

**EPC
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
MANUAL**

**UAB
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

Revised 2010

EPC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

1. Purpose of the Educational Policy Committee (excerpted from committee bylaws, see Appendix I)

The Faculty Assembly through its charter, delegates the development of policies and discharge of certain responsibilities in the area of academic affairs to the EPC.

Fulfillment of these responsibilities includes, but is not limited to: 1) approving new courses and modifications to the description, objectives or credit hours of existing courses; 2) approving new tracks and/or degree programs and Category A academic certificate programs (Category B, workforce development/continuing education certificate programs should be submitted to the EPC as informational items only); 3) approving substantial modifications to existing tracks and/or degree programs and/or Category A certificate programs which involve more than one department and/or are deemed substantial by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; 4) reviewing all programs globally for the school when departmental degree program reviews are conducted to ensure that each program meets the minimum requirements.

The EPC has oversight over coursework and requirements for all degree programs. The UAB Graduate School has ultimate oversight over coursework and requirements for PhD., MA and MS degrees but not for MPH, MSPH and DrPH degrees.

2. Operation of the EPC (as directed by the EPC bylaws).

In discharging its responsibilities, the EPC serves as an advisory committee to the Faculty Assembly of the School which is the final decision-maker on educational policy. To insure timely discharge of its responsibilities will require the EPC to act as a surrogate for the Faculty Assembly. To insure that the faculty are aware of issues under consideration by the EPC, agendas for meetings will be distributed one week in advance to all faculty and the President of the Student Association Council (SAC). Each faculty member has the right and responsibility to express their opinion to the EPC either through their department's EPC representatives prior to the meeting, by written communication to all members of the EPC committee prior to the meeting or by their own attendance at the meeting. As the EPC is an advisory committee to the Faculty Assembly, every faculty member has the right to attend any and all EPC meetings. Agendas, minutes, and other EPC related documentation for each meeting will be prepared by a staff member in the Office of Student and Academic Affairs, reviewed by the EPC Chair, and distributed to all faculty in a timely fashion.

It is the responsibility of the EPC member with guidance from the Chair of the Faculty Assembly to decide which issues should be brought before the faculty prior to the EPC's review. This ensures that the EPC members and their respective faculty are aware of all concerns regarding the issue and can supply their EPC representatives with informed opinions.

When examining an educational policy or issue, the EPC will interact with other standing and/or ad hoc committees of the School of Public Health where there is an overlap of interest. Generally, the EPC will interact with the Departmental Chairs and educational program directors in discharging its responsibilities.

A decision by the EPC committee will become accepted policy of the School one month after distribution of the minutes unless a review of the decision is requested by a primary full-time faculty member. A review of the decision is a request for open discussion of the decision during the next school-wide faculty meeting. A request for review must be made in writing to the chair of the EPC and to the Chair of the Faculty Assembly and must be co-signed by at least two other primary full-time faculty members. After the review of the decision at a faculty meeting, a vote of the faculty will be taken to either reject or accept the EPC's decision. This vote may then be polled at the faculty meeting or by each department's EPC representative. If rejected by the majority, the decision is overruled. A request for a review of the decision automatically suspends an EPC decision from becoming policy or taking effect until after the faculty has voted on the issue. No further action is required by the EPC on the issue unless new proposals are submitted for review.

3. **Membership of the EPC** (excerpted from the EPC bylaws)

Voting Members: The primary full-time faculty members of each SPH Department will elect one primary EPC representative (who must hold a primary, full-time appointment in the School of Public Health) and one alternate member (who attends meetings and votes in the place of the representative as needed) for 3-year terms. Neither faculty who are members of the Dean's Office, nor the Chair of the Faculty Assembly, may be elected as representatives or alternates. The departments will stagger their elections so that the representatives' terms end at different times. Each year when a new President of the SPH's Student Association Council (SAC) is elected, he or she shall appoint a student representative and an alternate (who attends meetings and votes in place of the representative as needed), each for a 1-year term.

Ex-Officio members: The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Public Health Research, the Chair of the A&G Committee, and the Chair of the Faculty Assembly are non-voting members who are encouraged to attend all meetings and to fully participate in debates and discussions.

The two officers of the EPC are the chair and vice-chair who each serve one-year terms. After serving one year as the vice chair, the vice chair assumes the position of the chair of the EPC. The vice chair is selected each year according to a rotation of all departments in the School.

The chair is responsible for serving as a spokesperson for the committee. The vice chair carries out the responsibilities of the chair during his/her absence. The staff member (OSAS) will schedule meetings, prepare agendas, and record/distribute minutes from EPC meetings to the faculty.

NOTE: The vice chair position rotates through departments in the school in the following order: Department of Health Care Organization and Policy, Epidemiology, Health Behavior, Maternal and Child Health, Biostatistics, Environmental Health Sciences.

4. **Proposal of New Courses**

The EPC reviews all department proposals for new courses. A new course proposal should include 1) a letter of support signed by the Department Chair, 2) a Master Course File change form (Appendix II) also signed by the Department Chair, and 3) a course syllabus. The recommended format of a course syllabus (per decision of the faculty, February 1990) is presented below (see also examples, Appendix III). Only those course proposals including all the elements listed below will be considered by the EPC.

1. Prefix and Course Number – for example, EPI6XX or EPI7XX. Use 600 numbers for Master’s courses and 700 numbers for Doctoral courses.
2. Title -
3. Instructors - any UAB appointment at the rank of assistant professor or higher is an acceptable course master
4. Credit Hours -
5. Introduction – describe the purpose of the course, the tracks for which the course will be a requirement, any limitations on enrollment and any prerequisites.
6. Description – describe the general content of the course and the structure in terms of sessions per week, lectures, seminar or lab format.
7. Objectives – list the educational objectives of the course, in terms of how the student should perform or behave upon completion of the course. See Appendix IV for a discussion of formulating educational objectives.
8. Evaluation – describe how student’s performance will be assessed (weighting of assignments, test, etc)
9. Required Texts -
10. Other References -
11. Course Schedule – list in sequence the topics to be covered by week over an academic term, and as appropriate, specific assignments, projects, requirements, and readings.
12. Disability Language – Any student with a disability that may need accommodations in order to successfully complete all requirements of this course should visit the Office of Disability Support Services, located in Room 516 of the Hill University Center, extension 4-4205. This office is responsible for registering students and in ensuring the University’s compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the American with Disabilities Act. Once registered, this office will then inform faculty members of all courses in which the student is enrolled of the students status and the specific nature of any accommodations required. Any student requiring such accommodation should discuss this with the course master and assure that the appropriate correspondence is sent from the Office of Disability support Services.

Requests to cross-list courses taught by other UAB schools or other Universities as Public Health School courses must be accompanied by the same documentation.

5. Modifications of Courses

Substantial modifications of existing courses are reviewed by the EPC. Proposed substantial modifications should be accompanied by a letter of explanation from the Department Chair, the current course description, as outlined above, the modified course proposal, and a form requesting a change to the Master Course File. In general, such modifications include changes in the course description, objectives, prerequisites or credit hours.

Minor course modifications and deletions of courses no longer offered in a department may be proposed on a form requesting a change in the Master Course File. Additional documentation will be requested by the EPC chair if necessary. At the discretion of the EPC chair, very minor modifications may be forwarded directly to the Academic Affairs Office for action, as they will not be substantial enough for EPC review. Decisions to bypass EPC review will be reported to the EPC at the next scheduled meeting, and course modifications may be recalled for EPC review if necessary.

Changes in texts, the scheduling of courses, and instructor do not require EPC review or the submission of a change in the Master Course File form.

6. Course Upgrades and Dual Master's/Doctoral Listings

Requests to change a course from a 600 (master's) to a 700 (doctoral) level course or to list a course at both levels must be approved by the EPC, and also by the UAB Graduate School. Proposed upgrades and dual listings should be accompanied by a letter of explanation from the Department Chair, the current course syllabus, the modified course syllabus and a Master Course File change form.

7. New Tracks and/or Degree Programs

The EPC reviews proposals for new tracks (e.g. new specializations within existing departmental degree programs with new credit hour and course requirements) and proposals for new degree programs (e.g. coordinated or dual degrees, Masters of Science or PhD degrees). A Request for Adjustment to Degree and Program/Track Options form should accompany the proposal (see Appendix V). MPH track proposals must meet School of Public Health MPH requirements and MSPH must meet CEPH accreditation requirements (see Appendix VI and Appendix VII). MS or PhD degrees must ultimately be approved by the Graduate School which has administrative responsibility for these programs. Coordinated degrees must be approved by the companion school.

Of particular concern in the EPC review are whether the new track or degree is clearly distinct from existing degree programs in the school, and whether there is sufficient depth and expertise of faculty to mount the program.

New track proposals should take the following form:

- a. Title – Indicate whether this would be an MPH, MSPH, DrPH or other degree.
- b. Introduction – describe the purpose of the degree or track, the targeted students for enrollment, and the career path students would be expected to follow upon completion of the program (i.e., relevance of program to job opportunities). Indicate how this degree or track differs from current departmental offerings.
- c. Course Description and Requirements – describe the general content of the program, the distribution of courses required across departments within the School and across other schools within the university, the courses that will be required to complete the degree, the academic term they are now offered, the total number of credit hours involved, any internship or practicum requirements and the total time it is expected to take to complete the program.
- d. Admission Requirements – indicate educational and experiential requirements for admission into the program. Indicate whether standardized test scores or grade point averages required for admission are higher than those of the school as a whole, as stated in the school catalogue.
- e. New track or degree proposals must be accompanied by a letter of support, from the departmental chair, in which faculty expertise and depth are presented.
- f. Supporting letters from other units that will be extensively involved in the program are helpful for EPC review.
- g. If the track or degree requires new courses which have not been approved by the EPC, proposals for these new courses, in the format described above, must accompany the track or degree proposal.

8. **Modifications to Tracks and/or Degree Programs**

Requests to modify existing tracks should be accompanied by a proposal that follows the format for proposing new tracks, above. Each of the five (Sec 7a-7d) sections should briefly describe the existing track, indicate any proposed changes, and provide a rationale for the changes. Track modification proposals must be accompanied by a letter of explanation from the department chair in support of the proposed modification.

9. Substitutions for Required Courses

Requests to substitute MPH core courses may be made on behalf of a student by his or her academic advisor to the instructor for the required course. Requests generally include evidence that the student is already competent in the material covered in the required course, and may include syllabi for courses taken elsewhere which covered similar material. The course instructor approves the substitution by completing a Course Substitution Form available in the OSAS (See Appendix VIII) and writing a letter of agreement to the student's academic advisor approving the request, for substitution. This letter should be retained in the student's file (located in the Office of Student and Academic Services) to document that the student has completed the requirements for graduation. Credit hours required for graduation in a given program are not reduced by substitutions for course requirements.

Decisions to allow students to substitute courses which are required by individual departments for graduation in a program but which are not MPH core courses, must be documented by a Course Substitution Form retained in the student's file in the OSAS.

10. Pass/No Pass Grading for Non-didactic courses (approved by EPC, February 26, 1999)

Research (non-didactic) courses (those numbered 690, 697, 698, 699, 798 or 799) are to be graded **P** for Pass or **NP** for No Pass or **I** for Incomplete*. Students engaged in research work are to be registered for a minimum of three credit hours each term in which they are conducting their research; each research course should be graded each term. At the beginning of each term, students are to meet with their academic or research advisors; together a plan for work to be accomplished during the term should be discussed, agreed upon and documented as appropriate. At the end of the term, the advisor shall assess whether or not the work was accomplished according to plan (and assign a grade of **P**), whether the work is nearly but not substantially complete (and assign a grade of **I**) or whether insufficient progress has been made (and assign a grade of **NP**). After enrollment of twelve hours in research courses, any student earning more credit hours worth of **NP** than **P** grades will be placed on academic probation and must comply with existing policies to regain acceptable academic standing, or risk dismissal from the program. Grades of **I** for which required work is not completed within one term after receiving the grade will automatically convert to grades of **NP**.

*The Department of Environmental Health Sciences assigns letter grades for 697 and 699.

11. **Transfer of Credit**

Courses taken at another university may be transferred toward a degree in Public Health when they are identified on an official transcript from the referring institution. These courses must meet the following criteria:

1. All courses must be graduate level.
2. Course content information must be provided to determine comparability (i.e. the syllabus).
3. The courses must not have been used to complete degree requirements for any previous degree.
4. The student must have matriculated for at least one term as a degree seeking student at the UAB School of Public Health and must be in good academic standing.
5. No grades below B will be acceptable.

Course instructor (for MPH core courses) or advisor (for other required courses) approval is required if the transferred course is intended to substitute for a required course (see item 9). Upon receipt of this written approval, the Office of Student and Academic Services will prepare a Transfer of Credit Form (Appendix IX) for signatures. A copy of the form, along with the transcript is sent to the Registrar's Office to be placed on the student's UAB transcript. In this case, the course(s) are included in the UAB credit hour and GPA calculations.

Students may transfer a maximum of 12 credit hours from other institutions towards a UAB degree.

12. **Repeat Policy (Approved by the EPC on January 22, 1999)**

A course with a grade of C or F is eligible for repeat. A course can be repeated only once at the home institution. A course taken at UAB earning a grade of "C" or "F" that is repeated at UAB is represented as: H1=X H2=Z. A course taken at another institution and is requested as transfer to replace credit for a "C" or "F" graded course must have a "B" or better grade and is represented as: H1=D T2=Z.

Legend of Codes:

- X – Indicates credit and GPA removed
- D – Indicates GPA retained but credit dropped
- Z – Indicates credit and GPA retained
- H – Indicates course taken at home institution
- T – Indicates course taken at another institution
- 1 or 2 – indicates incidence of course

13. **Documentation of EPC actions**

Copies of all EPC actions are to be sent to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, in whose office a Master Course File will be maintained containing all course syllabi, past and present, as well as copies of the EPC actions

14. **EPC DEADLINE**

The Chair of the EPC in conjunction with the Office of Student and Academic Services will develop an annual schedule of EPC deadline dates. See Appendix X for example.

List of Appendix

- I EPC Bylaws
- II EPC Request for Corrections to Master Course File Form
- III Course Syllabus
- IV EPC Recommendations for Course Objectives
- V EPC Request for Adjustments to Degree and Program/Track Options Form
- VI MPH Requirements
- VII CEPH Accreditation Requirements
- VIII Course Substitution Form
- IX Transfer of Credit Form
- X EPC Schedule

APPENDIX I

EDUCATIONAL POLICY COMMITTEE BYLAWS
UAB School of Public Health
Revised and Approved by EPC and Faculty June 5, 2001

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this committee shall be the Educational Policy Committee (EPC) of the School of Public Health, University of Alabama at Birmingham.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The Faculty Assembly through its charter, delegates the development of policies and discharge of certain responsibilities in the area of academic affairs to the EPC. Fulfillment of these responsibilities includes, but is not limited to: approving 1) new courses and modifications to the description, objectives or credit hours of existing courses; 2) new tracks and/or degree programs; and 3) substantial modifications to existing tracks and/or degree programs which involve more than one department and/or are deemed substantial by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

ARTICLE III – OPERATION

In discharging its responsibilities, the EPC serves as an advisory committee to the Faculty Assembly of the School which is the final decision-maker on educational policy. To ensure timely discharge of its responsibilities will require the EPC to act as a surrogate for the Faculty Assembly. As the EPC is an advisory committee to the Faculty Assembly, every faculty member has the right to attend any and all EPC meetings.

To insure that the faculty are aware of issues under consideration by the EPC, agendas for meetings will be distributed one week in advance to all faculty and the President of the Student Advisory Committee. Each faculty member has the right and responsibility to express his/her opinion to the EPC either through his/her department's EPC representatives prior to the meeting, by written communication to all members of the EPC prior to the meeting or by his/her own attendance at the meeting. Agendas and Minutes of each meeting will be prepared by a staff member from the Office of Student and Academic Services, reviewed by the chair, and distributed to all faculty in a timely fashion.

Issues of general concern to the entire faculty should be discussed during a school-wide faculty meeting prior to implementation of the EPC's recommendations. It is the responsibility of the EPC with guidance from the Chair of the Faculty Assembly to decide which issues should be brought before the faculty assembly prior to the EPC's review. This ensures that EPC members and their respective department faculty are aware of all concerns regarding the issue and can supply their EPC representatives with informed opinions.

When examining an educational policy or issue, the EPC will interact with other standing and/or ad hoc committees of the School of Public Health where there is an overlap of interest. Generally, the EPC will interact with the Departmental Chairs and educational program directors in discharging its responsibilities.

Once approved by EPC, a motion will become accepted policy of the School one month after distribution of the minutes unless a review of the decision is requested by a primary full-time faculty member. A review of the decision is a request for open discussion of the decision during the next school-wide faculty meeting. A request for review must be made in writing to the Chair of the EPC and to the Chair of the Faculty Assembly and must be co-signed by at least two primary full-time faculty members. After the review of the decision at a faculty assembly meeting, a vote of the faculty will be taken to either reject or accept the EPC's decision. This vote may be polled at the faculty assembly meeting or by each department's EPC representative. If rejected by the majority, the decision is overruled. A request for a review of the decision automatically suspends an EPC decision from becoming policy and taking effect until after the faculty has voted on and approved the motion. No further action is required by EPC unless new proposals are submitted for review.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Voting Members: The primary full-time faculty members of each SPH Department will elect one primary EPC representative (who must hold a primary, full-time appointment in the School of Public Health) and one alternate member (who attends meetings and votes in the place of the representative as needed) for 3-year terms. Neither faculty who are members of the Dean's Office, nor the Chair of the Faculty Assembly, may be elected as representatives or alternates. The departments will stagger their elections so that the representatives' terms end at different times. Each year when a new President of the SPH's Student Association Council (SAC) is elected, he or she shall appoint a student representative and an alternate (who attends meetings and votes in place of the representative as needed), each for a 1-year term.

Ex-Officio members: The Dean of Academic Affairs, the Chair of the A&G Committee, and the Chair of the Faculty Assembly are non-voting members who are encouraged to attend all meetings and to fully participate in debates and discussions.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

The two officers of the EPC are the chair and vice chair who each serve one year terms. After serving one year as the vice chair, the vice chair assumes the position of the chair of the EPC. The vice chair is selected each year according to a rotation of all departments. Should the chair or vice chair resign from their position, the department of affiliation is responsible for electing a replacement.

The chair is responsible for serving as a spokesperson for the committee. The vice chair carries out the responsibilities of the chair during his/her absence. The staff member is responsible for scheduling meetings, preparing agendas, and recording and distributing minutes from EPC meetings to the faculty.

ARTICLE VI – MEETINGS

The EPC will meet regularly at least once a month each academic term. Special meetings may be called by the chair. The EPC chair shall call a special meeting of the EPC upon written request by at least two EPC members. A quorum of 50 percent must be present to conduct official business.

ARTICLE VII – SUBCOMMITTEES

Subcommittees, either standing or ad hoc, of the EPC may be established to consider issues which require detailed information or evaluation.

A. STANDING SUBCOMMITTEES

The Faculty Assembly is responsible for approving any new standing subcommittee of the EPC. The purpose, membership and operating procedures of a new standing subcommittee shall be specified by the EPC, submitted to the Faculty Assembly for approval, and incorporated into the EPC Bylaws.

B. AD HOC SUBCOMMITTEES

Creation and dissolution of ad hoc subcommittees requires a two-thirds majority approval of EPC members present at a meeting. Assignment of subcommittee members will be made by the chair of the EPC. All activities of an ad hoc subcommittee will be brought forward to the full committee for action.

ARTICLE VIII – PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition Robert's Rules of Order should govern the EPC unless the chair specifies otherwise.

ARTICLE IX – APPROVAL AND AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Approval of any amendment to these bylaws requires submission to and subsequent affirmative vote by the Faculty Assembly of the School of Public Health.

APPENDIX II

APPENDIX III

APPENDIX IV

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Writing of goals and objectives may appear to be an onerous task, it is one that is important both in terms of accreditation and in terms of our own knowledge of what we are doing in our academic programs. It seems logical that the best way to chart our course is to know where we intend to go, how we intend to get there, and how to know when we have arrived. The effort involved in charting our course will, in fact, enable us to meet both the immediate needs related to accreditation but also the long-range needs of the School. For example, a particular course should provide certain knowledge, attitudes, and skills that will be provided regardless of who the instructor is. In essence, then, objectives become a sort of contract among the School, the faculty member, and the students.

Please take a few minutes to read the brief materials that follow in order to familiarize yourself with some basic points about objectives. Our goal is that meaningful objectives be prepared with a maximum of thought but a minimum of time commitment to the task.

REFERENCES

1. SJ Drumheller, Handbook of Curriculum Design for Individualized Instruction: A Systems Approach. Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Educational Technology Publications, 1971.
2. NE Gronlund, Stating Behavioral Objectives for Classroom Instruction. New York, NY, The MacMillan Company, 1970.
3. RF Mager, Preparing Instructional Objectives. Palo Alto, CA, Fearon Publishers, 1962.
4. WJ Popham, The Use of Instructional Objectives. Belmont, CA, Fearon Publishers, 1973.
5. GJ Posner and AN Rudnitsky, Course Design: A Guide to Curriculum Development for Teachers. 3rd Edition, White Plains, NY, Longman, Inc., 1986.

APPENDIX V

APPENDIX VI

Competency-Core Comparisons

The CEPH accreditation criteria set out five areas of basic public health knowledge that are to be part of the requirements for all MPH or equivalent professional degrees. Students working towards such degrees are to:

1. develop an understanding of the five areas of knowledge basic to public health,
2. have an opportunity to become proficient in one of those areas (that is to specialize in one of the five areas),
3. acquire skills in the application of both specialty and basic knowledge to solving community health problems.

The five areas of knowledge basic to public health include:

1. biological, physical, and chemical factors which affect the health of a community;
2. concepts and methods of relevant social and behavioral sciences;
3. distribution of diseases or conditions in populations and factors that influence (sic) this distribution;
4. collection, storage, retrieval, analysis, and interpretation of health data; and
5. planning, policy analysis, and administration of health programs.

UAB presently meets these requirements through common, shared instruction (core) in the five basic areas of public health knowledge, plus additional coursework by which a student may specialize in one of the areas, plus a for-credit integrative experience.

School of Public Health MPH Core Courses Requirements

The MPH Core Curriculum (19-22 credit hours) including the Integrative Experience

Course		Credit Hours
BST 600	Biostatistics for Public Health *	4
ENH 600	Fundamentals of Environmental Health Sciences	3
EPI 600	Introduction to Epidemiology **	3
HB 600	Social and Behavioral Science Core	3
HCO 600	Introduction to Public Health	3
PUH 695	Public Health Integrative Experience	3

*** Some departments require BST 611 (Intermediate Statistical Analysis I - 3 credit hours) and BST 612 (Intermediate Statistical Analysis II - 3 credit hours) as the MPH Biostatistics requirement.**

**** Some departments may allow a choice of EPI 600 or EPI 610 (Principles of Epidemiologic Research - 4 credit hours) to meet this course requirement. The Department of Epidemiology requires EPI 610 to meet this course requirement.**

APPENDIX VII

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