

**WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee  
Minutes of 12 November 2024**

**Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee was called to order at 1:02 p.m. on 12 November 2024, via Webex video conferencing, by Brian Tripp, chair.

**Members in Attendance:** Elissa Allen, Elizabeth Isidro, Lindsay Jeffers, Lei Meng, Jessica Parker, Brian Tripp

**Member Absent:** Brenda Srof, Kathryn Wagner

**Advisory Members Present:** Jonathan Bush, Carrie Cumming, Lisa DeChano-Cook

**Ex Officio Present:** Decker Hains

**Quorum**

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

**Agenda**

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Isidro, seconded by Parker, to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**Minutes**

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Allen, seconded by Parker, to approve the 8 October 2024 minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**Reports of Officers**

Chair Tripp reported that issues related to assessment plans and the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee are work-in-progress, along with transfer credits.

Ex Officio Hains did not provide a report.

**Reports of University Representatives**

Bush reported the following:

1. Bush and all three committees for the comprehensive review will meet on 26 November 2024.
2. A fourth committee led by Randy Ott has been formed to focus on student data.
3. WMU Essential Studies comprehensive review results will be presented at the end of April 2025.
4. There have been issues with assessment plans for courses that want to be part of WMU Essential Studies. The assessment plan should be a plan to maintain student learning outcomes. Assessment plans are sometimes created for the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee approval but then are not used within the course. Bush is working to create a new, more flexible assessment plan, which will shift the process for course review and approval. For current WMU Essential Studies courses, a new plan is not required until the cyclic review of that course. New courses will use the new assessment plan template.

DeChano-Cook reported on WMU's recent adoption of the Transferology® software platform. It is described on the [WMU Transfer Credit web page](#) as "a self-guided credit evaluation and lead generation tool for prospective undergraduate students with prior credits from colleges and universities, standardized exams, and/or other experiences." It will allow students to see how many of their previous courses match with courses at WMU, or whether a class will automatically transfer and will allow faculty to look at how

courses transfer. A soft launch of this platform is underway, and a hard launch is planned for the first week of December 2024.

### **Unfinished Business**

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Cumming, seconded by Allen, to approve the Best Practice document (guidance to advisors) drafted by DeChano-Cook and Parker. The motion was carried.

Ex Officio Hains will present the Best Practice document (guidance to advisors) to the Faculty Senate Executive Board.

Chair Tripp discussed the possible need to include a student learning outcome for the laboratory component of WMU Essential Studies courses in the Scientific Literacy with a Lab category. Between now and the next meeting, Bush recommends reviewing the student learning outcome rubrics. Some are very vague, and others are detailed. The outcome rubrics were originally developed quickly, and there are inconsistencies. Bush would like the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee to consider choices (*i.e.*, choices in world language for language classes vs. culture classes). The rubrics need reform and clarification for faculty members.

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Tripp, seconded by Jeffers, to clarify Memorandum of Action 19/03. The clarification is that “once every academic year” means once every 12 months or once every fiscal year (from 1 July to 30 June). The motion was carried unanimously.

Ex Officio Hains will update the Faculty Senate.

### **New Business**

DeChano-Cook reported that many courses will need approval by the next meeting on 10 December 2024.

### **Announcements**

None.

### **Adjournment**

Chair Tripp adjourned the meeting at 1:46 p.m. The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee will meet next on 10 December 2024 at 1 p.m. via Webex.

### **Approval**

Submitted by Lindsay Jeffers, Secretary

Minutes approved on 10 December 2024.