
EXECUTIVE BOARD
Minutes of 24 October 2025**Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Executive Board was called to order at 10:27 a.m. on 24 October 2025, in Ellsworth Hall room 3201 and via Webex, by Amy Naugle, president.

Roll Call

Members in Attendance: Osama Abudayyeh, Kimberly Buchholz, Anthony DeFulio, Kieran Fogarty, Wanda Hadley, Janet Hahn, Amy Naugle, C. Dennis Simpson, Laura Teichert

Members Absent: David Rudge

Parliamentarian Absent: Decker Hains

Recording Secretary in Attendance: Sue Brodasky, Administrator

Quorum

A quorum was present with nine members in attendance, of the six needed to establish quorum.

Agenda

The agenda was amended to add two items related to Academic and Information Technology Council and the International Education Council.

It was moved by Simpson, seconded by DeFulio, to accept the agenda as amended. The motion carried.

Minutes

It was moved by Teichert seconded by DeFulio, to approve the 10 October 2025 minutes as provided. The motion carried.

New Business

President Naugle explained the email that was distributed regarding term-faculty initiating curriculum proposals. She had consulted Parliamentarian Hains, Interim Provost Cheatham, and Director of Academic Collective Bargaining Mingus and it was determined that term-faculty are eligible and the issue has been resolved.

Unfinished Business

President Naugle reported receiving the same voice mail as the Faculty Senate office from Emeriti Council chair Lagerwey stating that the Emeriti Council is not prepared to meet. Therefore, the Ad Hoc committee is being postponed until further notice.

New Business, Cont.

President Naugle outlined the proposed new charge for the Undergraduate Studies Council for it to reactivate the Service-Learning committee under a new name to incorporate experiential-learning.

It was moved by Simpson, seconded by DeFulio, to approve the USC proposed charge. The motion carried.

It was moved by Hadley, seconded by DeFulio, to approve the appointment HIGE Director of International Students, Brian Childs, as an advisory, non-voting, member of the International Education Council. The motion carried.

It was moved by Fogarty, seconded by Simpson, to approve the distribution of the Academic and Information Technology Council survey to all faculty through the Faculty Senate office email list. The motion carried.

President Naugle introduced the 4 November Faculty Senate meeting agenda. The WMU Essential Studies report was postponed to the December meeting.

It was moved by Simpson, seconded by Abudayyeh, to approve the agenda as amended. The motion carried.

WMU President Russ Kavalhuna Report

- **Listening Sessions – Themes Related to Faculty Senate**
President Kavalhuna reported that faculty and staff expressed strong commitment and pride in WMU, maintaining a generally optimistic outlook. Common themes included questions regarding institutional identity (“Who are we?” and “Where are we headed?”) and concerns about confronting the broader challenges facing higher education. Participants also raised recurring questions regarding enrollment management and WMU’s constrained budget.
- **Themes from Board of Trustees**
Kavalhuna noted that the Board has identified several overlapping themes, including WMU’s branding and institutional identity, declining revenue and enrollment, and concerns that campus silos may hinder long-term institutional success.
- **Opportunities and Threats Consensus**
Key points of consensus included a shared commitment to students and research, coupled with a lack of understanding about decision-making processes and communication channels. Kavalhuna emphasized his goal of developing a transparent process for institutional visioning, feedback, and communication.
- **Academic Freedom and Federal Funding**
No formal requests have been received from the federal government regarding restrictions on academic freedom. Kavalhuna stated that any such decision would include broad campus consultation before action.
- **Government Shutdown Impacts**
Current effects remain consistent with prior federal administrative disruptions. A question was raised regarding financial aid caps for undergraduate and graduate students. Kavalhuna noted he has not yet received details. It was confirmed the caps are to go into effect as of July 2026.
- **WMU Preparedness for Potential ICE Actions**
Kavalhuna met with WMU General Counsel regarding differing legal interpretations of classroom status under federal law. The Faculty Senate has invited the General Counsel to speak at the November Senate meeting in order to clarify faculty legal responsibilities and WMU policy compliance.
- **Enrollment Plans for 2026**
WMU enrollment is currently down 1.6%. Market share has declined to 5.6%, with the University of Michigan and Michigan State University absorbing more of the regional student population. Strategies include increasing transfer student recruitment (down 10% from ten years ago), expanding participation among Kalamazoo Promise students, and maintaining headcount. College-specific enrollment goals will be set and publicized.
- **Experience-Driven Learning and Vocational Emphasis**
Kavalhuna reaffirmed WMU’s commitment to Experience-Driven Learning as a strategic differentiator and a means of enhancing employability outcomes. He emphasized the University’s role in developing professionals beyond traditional liberal arts models and contrasted WMU’s approach with vocational certification programs.
- **New Initiatives, Programs, Policies, or Restructuring**
President Kavalhuna indicated further information will be forthcoming.

Reports of Officers

President Naugle provided updates on recent meetings that included:

- WMU President Kavalhuna Meeting Update
 - President Naugle confirmed that all relevant topics were covered during participation on this meeting.
 - No decisions will be made regarding a Provost search until January.

Vice President Simpson reported:

- Interim Provost Cheatham Meeting Update:

- The Emeriti Council requested funding for a holiday reception; however, the request was denied.
- Concerns were raised about the difficulty students face when attempting to access syllabi before registration, which limits their ability to make informed course selections. The Interim Provost encouraged the Executive Board to promote faculty submission of syllabi into Banner.
- Attendance at academic forum had been instituted as mandatory for department chairs, directors, associate deans, and deans. The forum will include breakout sessions to address specific academic issues. The last forum focused on four-year graduation rates.

Reports of Councils and Committees

Hahn provided the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee report, which included:

- Katherine Suender (College of Education and Human Development) was elected as chair.
- Marie Moreno volunteered to serve as interim vice chair due to Nathan Tabor's fall class conflict.
- The committee will meet every Monday in November to review all fall 2026 proposals.
- Members divided into two subgroups to review proposals; future meetings will include pre-assigned proposal reviews.
- Discussion focused on meeting notifications and concerns about learning mid-semester of teaching conflicts.

Rudge provided the Undergraduate Studies Council report via email, which included:

- Cadaldo was elected as the USC representative to the Transfer Credit Committee.
- Marino to serve as chair of the Transfer Credit Committee.
- An MOA will be developed following discussion with IEC regarding transfer credits for study abroad.
- Rudge met with the Experience-Driven Learning working group.
- Curriculum Manager De-Chano-Cook reported:
 - Four upcoming curricular proposals.
 - New process anticipated for course reactivation.
- Griffin-Brown noted advising number of student alerts and Degree Works usage.
- Two curriculum proposals were postponed.
- Discussion was held regarding revising GPA policy to "undo" poor grades for students who switch majors with emphasis on undeclared students.
- MOA on cross-listed courses noted that they must have identical title, description, and prerequisites.
- Renaming of the Service-Learning Approval Committee was discussed. Chair Wagner presented tentative membership structure. Awaiting Faculty Senate Executive Board input.

Fogarty provided the Academic and Information Technology Council report via email, which included:

- Chair Cataldo reported
 - Finalizing faculty survey on preferred virtual meeting platforms (Zoom, Teams, WebEx).
 - Subcommittees established to review AI and cybersecurity implementation plans.
 - Finalizing MOA language addressing High-Flex Instruction registration concerns.
- Holmes provided the OIT report
 - 79% completion of new phone/messaging system.
 - Reviewing final bids for DNS/IP Network updates; award anticipated mid-November.
 - Cybersecurity Summit (October 9) drew 400 attendees.
 - Faculty cybersecurity training scheduled for fall.
- Carnell provided the WMUx report
 - E-Learning outage due to nationwide network disruptions.
 - ADA compliance issues to be resolved by April 2026.
- Glock provided the Student Success Hub report
 - Barry Olson presented updates on AI and BOT implementation in a two-year pilot program.

Hahn provided the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee report via email, which included:

- Membership shortages continue; unaffiliated committee member is still needed.
- Chair Allen was encouraged to reach out to associate deans for membership recruitment.
- Bush reported
 - WMU Essential Studies Faculty Fellow Ernst is working on a communication plan.
 - A new plan related to transfers has been developed to help operationalize MOA-17/04.

Abudayyeh provided the Campus Planning and Finance Council report via email, which included:

- Cumming, Registrar, reported
 - Reviewed MOA-23/02: Drop/Withdrawal Extension. She reviewed the background and progression of the MOA, noting that it was approved by both the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Councils but did not pass at the Senate level. Cumming addressed concerns that had been raised at that time by the Senate. Following her presentation, the council revived the MOA and invited Cumming to attend the Senate meeting should the Executive Board approve the revised MOA for resubmission to the Senate.
- Spoelstra, on behalf of Bertman, presented the 2025-26 charges of the Sustainability Committee. The charges were discussed, slightly revised, and approved.
- Van Der Kley stated that WMU received 3% one-time state budget. Tuition constraints for the 2026-27 year were established by the state, which capped tuition at a 4% increase. The state increased base by \$3.2 to \$3.6 million for MPSERS retirees.
- VanderVeen provided construction updates on the various ongoing projects around campus, as well as new projects that will start in January. The new dorms are scheduled to open in fall 2026. All wayfinding signs are installed.
- Spoelstra reported that he is collecting new student ideas for projects. He has been invited to speak at the next Board of Trustees meeting regarding student projects and the Sustainability Office programs.

Teichert provided the Graduate Studies Council report via email, which included:

- Graduate College Dean Byrd-Jacobs reported
 - Travel grants and research grant applications are closed. Now under review with faculty.
 - Dissertation writing workshop is scheduled for 10 November. Full day event with the morning focused on information and afternoon on individual consultation.
 - Call for Teaching Excellence Award nominations distributed for one MA and one PhD.
- Curriculum Manager DeChano-Cook reported
 - Proposed MOA-25/12: Establish Cross-Listed Courses Policy
- Graduate Student Association, Binford and Fermin reported
 - Successful Montgomery Essential Needs Drive exceeded donations goals.
 - Acceptance emails sent to 3-Minute Thesis competition registrants. Competition on 18 November, with another competition planned for spring.
 - GSA to host a General Assembly meeting on 24 October where the election of the Chief of Justice position will take place.
 - Second cycle for GSA grants: 15 proposals, five mixed RSO events, one operational RSO funding request.
- The council will put forward MOA-23/02: Drop/Withdrawal Extension again.
 - Chair Guth requested council input as the MOA was originally a joint CPFP, USC, and GSC endeavor.
 - Peer institution comparisons
 - WMU midterm grade deadline
 - Tuition reimbursement

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

President Naugle adjourned the meeting at 12 p.m. The Executive Board will meet next on 14 November 2025 at 10:30 a.m. in Ellsworth Hall, room 3201 and via Webex.

Approval

Submitted Sue Brodasky, Faculty Senate Administrator

Minutes were approved 14 November 2025.