
WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee

Minutes of 8 November 2022

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Board was called to order at 1:03 p.m. on 8 November 2022, via Webex video conferencing, by Brian Tripp, chair.

Members in Attendance: Elissa Allen, Lindsay Jeffers, Brian Tripp

Members Absent: Decker Hains, Elizabeth Isidro, Lois Lemon, Jessica Parker, Kathryn Wagner

Advisory Members Present: Jonathan Bush, Nicolas Witschi

Advisory Members Absent: Carrie Cumming

Ex Officio: Lisa DeChano-Cook

Guests: Brian Carnell, Associate Director, Educational Technology, Online Education; Randy Ott, Senior Director of Academic Collaboration, Merze Tate College; Harold Watkins, Associate Director of Educational Technology Support Services, Online Education

Quorum

A quorum was not present.

Agenda

The agenda was acknowledged but not accepted because of the lack of a quorum.

Minutes

Due to the lack of a quorum, the 11 October 2022 minutes will be postponed to the next meeting.

Reports of Officers

Chair Tripp reported that the WMU Essential Studies Data Spotlight 2022 event will take place on 9 December 2022, beginning at 8:30 a.m. in room 4010 in the College of Health and Human Services Building. All committee members are encouraged to attend.

Ex Officio DeChano-Cook did not provide a report.

Reports of University Representatives

Bush reported that he met with chairs and leadership councils, including the Provost's Council, from every college across the University, except the College of Aviation. He also attended seven department meetings. Bush provided rubric for each department's WMU Essential Studies portfolio to assist in the use of data to make decisions about WMU Essential Studies courses. He plans to present to the associate deans and will speak with the Academic Advising Leadership Council. He will be reaching out to undergraduate curriculum committees. Bush reported that the cyclic review is underway and the deadline is 18 November 2022. The deadline to add new WMU Essential Studies courses for the fall semester 2024 is 31 October 2023. At the WMU Essential Studies Data Spotlight 2022, customized data for each department will be provided. Committee members are encouraged to bring a WMU Essential Studies partner from their home department. Email invitations will be distributed this week.

Ott reported that WMU Essential Studies courses have been updated for the spring semester 2023. Students are currently registering for those courses.

Witschi reported that there were approximately 50 proposals currently submitted for WMU Essential Studies courses. Some of those proposals were for curricular changes. There are more proposals submitted to Curriculog for changes thus far this year, i.e., over 600 vs. 500 proposals submitted in 2021.

Witschi temporarily removed the WMU Essential Studies Curriculog templates to be modified for catalog proposals for the fall semester 2024.

Unfinished Business

Chair Tripp inquired about progress on the WMU Essential Studies handbook, which may develop into a website with PDFs. The completion goal is the end of the spring 2023 semester. There is currently a "Department Chair's Guide to WMU Essential Studies" document.

New Business

Carnell presented the Elearning segment of WMU Essential Studies assessments and student learning outcomes (SLOs). Currently, every section of each WMU Essential Studies course (approximately 771 sections) is checked for correctness every semester after the census is completed, and the assessment rubric and grades are manually imported from the WMU Cognos database to an Excel spreadsheet. There are plans to automate this data transfer process and provide a report several weeks after the end of each semester, starting in the spring semester 2023. Harold Watkins, WMUx Assistant Director, Educational Technology, added a note about large class options outside of the general rubric. This data will be part of the 9 December WMU Essential Studies Data Spotlight event to assist faculty in strategically making decisions about WMU Essential Studies courses. Amy Vance and Adam Wallace, Instructional Technology Specialists at the WMUx Instructional Design and Support Center, are available to respond to faculty requests for assistance. Bush noted that WMU Essential Studies is a data-driven program. DeChano-Cook reported that Science Literacy SLOs and Science with Lab literacy SLOs are exactly the same. Bush agreed that a subcommittee needs to be created to consider SLOs for the lab component. DeChano-Cook reported that some classes without a lab are in the category of Science with a Lab. Witschi stated that the science faculty will decide whether or not to make a change.

Adjournment

Chair Tripp adjourned the meeting at 1:55 p.m. The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee will meet next on 6 December 2022 at 1 p.m. virtually via Webex.

Approval

Lindsay Jeffers, Secretary

Minutes approved on 10 January 2023.