
PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE
Minutes of 18 March 2026

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Professional Concerns Committee was called to order at 12:30 p.m. on 18 March 2026, via Webex conferencing by Kahwaji, Chair.

Members Present: Jennifer Foster, Michael Kahwaji, Matilda McLean, Richard Meyer, John Miller, Marian Tripplett, Amy Zufelt

Members Absent: Thomas Gorczyca, Mariana Levin

Advisory Members Present: None

Advisory Members Absent: Joe Erskine; Eric McConnell

Ex Officio: C. Dennis Simpson, Faculty Senate Liaison

Quorum

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

Agenda

[MOTION] It was moved by Foster, seconded by Zufelt, to accept the agenda as provided. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Zufelt, seconded by Foster, to approve the 18 February 2026 minutes as provided. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Kahwaji reported that the committee's year-end report will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Ex Officio Simpson reported that the next meeting will be his last as liaison. At the fall committee meeting, elections for leadership will be conducted.

Reports of University Representatives

Due to Erskine's absence, there was no Student Rights and Responsibilities report.

Due to McConnell's absence, there was no Ombuds report.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

A new action item for the first fall 2026 meeting will include discussion of an accessibility concern related to syllabus statement implications. Guests will include Faculty Senate President Jahn Hahn and Melinda Koelling, chair, Mathematics, and Gwen Bostic, WMU Accessibility Compliance Specialist, to inform the committee's discussion of the issue.

Federal student loan restrictions will take effect on 1 July 2026. Projected loan cap reductions are expected to significantly decrease available funding for both undergraduate and graduate students. University-wide discussions at the college and program levels are expected to occur in April 2026 to assess potential impact and response strategies.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Meyer, and seconded by Zufelt, to adjourn the meeting at 12:48 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Professional Concerns Committee will meet next on 15 April 2026, via WebEx at 12:30 p.m.

Approval

Submitted by Marian Tripplett, Secretary

Minutes approved on 15 April 2026.