

WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee



WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Merze Tate College
WMU Essential Studies



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2025-26 Committee Report

Elissa Allen, Chair WES Executive Advisory Committee



2025-26 WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee

- **Appointed Faculty Members**

- **Elissa Allen** (CHHS) (2025-26 Chair)
- **Elizabeth Isidro** (EHD) (2025-26 Vice Chair)
- **Beth Ernst** (Business)
- **Lindsay Jeffers** (Arts and Sciences)
- **Brian Tripp** (Arts and Sciences)
- **Kathryn Wagner** (Fine Arts)
- **Dana Hammond** (Engineering)
- **Anthony Helms** (Unaffiliated Units)

- **Appointed Administrative Members**

- **Jessica Parker** (Director, Academic Advising, Merze Tate)
- **Luchara Wallace** (Dean, Merze Tate)

- **Advisory Members**

- **Jonathan Bush** (WMU Essential Studies Faculty Director)
- **Carrie Cumming** (Registrar)
- **Lisa DeChano-Cook** (Curriculum Manager)

- **Ex Officio Member**

- **Janet Hahn** (Faculty Senate Executive Board)

2025-26 WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee

- **Appointed Faculty Members**

- **Katherine Suedeman (Chair)**
- **Nathan Tabor (Vice Chair)**
- **Kwangmin Lee (Secretary)**
- **Anne-Marie Guidy-Oulai**
- **Dana Hammond**
- **Vincent Lyon-Callo**
- **Matilda McLean**
- **Marie Moreno**
- **Agatha Slupek**
- **Kathryn Wagner**

- **Advisory Members**

- **Jaquelyn Bizzell**
- **Melinda Lockett**
- **Colleen Stano**
- **Sharon VanDyken**
- **Lucy Kent-Bracken**
- **Destiny Wallace**
- **Lisa Dechano-Cook**
- **Jonathan Bush**

- **Ex-Officio**

- **Janet Hahn** (Faculty Senate Executive Board)
- **Elissa Allen** (WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee)

Committee Charges for 2025-26

- **Simplified categories (11 formal charges):**

- Transfer credit processes overview
- Course review and approval coordination
- Faculty resources and communication
- Student Learning Outcome (SLO) improvements
- Program review and continuous improvement

Charge 1: Improving Transfer Credit Processes

- Implemented structured transfer review workflow
- Created in collaboration with advising
- Ongoing review for consistency and transparency

WMU Essential Studies: Credit Evaluation Flow-Chart

This document provides WES guidance for advisors in cases where a newly encountered or legacy course evaluated on previous curriculum models is presented for transfer evaluation.

Exigency Carveout: Under authority via Faculty Senate MOA 17/04, advising directors and/or one designee are empowered to make immediate decisions on student transfer credit following standard guidelines (attached) and then engage in the steps for long-term certification of a course for future decisions. *Once approved by an advising director or designee, this course is permanently part of that student's record regardless of permanent evaluation.*

WES Transfer Steps. If a student presents a new or legacy course to an advisor.

1st step:

- If the course is listed as equivalent to an existing WMU WES category/level course in Transfer Equivalency System (TES) **the student is awarded an identified direct equivalent**, and the task is complete.

2nd step:

- If the course has not been evaluated as equivalent (department credit) or is not listed in TES, advisor contacts department to utilize procedures and authorities under Faculty Senate MOA 24/03 to make assessment.
 - Department makes one of the following decisions:
 - A. New Course Direct Equivalent (WES course)**

Charge 1: Improving Transfer Credit Processes

- WMU Essential Studies Exception tracking document was created in collaboration with advisors
- Allows for transparency in approvals process
- Serves to preserve institutional memory
- Improves efficiency by reducing redundancies

External Institution	External Course Code	External Course Title	External Course Title	WMU Equivalent Course	Direct Match	WMU Course Title	Student Learning Outcomes Alignment	Alignment Level	Assessment Notes	Notes	Last Reviewed
Kalamazoo Valley CC	BIO 150	BIO 150	Human Anatomy & Physiology I	BIOL 2120	Y	Human Anatomy & Physiology I		Full Alignment	Meets lab requirement		01/2026
Grand Rapids CC	ENG 101	ENG 101	English Composition I	ENGL 1050	Y	English Composition I Human Anatomy		Partial Alignment	Recommend writing sample review		01/2026
Lansing CC	PSY 200	PSY 200	Developmental Psychology	PSY 2500	Y	Lifespan Development		Full Alignment	Meets lab requirement		01/2026
Out-of-State Univ	NURS 120	NURS 120	Fundamentals of Nursing	NURS 2100	N	Clinical hours deficit. Skills validation needed		Partial Alignment	Require: skru verification		02/2026

Charge 2: Course Review & Approval Oversight

- Ongoing coordination with WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee
- 100% of courses approved in Fall 2025
- Streamlined review and approval processes
- WMU Essential Studies Faculty Director and Curriculum Manager support for timely curriculum decisions

Charge 3: Faculty Resources and Communication

- Development of WMU Essential Studies faculty website (Beth Ernst, WMU Essential Studies Faculty Fellow)
- Website is in feedback stage
- <https://wmich.edu/essentialstudies/facultyresources>

For Faculty

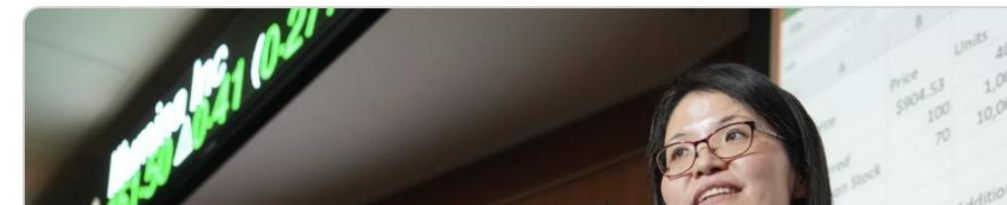
Western Michigan University curriculum work associated with WMU Essential Studies is completed through the Faculty Senate's committee. Click on the links below for more information.



Teach a WES Course



Propose a WES Course



Learning Outcome: Analyze and interpret quantitative information (equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, word descriptions, and data).

Charge 4:

Instructors may choose two out of these five criteria to satisfy this learning outcome.

Student Learning Outcome (SLO) Improvements

<p>1) Data collection and interpretation process</p>	<p>Critique the process, run multiple solutions and compare. Detailed hypothesis testing and analysis.</p>	<p>Apply the full method/process to a given problem and make reasonable solutions to the problem. Initial hypothesis</p>	<p>Use the process of data investigation: collect, analyze, display. Formulate good questions that lead to data</p>	<p>Understand: 1) different types of data and data collection methods; 2) measures of center and variability and the effects of</p>
<p>2)</p>	<p>Inconsistencies Identified Gaps and discrepancies found across existing rubrics</p>		<p>Priority Areas Science with Lab · Societies & Cultures</p>	
<p>3) Understand different types of</p>	<p>Critique and apply various</p>	<p>Understand various types of</p>	<p>Apply at least one modeling</p>	<p>Know that there are different</p>
<p>4)</p>	<p>Subcommittees Formed Leading targeted revisions</p>		<p>Drafts in Progress Revised rubrics actively being developed</p>	
<p>5) Interpret mathematical</p>	<p>Provide explanations of all</p>	<p>Provide explanations of all</p>	<p>Provide many explanations of</p>	<p>Provide some explanations of</p>

Summary and Future Priorities

- **Strong progress made across all major charge areas. Keep progressing toward:**
 - Finalizing Student Learning Outcomes rubric revisions
 - Formal recommendations for Memorandum of Action proposals
 - Formally launch WMU Essential Studies Faculty Resource hub website
 - WMU Essential Studies Review cycle begins again in AY 2026-27
 - Next WMU Essential Studies Comprehensive Review will occur in AY 2028-29