
**EXECUTIVE BOARD
Minutes of 12 December 2025****Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Executive Board was called to order at 8:31 a.m. on 12 December 2025, in Ellsworth Hall room 3201 and via Webex, by Amy Naugle, president.

Roll Call

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

Members Absent: Kieran Fogarty

Parliamentarian Present: Decker Hains

Guests: Jessica Cataldo, Chair, Academic and Information Technology Council; Eric McConnell, University Ombuds, Representing Professional Concerns Committee; Remzi Seker, Vice President for the Office of Research and Innovation

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

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

Minutes

It was moved by Rudge, seconded by Teichert, to approve the 14 November 2025 minutes as provided. The motion carried.

Action Items

MOA-25/11: Revision of Recommendation of Course Delivery Definitions for Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs was presented by Academic and Information Technology Council chair Cataldo. Sarah Nelson had asked AITC to review the prior MOA for revisions. This MOA stream lines the definitions and made minor edits. Discussion was held regarding the Hybrid definition including 51% virtual classes. instead of at instructor discretion. Anthony-what is the effect of 51%. Decker-if instructor has to list 51% of classes on-line. It was noted that the 51% is part of the AAUP Agreement. It was moved by Simpson, seconded by Rudge, to approve MOA-25/11. The motion carried.

University Ombuds McConnell presented MOA-25/13: Revise Academic Appeals Review Process to Include Student Deadlines on behalf of the Professional Concerns Committee. He brought the MOA to the PCC due to significant increase of academic appeals initiated by students. He stated that once a student has engaged in the process there are no deadlines established to provide supporting documentation.

It was moved by Simpson, seconded by Teichert, to approve MOA-25/13. The motion carried.

Reports of Officers

President Naugle reported that in her meeting with President Kavalhuna, several key topics were discussed, including a review of his recent email and ongoing preparations for commencement. The President outlined the provost transition plan, noting that although the interim contract concludes in December, Cheatham may continue in the interim role through fall 2026. The Board of Trustees remains committed to ensuring that the Provost position effectively advances enrollment management and financial aid. Additionally, the administration is pursuing an external firm through an RFP process to guide strategic decision for units outside of beyond Academic Affairs. President Naugle has been appointed to serve on the selection committee. The President also confirmed that the University will discontinue the SRM budget model as of 1 July 2026, the new budget model will eliminate the subvention, space fees, and reduction of college competition for credit hours, while retaining a responsibility-centered structure. It

is expected that the University Strategic Plan will be revisited following analysis of data from the listening sessions. Finally, it was clarified that the messaging regarding the Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was issued at the incumbent's request.

New Business

Vice President Seker opened discussion on the *Eligibility to Serve as Principal Investigator* policy and its relationship to MOA-19/08, noting that although the MOA exists, faculty must still meet current policy requirements to serve as Principal Investigator. He explained that shifting PI responsibilities would require agreement from the dean, chair, and Sponsored Programs, and emphasized that recent policy changes were implemented in response to federal mandates that took effect immediately. Seker stated that the University must either comply with these requirements or forego federal funding. When asked about an appeal process, he indicated that none exists but affirmed his commitment to keeping grants at the University, encouraging faculty to meet with him to explore alternative pathways. Research and Creative Scholarship Council observed that the MOA may require revision to align with the updated University policy, while Seker cautioned against revising the MOA prematurely, as additional policy changes may be forthcoming. He further noted that an MOA is not required for the University policy. Hains was asked to investigate how to formally eliminate the previous MOA. Simpson recommended postponing further consideration of the MOA until Hain's research is complete and asked for the topic to be on the next EB meeting agenda. Abudayyeh suggested retaining the MOA to provide shared governance with the office of Research and Innovation and preserve opportunities for faculty consultation.

Reports of Officers, Cont.

Vice President Simpson reported on his recent meeting with Interim Provost Cheatham, noting several key updates. The Provost discussed emerging federal regulations that will impose new caps on financial aid and outlined the University's current financial aid deficit, which is expected to be resolved by the end of 2026. He confirmed that questions related to teaching assistants raised at the Senate meeting have been addressed. Additionally, he emphasized that the President's recent statement does not preclude or eliminate the continuation of academic program review, which will proceed through internal processes.

Reports of Councils and Committees

Hahn did not provide the reports for 17 and 24 November meetings of the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee.

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

- Guest Carbonneau Provided an update on Hi-Flex course offerings at WMU.
 - Currently 103 courses (206 sections) are designated as Hi-Flex, with rising demand.
 - New user interface in Banner does not clearly identify Hi-Flex courses, causing student confusion.
 - Plans are underway to expand the number of Hi-Flex equipped classrooms.
- Chair Cataldo reported that the faculty survey regarding the use and preferences of virtual meeting platforms is nearing completion.
 - Data collection, analysis, and reporting are almost finalized.
 - Final report is expected to be submitted to the Executive Board in mid-December.
 - The Provost will attend the February AITC meeting to discuss WMU's Artificial Intelligence implementation plans.
 - AITC reviewed the revised MOA on course delivery method definitions.
- Ex Officio Fogarty Encouraged council members to review the WMU AI Report completed last year. The report will play an important role in shaping the University's AI implementation strategy.
- Holmes provided the OIT report.
 - OIT is responsible for determining data storage requirements beyond WMU's existing networks.
 - Work includes meeting controlled and classified data requirements.
 - Cybersecurity training emails currently come from an external vendor, causing confusion and frequent deletion.

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

- Scarff reported:
 - The SRM budget model is being reviewed for revision.
 - Discussion was held in response to Charge 3 regarding review of the SRM budget model's implementation, rules, and regulations.
 - Noted that the deans serve as the final decision makers for any revisions.
 - The review group met six times since fall 2024.
 - The FY26 budget was booked on 17 November.
 - Budget processing and confirmation were completed.
- Nelson reported
 - Fall-to-spring retention rates are positive.
 - Applications and admission trends are increasing at both the graduate and undergraduate levels.
- VanderVeen reported that the BOT approved the 5-year capital outlay master plan.
 - She is working with the College of Health and Human Services to assess space needs within the building.
 - A total of \$9.8 million was budgeted for 75 projects this year.
- Spoelstra reported that he is studying electric vehicles on campus.
 - He anticipates roughly 20 student ideas or projects in response to the sustainability challenge issued.
- Spoelstra, on behalf of chair Bertman, reported that the Sustainability Committee started work on charges.

Simpson provided the Professional Concerns Committee report via email, which included:

19 November Meeting

- MOA: 25/13- Revise Academic Appeal Review Process to Include Student Deadlines was approved by the PCC and is being forwarded to the Senate Executive Board for review and submission to the Senate.
- An MOA was developed by a joint committee of PCC and AITC members. The title is *Inclusion of AI Statement on WMU Syllabus Requirements*. This MOA was approved by PCC and is being sent to AITC for its review and action.

10 December Meeting

- The PCC representatives will be presenting MOA: 25/13 on setting deadlines for student submission of appeal materials to the EB on 12 December.
- The PCC is awaiting the AITC response on the jointly developed MOA AI syllabus statement so PCC can formally vote on this MOA at its January meeting.
- The volume of student appeals, and referrals to student conduct, are significantly up from Fall 2024. Noted as a major trend requiring attention.
- The number of faculty volunteering to sit on student appeals committees is at an all-time high. Participation remains strong and exceeds prior years.

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

20 November Meeting

- Ex Officio Teichert reported that not all councils are familiar with the 2023 AI Ad Hoc Committee Report, so it will be emailed to the GSC membership. Asked about past GSC processes for MOA development; Zondag explained that individuals most involved with the topic typically draft MOAs outside of meetings, with most MOAs addressed in the spring.
- Byrd-Jacobs gave the graduate college report
 - Graduate Student Research and Travel Grants: 51 travel applications with 35 funded (69%), and 21 research applications with 14 funded (67%).
 - Held a Dissertation Writing Workshop with 27 students.
 - Hosted the 3-Minute Thesis competition with nine participants.
 - Noted that WMU has participated in regionals for eight years, with significant successes including a finalist in 2020 and the Midwest regional winner in 2022.
- Fermin provided the Graduate Student Association report

- Reported 12,565 items collected for the Montgomery Essential Needs Drive; also hosted a Pie the Presidents event on 5 November.
- Noted that over \$15,000 has been distributed in student support, with 11 conference proposals, three certification proposals, and nine RSO event/operations applications.
- Announced that the spring 2026 GSA Gala will be an off-campus formal event.
- Reported ongoing standardization and evaluation of GSA policies and procedures.

11 December Meeting

- Chair Zondag reported a brief summary of unfinished business related to AI.
 - Brought the Council's attention to two memos emailed earlier in the week related to GSC Charge #3 on AI.
- Ex Officio Teichert reported the ability to upload syllabi to Banner. Noted that uploading syllabi is voluntary for faculty.
- Byrd-Jacobs provided the graduate college report
 - Commencement will occur on Saturday, 13 December, with two ceremonies; 41 PhDs will be awarded, including 25 to be hooded, along with Doctor of Physical Therapy graduates.
 - Provided a briefing on Council of Graduate Schools conference, emphasizing themes such as affordability, time to graduation, modality, and career outcomes in prospective student decision-making.
 - Reported that the ProQuest dissertation repository will include an ADA-aligned accessibility checker and a dissertation-summarizing AI tools.
 - Noted that over 100 graduate proposals were reviewed last month, indicating high faculty engagement in curricular improvement.
 - Reminded members that PLA now carries a standardized \$250 fee for graduate students.
- DeChano-Cook Curriculum Manager report highlighted the charge to review 5000-level courses. Emphasized the need for Council action and eventual presentation to the Faculty Senate.
- Binford Graduate Student Association provided the report:
 - The election of a chief justice, with onboarding to begin next week; GLA Gala planning is progressing, and nominations will be sought for several awards.
 - Shared that the Graduate Allocations Committee concluded its final cycle in November, allocating support for 18 conferences, 4 certifications, and 10 events. Updated bylaws now align award limits with Graduate College policies.
- the GSC has split into two sub-committee working groups to address two key charges needing to be addressed in the spring,
 - One sub-committee will address the AI charge
 - The other will address the 5000-level courses charge
 - Binford will solicit two GSA student volunteers, one for each group.
- MOA-Revision to Create Faculty-Driven Learning Assessment (PLA) Opportunities for Graduate Programs was reviewed and approved.

Hadley provided the International Education Council report via email, which includes:

- Max gave the HIGE report:
 - December Faculty Senate will have an international focus, with Joe Milostan and Brian Childs presenting in place of Max.
 - Discussed developments in the five key areas of HIGE's focus:
 - International students: A three-year recruiting plan (2026–2029) is underway. HIGE conducted a 10-year review of partnerships. Collaboration with the Senate is needed to improve Master's admissions for international students. HIGE hired an additional recruiter and is adding a marketing specialist for recruitment. Updates for current students include clearer health insurance guidance, additional emergency funds, work on transportation issues, and a forthcoming survey.
 - Study abroad: Faculty-led programs remain most popular. A new process is being developed to support faculty leading study abroad programs, with goals to expand offerings.

- Campus internationalization: HIGE will evaluate the Global Engagement Program to assess service to students who do not study abroad. International Education Week was successful.
 - WMU's international presence: Funds are being directed toward engaging international alumni and strengthening networks. Funding for faculty international travel and Global Classrooms has doubled. A global engagement dashboard is being planned.
 - Budget planning: Endowments are available but need alignment with institutional goals; additional funding is being sought.
- Provided clarification that the \$100K H1B visa fee does not apply when an individual already in the U.S. (e.g., on an F-1 visa) changes status to H1B.
- Noted ongoing discussion regarding international student admissions and related barriers.
- Childs shared updates from conversations with Kalamazoo Metro Transit leadership regarding MetroLink, an app-based rideshare service. It is unclear whether students may use MetroLink for travel to and from main campus due to service-zone restrictions. Childs will follow up and share an update.
- Nayab invited IEC members to the General Assembly meeting on Tuesday, December 2 (6:30–8:30 p.m.) in the Student Center Fire Lounge to discuss MetroLink.
 - Opportunity for dialogue with students on transit access.
- Chair Dennis gave the Global Student Learning Outcomes update
 - Presented progress, including revisions shown in a PowerPoint.
 - Feedback emphasized collaborating with departments to embed global learning outcomes meaningfully, including through curriculum proposals for globally focused courses.
- Interim Provost Cheatham gave an overview of international education support from his office
 - Discussed ongoing efforts to reduce barriers, including decreasing the international student fee, currently over \$700.
 - Noted broader challenges outside WMU's control but emphasized focusing on areas WMU can influence.
 - Highlighted that internationalization extends beyond study abroad and must be embedded across university life.
 - Addressed concerns about financial support for international students and explored possible options and scenarios.
 - Discussed barriers to using Empowering Futures funds for international education and explored ways IEC members can help increase international enrollment.

Naugle provided the Unaffiliated Units Curriculum Committee report via email, election of Officers occurred. Bott was elected as chair; Jaspore was elected as vice chair; Connors was elected as Secretary.

DeFulio provided the Research and Creative Scholarship Council report via email, which includes:

- Seker reported that the travel fund is down to about \$316k from the originally budgeted \$440k and noted that this allocation covers the fiscal year rather than the academic year.
- Interim Provost Cheatham gave a brief overview of the status of Graduate and Parent Plus loans and the implications of this for graduate education.
 - Explained that new federal guidelines and revised government definitions affecting professional programs will eliminate Graduate Plus loans as of July 2026 and impose new restrictions on Parent Plus loans.
 - Clarified that current graduate students will be grandfathered under existing rules but will still face new budgetary limits.
 - Reported that the University is developing mitigation strategies, including exploring new scholarship options.

- Subcommittee, which is handling charge about FRACAA/SFSA procedures, has determined in concert with WMU ORI staff that switching the due dates of the two applications would help faculty to make optimal decisions about what to apply for.
 - Explained that faculty cannot accept both awards in the same academic year, so placing the larger award first will clarify decision-making.
 - Beginning next year, FRACAA will be due in the fall and SFSA will be due in the spring.

Hahn did not provide the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee report.

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

- Chair Wagner reported:
 - New subcommittee will have three representatives from the College of Arts & Sciences to represent three different areas where the form experiential learning takes place can differ.
 - Decided that an IEC representative should join the committee.
 - Rudge will serve as the USC liaison.
 - The committee's first task will be to propose its own charges.
- Ex Officio Rudge reported that the Executive Board anticipates it may start suggesting faculty to submit syllabi on Banner in advance of students registering for courses.
 - Shared updates from the most recent Experience-Driven Learning (EDL) Workgroup meeting, including interactive workshops planned for faculty and students to explore examples of EDL using the three MOA-defined criteria.
 - Discussed the existing funding program supporting experiential learning and considerations for future allocations.
 - Noted the need for additional EDL examples for marketing purposes.
 - Reported that the new experiential learning committee is being formed and may be tasked with identifying and prioritizing charges, subject to USC and Executive Board approval, with service-learning likely to be a priority.
- Griffin-Brown briefed USC on academic advising associated with Merz Tate.
 - Reported attending a conference on student advising and success.
 - Discussed course performance alerts issued to students this term.
- Cataldo gave the Transfer Credit Committee summary
 - A guide on transfer credit is being developed and will be shared with individuals who regularly make transfer credit determinations.
- Council approved thirteen different curriculum proposals, many of which were minor name changes.
- USC discussed the policy of reducing required credits from 122 to 120 for an undergraduate degree.
 - USC will draft an MOA on the change, with Wagner agreeing to prepare the document.
 - Discussion included historical context for the 122-credit requirement and financial considerations.
 - Karowe requested more information on the original rationale; Rudge will consult the Executive Board.
 - The MOA will be discussed further in January.
- USC discussed the merits of establishing a cross-listed course policy (MOA 25/12 – Establish Cross-Listed Courses Policy).
 - Identified student confusion when cross-listed courses appear separate during graduation review.
 - Council voted in favor of the MOA.
- Council discussed prior learning assessments (PLA) and how to give credits for student prior learning.
 - Clarified that PLA is intended for work experiences, not as a workaround for transfer credit policy.
 - MOA was approved.

- Council discussed MOA:18/05-Creation of a GPA Revision Policy and will continue discussion once finalized MOA wording is available.

Buchholz provided the Centers and Institutes Committee report via email, which includes:

- Progress Charge 3: The team's working inventory of centers and institutes (approx. 100+) is ready to go to deans for review.
 - Chair Hains and Nelson will work to engage the Deans Council.
 - Nelson recommended creating organized lists for each dean.
 - Deans will provide clarification and updated information on any inaccuracies.
- Progress Charge 1: Establishing a university form is recommended for the creation of new institutes/centers to make the process more efficient and consistent across campus.
 - Discussions about this form and procedure are emerging as the team learns from the inventory process.
 - Chair Hains created a draft outline for the proposed form.

Announcements

President Naugle noted there has been discussion about having her attend a President Cabinet meeting. She asked for EB members to forward talking points to the Senate office.

Adjournment

President Naugle adjourned the meeting at 9:42 a.m. The Executive Board will meet next on 9 January 2025 at 10:30 a.m. in Ellsworth Hall, room 3201 and via Webex. Guests will include Merze Tate Dean Wallace and WMU Essential Studies Faculty Director Bush.

Approval

Submitted Sue Brodasky, Faculty Senate Administrator

Minutes were approved 9 January 2026.