**Roles & Responsibilities**

**CONTENT SUMMARY**

* Vice Chair for Education
* Faculty program directors
* Faculty academic advisors
* Faculty Area of Emphasis heads/members
* Student Services staff
* Epidemiology Administrative staff
* Epidemiology Data Center staff
* Pitt Public Health Student Affairs and Dean’s Office staff

**Vice Chair for Education**

* Maria Brooks, PhD [brooks@edc.pitt.edu](mailto:brooks@edc.pitt.edu)

**Faculty Program Directors**

* Thomas Songer, PhD, MPH, M.Sc. Doctoral Programs [tjs@pitt.edu](mailto:tjs@pitt.edu)
* Nancy Glynn, PhD Master’s Programs [glynnn@edc.pitt.edu](mailto:glynnn@edc.pitt.edu)

**Academic advisors**

* **Advisor assignments**
* **Doctoral programs (PhD, DrPH)**
* Faculty meeting qualifications defined by the department for advising doctoral program students (refer to the **Faculty Status** section of the Faculty Handbook) will be contacted by the Student Services staff (on behalf of the Epidemiology Admissions Committee) to determine if they are able to act as academic advisors of newly accepted applicants.
* Accepted doctoral applicants are initially assigned a temporary academic advisor (**Thomas Songer, PhD, MPH, M.Sc., Doctoral Program Director,** [tjs@pitt.edu](mailto:tjs@pitt.edu)) until they officially accept their Pitt Public Health admission offers and forward the required deposit to Pitt Public Health Admissions. Then, a permanent faculty advisor is assigned.
* Faculty may be requested to act as academic advisors for outstanding accepted applicants who have been extended one year of **priority (bridge) funding** support from the department. To learn more about the priority funding process, contact the Department of Epidemiology Student Affairs Manager and Program Administrator, Lori Smith, at [smithl@edc.pitt.edu](mailto:smithl@edc.pitt.edu).
* Faculty will be contacted by the Student Services staff to determine if they will accept new students (who are not priority funding candidates) as advisees. This does **not** obligate them to provide financial support (Graduate Student Researcher [GSR] or trainee positions), although this is optimal for students.
* Faculty will receive electronic copies of new advisees’ SOPHAS (school) applications for their records from the Student Services staff.
* **Masters programs (MS, MPH)**
* Accepted masters applicants are initially assigned a temporary academic advisor (**Nancy Glynn, PhD, Master’s Program Director**, [glynnn@edc.pitt.edu](mailto:glynnn@edc.pitt.edu)) until they officially accept their Pitt Public Health admission offers and forward the required deposit to Pitt Public Health Admissions. Then, a permanent faculty academic advisor is assigned.
* Faculty will receive notice that they have been assigned to a new student via e-mail from the Student Services staff (on behalf of the Epidemiology Admissions Committee), along with electronic copies of new students’ SOPHAS (school) applications for their records.

Epidemiology Department applicants who have accepted the Graduate School of Public

Health’s offer of admission are advised to contact the academic advisor identified in their offer of admission letter as soon as possible to introduce themselves and discuss departmental programs and enrollment. **After academic advisors receive confirmation of advisee assignments from the Epidemiology Student Services staff, they should take the initiative to contact new students if they have not yet heard from their new advisees.**

Refer to the **Mentoring** section of the Faculty Handbook for more information concerning the initiation and development of mentoring relationships with students.

Refer to the **New Faculty Information** section of the Faculty Handbook to learn more about qualifications for advising master’s and doctoral students.

* **Academic advisors should be prepared to discuss the following with students**:
* Student academic or professional backgrounds, areas of concentration & research

Interests

* Ongoing meetings/discussions (mutually agreed upon by advisors and students)
* Master’s and doctoral academic program requirements
* Term schedules (fall, spring or summer)
* Course selection and student self enrollment
* Course exemptions and/or credit transfers
* Degree program milestone exams/activities and associated reporting & operational processes
* Faculty committee composition (essay/thesis/dissertation)
* Dissertation, thesis or essay development
* Academic progress and student performance
* Graduation readiness – checklists are available on the department’s website
* Career objectives – post graduation employment opportunities
* Requests to change advisors
* Student grievances
  + Financial assistance options (Graduate Student Researcher positions, training grant positions, student hourly employment)
* Projected [sequence of courses](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/forms.asp) to complete degree programs (Curriculum section of Student Handbook) and [graduation checklists](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/handbook_FAQFormsAndDocuments.asp) (by program and year of matriculation).
* [MPH internship program](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/practicum.asp)
* [Academic and research integrity policies of the University and GSPH](http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/interior.php?pageID=287) (completion of online modules are required of all GSPH students within the first two terms after their matriculation – more information is to be announced concerning these modules prior to fall term 2010). Faculty may also contact the [Center for Instructional Design and Distance Education](http://www.cidde.pitt.edu/fds/lrn_plagiarism.htm) (CIDDE) to learn more about how to prevent and address issues involving plagiarism and how to access **Turnitin and Safe Assign**, two web-based tools designed to assist with detection of online plagiarism.
* Development of writing and data analysis skills
* Online University Internal Review Board (IRB) module completion. Contact the Epidemiology Student Services staff with questions (Lori Smith, Student Affairs Manager and Program Administrator, [smithl@edc.pitt.edu](mailto:smithl@edc.pitt.edu)).
* [Teaching Practicum requirement](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/documents/handbook/STUDENT_HANDBOOK_DOCTORAL_DEGREE_PROGRAMS_10-14-09_kst.pdf) (doctoral program students)
* Clear [protocols](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/documents/research/Student_Research_Guidelines_1-22-13.pdf) for interaction, communication and progress expectation involving essay/thesis/dissertation work and research assessment ([research grading forms](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/handbook_FAQFormsAndDocuments.asp)), if advisors are also acting as committee chairs.
* **Academic advisor changes**
* An academic advisor change may be made if, in the opinion of the student, current advisor and proposed new advisor, it would result in a working environment more conducive to academic progress and effective mentoring.
* Advisor changes should not be discouraged if they are viable solutions to problems, and are not regarded as negative actions in the Department of Epidemiology
* Students may download a **Request to Change Academic Advisor form** from the departmental [Web site](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/handbook_FAQFormsAndDocuments.asp), sign the form and request signatures of the current and proposed advisors.
* Students and faculty should retain copies of the form for their records, and the original form should be submitted to the Epidemiology Student Services Offices (A536 or A537 Crabtree) for retention by the department.

[**Faculty Area of Emphasis heads/members**](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/courses_aoc.asp)

Areas of Emphasis (AOE) within the Department of Epidemiology are groupings of faculty who share research interests (methodological, host, or disease-specific) and work together to provide a specific educational component for students. These groups represent many of the strengths of the department.

Students are welcome to identify themselves with one or more AOE, but are not required to do so; in fact, mixing is encouraged to tailor the academic program and experience to the individual student’s needs and desires.

**Epidemiology Student Services staff**

The Epidemiology Student Services staff is led by Lori S. Smith, Student Affairs Manager and Program Administrator. Gwen O’Brien and Lindsay Flinn are Student Services Specialists, focusing on the providing service and support to doctoral and master’s program applicants, students, and graduates , respectively. Thomas Songer, PhD, MPH, M.Sc., ([tjs@pitt.edu](mailto:tjs@pitt.edu)) is the Student Services Director. Students interact consistently with the Epidemiology Student Services staff throughout their course of study at Pitt Public Health, from the time of application, admission and initial enrollment, throughout course completion and milestone exam passage, and finally as graduation approaches and all final program requirements must be met.

* Student Services staff members work collaboratively with instructors, faculty academic advisors, University and Pitt Public Health staff and essay/thesis/dissertation committee members to ensure students have the information they need to navigate successfully through our degree programs. Their primary duties include:
  + Coordination of Pitt Public Health and departmental special events for applicants and students.
  + Coordination of the UPMC Career Connections program for MPH or MS students.
  + Approval of faculty committee composition for all Epidemiology students conducting research (MPH essays, MS theses, DrPH/PhD dissertations). Lori Smith is responsible for these approvals on behalf of the department.
  + New student recruitment.
  + Graduation readiness review (in conjunction with academic advisors)
  + Student grievance and problem resolution (in conjunction with faculty and the Student-Faculty Liaison Committee. Grievances should be presented to Lori Smith, if students wish to involve the Epidemiology Student Services Office staff.
  + Maintenance of student departmental files and student-related departmental database
  + Responding to applicant, student and faculty policy and procedural inquiries received via phone, e-mail, Web site Help Center and office visits
  + Correspondence with students and faculty via ongoing policy updates, e-newsletters, operational procedural announcements and reminders
  + Central oversight of the departmental student grade submission process
  + Communication with applicants and Epidemiology Admissions Committee / presentation of applications to committee
  + Maintenance of departmental course schedule matrix
  + Participation in departmental student recruitment efforts
  + Editing and design of departmental website content
  + Acting as department liaisons to GSPH Student Affairs to assist with design and facilitation of school-wide initiatives, coordinate student admissions process and organize student related events.
* Student Services staff members include:
  + **Lori S. Smith**

Student Affairs Manager and

Program Administrator [smithl@edc.pitt.edu](mailto:smithl@edc.pitt.edu) A537 Crabtree Hall

* + **Gwen O’Brien**

Student Services Specialist [obrieng@edc.pitt.edu](mailto:obrieng@edc.pitt.edu) A536 Crabtree Hall

* + **Lindsay Flinn**   
    Student Services Specialist [flinnl@edc.pitt.edu](mailto:flinnl@edc.pitt.edu) A536 Crabtree Hall

**Epidemiology administrative staff**

* The Department of Epidemiology administrative staff is supervised by Linda Deluco. See the department website for a list of members and summaries of individual responsibilities. Linda and her staff are responsible for:
* Grant management activities
* Contract administration
* Departmental salary distribution
* Preparation and processing of all departmental research proposals and applications
* Monitoring of account expenditures to ensure compliance with University and agency policies and procedures
* Preparation of grant proposal budgets
* Maintenance of database for research proposals and special projects
* Human resources management for the department
* Assistance with proposal development
* Faculty recruitment
* Departmental facilities management
* Linda Deluco may be contacted at [deluco@edc.pitt.edu](mailto:deluco@edc.pitt.edu). Her office is located in A516 Crabtree. A complete listing of the Epidemiology administrative staff is available on the Department of Epidemiology [website](http://www.epidemiology.pitt.edu/admin.asp).

**Epidemiology Data Center (EDC) staff**

* Faculty should correspond with EDC staff members concerning the following:
* Request technical assistance for computer problems via submission of Help Desk tickets

[**Pitt Public Health Student Affairs and Dean’s Office staff**](http://www.publichealth.pitt.edu/interior.php?pageID=72)

* It is generally recommended that faculty and students attempt to resolve concerns and obtain responses to inquiries at departmental levels before presenting them to the school’s Student Affairs or Dean’s Office staff.
* Refer to the **New Faculty** section of the Faculty Handbook for a list of departmental informational resources.