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**Undergraduate Studies Council**  
Minutes of 3 December 2024**Call to Order**

A meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Undergraduate Studies Council was called to order at 3:01 p.m. on 3 December 2024 via Webex video conferencing by Diane Riggs, chair.

**Members in Attendance:** Jennifer Bott (substitute for Bret Wagner), Carrie Cumming, Lisa DeChano-Cook, Tomika Griffin-Brown, Scott Slawinski, Irma Lopez, Dylan McGlothlin, Diane Riggs, Priyanka Sharma, Katherine Suender, Yuanling Sun

**Members Absent:** Jessica Birnbaum, Lucy Clark, Dave Karowe

**Advisory Member in Attendance:** Colleen Stano

**Ex Officio:** David Rudge

**Guests:** Michael Ryan, Chair of Department of Economics; Shawn Tenney, Director of Service Learning

**Quorum**

A quorum was present with 12 members in attendance, of the 10 needed to establish a quorum.

**Agenda**

An amendment was made to include the approval of the Master of Arts in Special Education Clinical Teacher (Accelerated) program.

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Slawinski, seconded by Bott, to accept the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

**Minutes**

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Rudge, seconded by Bott, to accept the 12 November 2024 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

**Reports of Officers**

Chair Riggs reported the following:

1. Tony Proudfoot is initiating a meeting before the end of the semester to discuss issues raised by the Undergraduate Studies Council regarding the experiential learning program. Chair Riggs will report back to USC in January.
2. USC will receive more details about the experiential learning program following the executive board meeting with the provost and the Faculty Senate President scheduled for January. One of today's guests, Adam Manley from the Family and Consumer Sciences, will not be able to attend.
3. Shawn Tenney, Chair of the Service-Learning Committee, will be presenting today and is expected to provide USC with more information on service learning and experiential learning.

Ex Officio Rudge reported that the Faculty Senate Executive Board agreed that the definition of experiential learning in the Memorandum of Action of 2018 needs to be updated based on recent developments. The Faculty Senate Executive Board expressed an interest in exploring how the experiential learning initiatives can collect data on assessment for the Higher Learning Commission.

**Reports of University Representatives**

Griffin-Brown reported that the Second Annual Advising and Success Conference will be held in the College of Health and Human Services on 5 December 2024. Presenters who have received funding from Merze Tate College will have the opportunity to share information learned from conferences attended throughout the year. Actions are underway to assist students who have fallen into academic distress with their journeys through the Student Success Hub.

Chair Riggs reported attending the International Education Council (IEC) meeting on 21 November and noted that one of USC's responsibilities is to collaborate with the IEC on various activities. The IEC focuses on supporting international students with issues such as transportation, housing, and funding. At the IEC meeting, there were discussions regarding study abroad programs and transfer credits. Chair

Riggs shared information on USC's role in experiential learning, highlighting that study abroad programs should be recognized as resume-worthy experiences and part of the definition of experiential learning. These topics will be revisited by the IEC. IEC representatives will attend the USC meeting in January to discuss their activities and potential coordination with USC.

Tenney reported that the Office of Service Learning currently manages eight service-learning designated courses. Tenney coordinates partnerships, manages projects, and serves as the liaison for all stakeholders. Last semester, the office had 10 service-learning courses, with a peak of 13 courses before the pandemic, during which the number dropped to two. The Office of Service Learning is also expanding volunteer initiatives, coordinating community requests through Experience WMU, and providing reflection activities to enhance student learning. Tenney is involved in two experience-driven learning grants this semester, both progressing well, and has been invited to participate in additional programs supported by these grants next year. Currently, there are no faculty members in the group, but four faculty members are available ad hoc to review and approve courses for the service-learning attribute in Banner upon request.

Other topics related to service learning and experiential learning were discussed:

1. There is already a process, through a checklist, by which instructors can petition the Office of Service Learning to designate their courses as service learning. Adding the service-learning attribute helps students plan effectively and standardizes the criteria for what qualifies as service learning.
2. The new definition of experiential learning has been developed based on the 2015 version. Experience-driven learning falls under experiential education, including any out-of-classroom experience for students. While service learning specifically involves community partners, experience-driven learning does not necessarily require community engagement.
3. There is no special credit for students doing an outside class project. However, outside projects can be part of the WMU Signature program, where students apply classroom learning to community engagement, enhancing their resumes and interview opportunities. The Office of Service-Learning works with 130-140 community partners and can help connect students seeking extra experience with relevant opportunities. The office also assists with partnerships and project design for instructors who want to offer service-learning courses.
4. The Office of Service Learning manages the assessment and evaluation of service-learning courses. The evaluation system, created by the Evaluation Center on campus, is accessible online to faculty, students, and community partners. However, there is currently no one on campus tracking data related to service learning or experiential learning. Tenney is willing to share the evaluations used by her office.

Stano left the meeting at 3:42 p.m.

Suender joined the meeting at 3:43 p.m.

### **Unfinished Business**

None.

### **New Business**

Curriculum Proposals:

Ryan presented the Behavioral Economics Minor proposal.

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Rudge, seconded by Sun, to approve the Behavioral Economics Minor proposal as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

DeChano-Cook presented the Occupational Therapy Assistant Progression Track Major proposal.

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Rudge, seconded by Lopez, to approve the Occupational Therapy Assistant Progression Track Major proposal as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

DeChano-Cook presented the Master of Arts in Special Education Clinical Teacher (Accelerated) proposal.

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Suender, seconded by Rudge, to approve the Master of Arts in Special Education Clinical Teacher (Accelerated) proposal as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**Announcement**

None.

**Adjournment**

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Rudge, seconded by Suender, to adjourn the meeting at 4:02 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Undergraduate Studies Council will next meet on 14 January 2025 at 3 p.m. via Webex.

**Approval**

Submitted by Yuanliang Sun, Secretary

Minutes approved on 14 January 2025.