
Undergraduate Studies Council
Minutes of 11 November 2025

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Undergraduate Studies Council was called to order at 3:02 p.m. on 11 November via Webex video conferencing by Bret Wagner, chair.

Members Present: Jessica Birnbaum, Lisa DeChano-Cook, Kerry Hegele, Dave Karowe, Mark Kelley (substitute for Jessica Cataldo), Irma Lopez, Dylan McGlothlin, Diane Riggs, Priyanka Sharma, Bret Wagner

Members Absent: Mert Altihan, Carrie Cumming, Natalio Ohanna, Coleen Stano, Yuanliang Sun

Advisory Members Present: Tomika Griffin-Brown

Ex Officio: David Rudge

Guests: Sara Nelson, Interim Vice Provost and Associate Vice President for Strategic Initiatives; Tony Proudfoot, Vice President for Marketing and Strategic Communications

Quorum

A quorum was present with 10 members in attendance, of the eight needed to establish quorum.

Agenda

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

Minutes

An amendment was made to indicate that Jessica Cataldo had been elected as the Transfer of Credit Committee representative.

[MOTION] It was moved by Rudge, seconded by Karowe, to approve the 14 October 2025 minutes as amended. With one abstention, the motion carried.

Reports of Officers

Chair Wagner did not provide a report.

Ex Officio Rudge did not provide a report.

Reports of University Representatives

Curriculum Manager Lisa DeChano-Cook reported:

- There have been questions about accepting transfer credits based on the credentials of the person teaching the course even though the syllabus may meet transfer standards. DeChano-Cook will bring this to the Transfer Credit Committee.
 - Comments were made that credentials/qualifications vary across disciplines and cautioned against making a set criterion for instructor qualifications and accreditation requirements.
- It was questioned if pre-requisites have a time limit. Undergraduate students at WMU are admitted under one catalog for 10 years. For students who return to WMU after six years, it was asked if their pre-requisites will allow them to take the course for which the pre-requisite is required, or should the student be required to retake the pre-requisite course. It was further questioned what should happen if the pre-requisites course has changed in a newer catalog year. Further discussion will be held at the next meeting.

Assistant Dean of Academic Advising Tomika Griffin-Brown reported:

- Advising has the majority of its appointments during registration with up to 600 students being seen each day. It is actively working on a plan to disperse this work throughout the semester.
- [The 3rd Annual Advising and Success Conference](#) is scheduled for Friday, 5 December 2025.

- Retention is trending up at 81.8% compared to 78.7% at the same time last year.

Transfer of Credit Committee

[MOTION] It was moved by DeChano-Cook, seconded by Karowe, to accept the TCC charges as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

New Business

[MOTION] It was moved by Wagner, seconded by Karowe, to approve the following list of curriculum proposals. With one abstention the motion carried.

- Engineering Management Minor (ENMN)
- Integrated Science: Biological (IBSN)
- Integrated Science: Chemistry (ICHN)
- Integrated Science: Earth and Space (IESN)
- Integrated Science: Physics (IPHN)
- Political Science: Social Studies Secondary Education Minor (PSSN)
- Student Planned Major (SPMJ)
- Undergraduate Certificate Program in Electric Vehicles
- Undergraduate Certificate Program in Semiconductors
- Undergraduate Certificate Program in Cultural Resource Management (RMCF)
- Undergraduate Certificate Program in Web Development (WDVF)

Discussion was held regarding MOA-25/12: Establish Cross-Listed Courses Policy as follows:

- There are differences in course number, title, description, etc. among cross-listed courses. If the course number has been used in the past, it cannot be reused, the course numbers may not match. The title, description, prerequisites, and restrictions can and should be the same to prevent student confusion.
- There should not be any cross-listing with a topics course because the topic changes.
- If one course is offered under one department, the other course under the other department must be offered in the same semester. This will require department-to-department communication.
- If one course is revised, the other course needs to be revised the same.
- The current course system cannot flag that students have already taken the cross-listed course if they are not registering for both courses in the same semester.

Lopez joined the meeting at 3:49 p.m.

Proudfoot joined the meeting at 3:50 p.m.

Unfinished Business

Discussion was held regarding Experiential Learning Committee charges as follows:

- Proposed Committee Members were revised to include:
 - The Provost Office as there may be occasional advice on how these activities are being reported to the Higher Learning Commission.
 - An Unaffiliated Unit representative as many of activities may fall under these definitions.
 - Academic Advising as an advisory member to provide guidance.
- Proposed Committee Charges
 - Concern was expressed that the charges overemphasize service learning. It was explained that there is currently a process in place to approve the course designation which can be applied to the other forms of learning.
 - The definitions of these learning types from [MOA-25/03](#) will be incorporated into the charges.

[MOTION] It was moved by Rudge, seconded by Riggs, to seek Executive Board approval to create the Experiential Learning Committee which will replace the Service Learning Approval Committee. With one abstention the motion carried.

MOA-18/05 *Creation of a GPA Revision Policy* was postponed to the next meeting.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Rudge, seconded by Karowe, to adjourn the meeting at 4:49 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Undergraduate Studies Council will meet next on 9 Dec 2025 via WebEx at 3 p.m.

Approval

Submitted by Dylan McGlothlin, Secretary

Minutes were approved 9 December 2025.