
WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee

Minutes of 8 April 2025

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee was called to order at 1:04 p.m. on 8 April 2025, via Webex video conferencing, by Brian Tripp, chair.

Members in Attendance: Elissa Allen, Elizabeth Isidro, Lindsay Jeffers, Brenda Srof, Brian Tripp, Kathryn Wagner, Luchara Wallace

Members Absent: Jessica Parker

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

Ex Officio Present: Decker Hains

Quorum

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

Agenda

Chair Tripp added the year-end report review to the agenda.

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

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by DeChano-Cook, seconded by Jeffers, to approve the 11 March 2025 minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Tripp announced the current meeting as his last meeting as Chair. Tripp noted the Faculty Senate website was updated to reflect the roles of members of the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee. Tripp met with Jonathan Bush, WMU Essential Studies Faculty Director, and Carol Weideman, Chair of the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee, to discuss assessment plans.

Hains reported that he was looking forward to the WMU Essential Studies meeting scheduled at the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS), room 1010, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on 23 April 2025.

Reports of University Representatives

Bush distributed the announcement about the WMU Essential Studies meeting on 23 April 2025 at CHHS 1010. There will be a live-stream option for virtual attendance. The meeting is intended for an audience from the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee and the Merze Tate College.

Bush recommended a one-year hiatus for the cyclic review of courses. The cyclic review may begin in fall 2025. Academic year 2025-2026 will also be a year to implement the recommendations of the review. A one-year delay will give time to put changes into effect before the cyclic reviews in 2026.

Bush has created a [website](#) for results and reports, and another [website](#) as an archive of reviews. Around seventy faculty members have been involved in the review process.

Bush noted that a revision of assessment plans has been an essential outcome of the review. Another need is a review of Student Learning Outcome rubrics. The newly appointed WMU Essential Studies faculty fellow will work with faculty communications next academic year.

Unfinished Business

At the previous meeting, leadership for the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee in 2025-26 was discussed.

[MOTION] It was moved by Isidro, seconded by DeChano-Cook, to elect Elissa Allen as Chair. The motion carried unanimously.

[MOTION] It was moved by Allen, seconded by Wagner, to elect Elizabeth Isidro as Vice Chair. The motion carried unanimously.

Bush noted that the need for new committee members starting in fall 2025 will be to serve as Secretary, as Jeffers will not be continuing.

New Business

Chair Tripp and Bush brought up the position of the WMU Essential Studies Faculty Fellow. Bush approached Professor Beth Ernst, Haworth College of Business, regarding taking the position. Chair Tripp noted the Faculty Fellow position is an appointed position. Wallace stated the goal is for the Fellow to advance the work of WMU Essential Studies and endorsed Ernst as a candidate. The WMU Essential Studies Fellow will be given a one-course release for this work, and it is an academic-year appointment based on a specific goal and project.

[MOTION] It was moved by Tripp, seconded by Allen, to appoint Beth Ernst from the Haworth College of Business as WMU Essential Studies Faculty Fellow for the academic year 2025-26. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Tripp distributed a draft of the year-end report previously. Chair Tripp noted two additional meetings this year, and best practices were drafted and documented for transfers and for the writing requirement for students who have taken Advanced Placement. Hains noted that a correction was required for a course prefix in the report (the Military Science and Leadership course should be MSL instead of MLS). Chair Tripp is currently waiting for the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval year-end report. The report will be circulated and reviewed by email, and will require unanimous approval.

[MOTION] It was moved by Tripp, seconded by Isiodro, to approve the year-end report as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Announcement

None.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Tripp to adjourn the meeting at 1:42 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee will meet next in the fall semester.

Approval

Lindsay Jeffers, Secretary

Minutes approved on 9 September 2025.