the first year seminar.
- It was suggested that a six credit internship requirement replace the nine credit internship requirement. The internship experience could be incorporated as a capstone project.
- It was suggested that students might prefer a single six credit internship with a three credit heavy duty scientific paper. But one of the drawbacks of this option would be students having a lack of internship experience variety in the event the student was unhappy with his or her internship placement. Also, requiring a scientific paper from all MPH students would create a major demand on faculty for careful mentorship.
EPI 503

- It was mentioned that in order to propose re-instituting the EPI 503 course, the committee would need data to support the proposal.
- One member indicated that many schools have an Intro to Public Health course. Based on informal conversations with students, there is an apparent need for a basic public health course.

Decisions Made:

- The committee agreed that it was important to have a common designated time to bring all MPH students together to foster community spirit, communication, and enthusiasm. A biweekly seminar was proposed as an example. Further discussion is needed to develop a specific recommendation.

Action Items:

- The committee will review the 2006 report (Perry) and accreditation requirements (Caitlin) to guide future discussions about re-instituting the EPI 503 course and reconfiguring the seminars.
- Caitlin will pull the course proposal and objectives for Epi 503 and the first year seminar for committee review.
- Punkin offered to review current published competencies that are pertinent to these discussions.
- Dayna offered that her graduate assistant will do a scan of other Schools of Public Health regarding their including a Capstone Seminar and Principles of Public Health course.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 14, 2013
MPH Steering Committee Meeting
March 14, 2013

Meeting Notes

In attendance: Mary Gallant, Lenore Gensburg, Lauren Howland, Dayna Maniccia, Casey O’Brien, Caitlin Reid, Perry Smith, Norma Tavakoli, Hyunok Choi

Unable to Attend: Katrina Chamberlain, Punkin Stephens, Yuchi Young

The meeting was called to order at 2:40pm.

Review of February 28, 2013 Minutes:

• There were a number of corrections proposed to the February 28, 2013, meeting minutes. The minutes will be revised and recirculated for approval at the next meeting.

1. Subcommittee and Program Updates
   • MPH Student Progress Committee- No activities to report
   • Internship Director- No activities to report
   • Online MPH Director- No activities to report
   • MPH Admissions Committee- No activities to report
   • MPH Internship Waiver Review Committee- No activities to report
   • First Year MPH Experience Committee- No activities to report

2. Old Business
   a. Review of the 2006 report and accreditation requirements to guide future discussions about re-instituting the EPI 503 course and reconfiguring the seminars.
      i. There was some discussion about whether the MPH Steering Committee was second-guessing the recommendations made in the 2006 MPH Review report, or whether it was assessing the success of those recommendations that had actually been implemented. The committee decided that the focus should be on what the original intent of the recommendations was, and how the committee can best suggest changes that will meet both the intent of the recommendations and the needs of students and educational objectives.
      ii. The committee Chair proposed that the committee divide and conquer the tasks by doing homework and filling in fragmented areas. The idea is to have everyone doing something and bringing things to the table.
      iii. The committee began a discussion about next steps:
         • A suggestion was made to start with focusing on seminar because it is currently being implemented in the SPH curriculum. It was mentioned that all of the courses are connected and fit into a larger picture. It was
also expressed that if the committee starts focusing on seminar, there must be a conversation about how all of the pieces work together.

- The HPMB department was scheduled to have a meeting at which the MPH Steering Committee updates were to be addressed, but the meeting was canceled.

- It was recommended that instead of talking about seminar, the committee should review the learning objectives required for the MPH and this would help frame the discussion.

- A committee member asked the purpose of seminar and was told that it had historically been a venue for students to present their internship presentations.

- The committee reviewed the Course Action Proposal form for seminar
  a. One recommendation from the 2006 report was a one credit writing course. A committee member indicated that one credit courses caused a lot of confusion for students and their workloads in the past.

- It was mentioned that the caliber of SPH students has increased and as a result, many students start the program with more advanced PowerPoint and writing skills.

- A committee member suggested that the seminar course be turned into an intensive writing course.

- Another member mentioned that there are different types of writing, which suggests a need to focus on concentration specific writing.

- It was said that some students who are at a certain level of writing may feel it is too elementary to have graduate level courses focus on writing.

- Another committee member commented that improving writing skills should be incorporated into the courses.

- It was also suggested that students be asked to complete a boot camp (which could cover writing) prior to the start of classes. Columbia and Harvard both have such programs.

- A committee member proposed finding a middle ground which would entail providing students with a writing resource--then it would be up to the students to work on increasing writing skills.

- The committee agreed that there were two writing issues involved, which include poor grammar and punctuation, and how to write technical reports (e.g., scientific abstract and/or grant).

- The HPMB department is working on putting together a grant writing course proposal.

- A committee member asked if the school could address diversity in writing by separating students by concentration.

- Rockefeller has a writing course that SPH can look into.
• In response to the conversation about faculty not having time to grade and provide feedback on writing assignments, some committee members felt strongly that faculty should provide feedback in order to improve students’ writing skills.

• A committee member asked which components of seminar are the most important and which components could be pulled out and offered as an additional resource to students. Ethics was mentioned as a topic that could be pulled out of seminar. Students should be advised to complete the CITI training certification. It was mentioned that several courses already have this requirement.

• One committee member asked whether the SPH can mandate the content to be covered in each particular core course. The member argued that faculty should have the freedom to decide how to teach their course content, but that the SPH should be able to dictate and ensure that essential core content is covered.

• Next Steps:
  a. The committee was asked to take the material home, read it and think about what teaching objectives should be required for the first year seminar, capstone and Epi 503.
  b. At the next meeting, the group will review the different topics and group them according to importance and whether they should be included in a credit bearing course or provided outside of the curriculum.
  c. The committee will compile the results and then put it in survey format to solicit faculty and student perspectives.
  d. Committee members should be prepared to defend their opinions.

b. Accreditation Requirements-
  i. Caitlin sent out a link electronically to the CEPH accreditation requirements.
     • The committee should review the required competencies to be familiar with what core and cross cutting competencies are being taught.
     • Dayna and Caitlin will verify if SPH is required to demonstrate all of the competencies that are cross cutting.

3. Discussion of Recommendations – Tabled for March 28, 2013 meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 28, 2013
MPH Steering Committee Meeting
April 11, 2013
Meeting Notes

In attendance: Katrina Chamberlain, Hyunok Choi, Mary Gallant, Lenore Gensburg, Lauren Howland, Casey O’Brien, Dayna Maniccia, Caitlin Reid, Perry Smith, and Wendy Weller

Unable to Attend: Punkin Stephens and Norma Tavakoli

The meeting was called to order at 2:40 p.m.

Review of March 28, 2013, Minutes:

The committee meeting minutes were approved pending edits.

Committee Discussion:

MPH Student Progress Committee: There is nothing to report at this time.

Internships: Katrina Chamberlain

- SPH has 60 internship placement sites this summer for about 47 students. The number of internship placement sites has decreased in previous years due to a decrease in funding and human resources.

Online MPH: Dayna Maniccia

- Twenty admission applications have been received.
- Three of the Online MPH Admission committee members are available to review the first round of applications.
- The Director of the Online MPH program has completed a draft Capstone syllabus and curriculum for the Online MPH program.
- The MPH Steering Committee will develop a resolution in support of additional resources to enhance and sustain the Online MPH program. The Director of the Online MPH program will draft a statement to be included in the resolution.

MPH Admissions: Caitlin Reid

- Graduate Admissions is wrapping up review of applications for the fall semester.
- Sixty students have indicated they plan to enroll for the fall 2013 semester. Graduate Admission’s goal is to have 85-90 applicants planning to enroll into the program. This number is desired to offset the anticipated withdrawal of students before the start of the semester.
- Conditional Admissions Request
  - SPH is discussing the process for conditional admission with Kevin Williams, Dean of Graduate Studies, and Arash Alaei, regarding students sponsored by their government.
Students would be allowed conditional admission based on criteria established by the Admissions Committees or department of the relevant program the student wishes to enter. The MPH Admissions committee is formalizing a process for conditional admissions and for reviewing and ranking MPH applications. The committee will decide which undergraduate and graduate courses students will be required to take.

MPH Internship Waiver Committee: There is nothing to report at this time.

First Year Experience: There is nothing to report at this time

Review of First Year Seminar, Capstone Seminar, and HEPI 503 Materials:

- The Committee continued a discussion to prioritize learning topics.

* A table detailing First Year Seminar, Capstone and HEPI 503 topics and their assigned categories is attached.

Next Steps:

- Develop recommendations for structuring the MPH curriculum based on topic priorities discussed at the last two meetings

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 25, 2013
MPH Steering Committee Meeting  
April 25, 2013  
Meeting Notes

In attendance: Katrina Chamberlain, Hyunok Choi, Diane Dewar, Mary Gallant, Lenore Gensburg, Lauren Howland, Casey O’Brien, Dayna Maniccia, Dean Philip Nasca, Perry Smith, Norma Tavakoli, and Wendy Weller

Unable to Attend: Caitlin Reid and Punkin Stephens

The meeting was called to order at 2:35p.m.

Review of April 11, 2013, Minutes:

The committee meeting minutes were approved.

Dean’s Update: Dean Philip Nasca and Diane Dewar

Learning Commons

- The computer lab underwent renovations and is now called the “Learning Commons.” A flyer detailing the upgrades and how to use the newly installed technology was sent to SPH faculty on 4/25/2013.
- The goal of the Learning Commons is to foster an interdisciplinary learning environment for students. The pod-style work stations promote group and team-based learning. Additional pod-style work stations have been ordered and will arrive soon.
- New lighting was added in the Learning Commons.
- Dean Nasca will ask Larry Preston if sound-absorbing partitions could be added to the Learning Commons.

Curriculum

Diane Dewar requested that the committee review action items and make a determination about which items need additional review now at the main campus. New curriculums should be forwarded to Dr. Dewar as soon as possible for packaging and shipping to the main campus.

MPH Steering Committee Updates (since January): Perry Smith

- Two student representatives were added to the committee.
- The committee discussed potential changes to the MPH curriculum, involving the Capstone, First Year Seminar and EPI 503 courses. The committee reviewed the learning objectives and topics covered for each course and prioritized each topic area. The committee will make recommendations regarding the curriculum during the Fall 2013 semester.
- The committee will disseminate a short survey to solicit faculty and student feedback regarding possible changes to the MPH curriculum.
SPH Assessment: Casey O’Brien

- Casey O’Brien presented the findings of his nationwide assessment of U.S. Schools of Public Health (see attached). Key findings included that 40% of schools require a Principles of Public Health course, 61% of schools require all students to complete a project, manuscript, or thesis for their culminating experience, and the average internship requirement is 229 hours (compared with our 720 hour requirement).

Discussion

Capstone Experience

- The committee agreed that the MPH curriculum should incorporate ongoing reflection and student discovery. SPH should get rid of compartmentalized learning and shift to a curriculum that helps students to “connect the dots” about how public health course work translates to public health practice.
- The committee discussed incorporating e-portfolios into the learning experience for students. Dean Nasca asked the committee to brainstorm suggestions for incorporating this idea into the curriculum and suggested that the committee locate exemplary e-portfolio syllabi for consideration. The following comments were made about e-portfolios:
  o The e-portfolio should be graded but not considered a course.
  o Faculty should periodically evaluate the e-portfolio.
  o Students should start working on their e-portfolio as soon as they start taking courses at the SPH.
  o The process for developing the e-portfolio concept should happen organically at the faculty level.
  o The e-portfolio would be a burden to faculty. In some cases, faculty would have 20 projects to grade.
  o SPH should conduct a pilot program and evaluate the pilot. If the program works, it would become permanent.
- First year SPH students may not be ready for reflective learning. However, students should be asked to answer the following questions during their first year in the program:
  o What do you expect from your SPH experience?
  o How have your perceptions about public health changed?
  o What is unique about this SPH?
  o Why did you choose this SPH?

Internships

- The SPH has the highest internship credit hour requirement compared to other schools across the country. Our emphasis on internships provides the school with a competitive edge. The following suggestions were made for consideration regarding internships:
• Decrease the number of required credits for internships. Even if the SPH decreased the number of required credits, the school would still have a higher internship credit hour requirement compared to other schools across the country.

• Provide students with the option of taking three credits of internship (in addition to a 6 hour internship requirement) or taking three credits of electives. Several committee members liked the idea of students having more flexibility with their internship credits.
  • The committee will consider the existing credit waiver policy when making recommendations regarding internships

Next Steps:
  • The committee will review exemplary MPH program syllabi.
  • The committee will come to a consensus on preliminary curriculum recommendations before conducting a student/faculty survey.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 9, 2013
**MPH Steering Committee**

May 23, 2013

**Meeting Minutes**

**Present:**
May Gallant, Acting Chair in Perry Smith’s absence
Dayna Maniccia
Lenore Gensburg
Norma Tavakoli
Katrina Chamberlain
Caitlin Reid

Review of Previous Minutes; Minutes Accepted

**Subcommittee Updates:**

1) **Student Progress Committee**
   a. Brief discussion of students on probation now
   b. Policy re: internships when GPA < 3.0
      i. Case by case basis
   c. Meeting scheduled for Thursday, May 30, 2013
   d. 8 students to be discussed at 5/30 meeting

2) **Online MPH**
   a. 37 applications under review for Fall 2013
      i. Many more traditional students
      ii. Got rid of 3 year experience requirement
   b. Same admission criteria as traditional MPH (ex: GPA, GRE)
   c. Practice based
   d. No international applicants
   e. Nationwide at present
   f. First batch average age: 55 (returning students)
   g. More students moving on to MPH versus enrolling because of employment requirements
   h. Comments:
      i. Lenore: mixed class of MPH and Certificate students; Certificate students tending to not be engaged; different level of ability; job may require it
      ii. EHS 590 problems with Certificate students, different experiences, dynamic would have been better

3) **MPH Admissions**
   a. 77 reported enrolling; target true enrollment is 75
   b. Tracks:
      i. HPM: 18
      ii. SBCH: 22
      iii. EPI: 22
      iv. BMS: 7
      v. EHS: 6
   c. Enrollment numbers to be run mid-June to determine class size
4) **Certificate**
   a. 17 new Certificate students for Summer 2013; large number in comparison to previous years
   b. Optimistic about hitting targets
5) **Developing Recommendations for Curriculum: Capstone Course**
   a. Student Reaction:
      i. Not a culminating experience like internship experience; unclear to students what the capstone is
   b. Plan:
      i. Early in the Fall, survey faculty and current students and pull out comments
      ii. Committee must decide what the culminating experience should be
         1. Academic
         2. Professional Development (internship)
   c. Comments:
      i. May: overall, good training; would like to know how things work in the real world
6) **Developing Recommendations for Curriculum: 1st Year Seminar**
   a. Does the committee feel that we should be making specific recommendations about Seminar for Fall 2013, as well as broader changes to the course?
   b. Is there any added value to this course?
   c. Committee thinks major changes necessary
   d. MPH Program Director should influence what is happening in Seminar
   e. Possible course substitution for Fall 2013
   f. Possible Revision:
      i. First Semester 5-Week Mini Course
         1. Basics, Fundamentals of Public Health
         2. Interdisciplinary
      ii. Second Semester
         1. Internship Prep
         2. Career Development
7) **Developing Recommendations For Curriculum: EPI 503**
   a. Remove course?
8) **Recommendations for Next Meeting: June 6, 2013**
   a. Re-visit Fall 2013
   b. More feedback regarding how to organize Capstone
   c. Follow up with Perry
MPH Steering Committee Meeting

July 25, August 2013

Meeting Notes

In attendance: Perry Smith, Hyunok Choi, Casey O’Brien, Caitlin Reid, Wendy Weller, Mary Gallant (by phone)

Perry thanked the committee for all of the work conducted over the semester and thanked Mary for stepping in to help write the memo to the Dean regarding the committee recommendations.

Perry summarized remaining work to be completed:

- Develop a survey for faculty and students to gather data to help in designing further recommendations
- Provide curriculum change options with explanations of what each change would entail
- Homework is needed before the survey is developed and sent out, to summarize issues and options

SPH 680 Fall 2013. The Public Health mini-course is on track for the fall. Students will be split into two groups, with each group participating for half the semester. Diane to take the lead on this and pull in other faculty to assist with lectures.

There was some discussion that the class is not taken seriously because it is just a 1 credit course and is graded S/U. It was recommended that the grading be changed to A-E and the title changed to Public Health for Professionals.

Action list:

- SPH 680 spring semester seminar curriculum to be determined
- Continue review of Capstone for content and credit load
- Reinstatement of Principles of Public Health
- Internship changes
  - Credit/hour requirements
  - What are the resource implications
  - Course sequencing
  - Funding availability
  - Student financial liability over the summer – need income and additional cost to them
MPH Steering Committee Meeting
August 2013

Meeting Notes

In attendance: Perry Smith, Hyunok Choi, Casey O’Brien, Caitlin Reid, Wendy Weller, Mary Gallant (by phone)

Perry thanked the committee for all of the work conducted over the semester and thanked Mary for stepping in to help write the memo to the Dean regarding the committee recommendations.

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