
EXECUTIVE BOARD**Minutes of 14 August 2026****Call to Order**

The meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Executive Board was called to order at 10:30 a.m. on 14 August 2026, at Ellsworth Hall, room 3201 and via Webex, by Janet Hahn, president.

Roll Call

Members in Attendance: Matthew Dumican, Lofton Durham, Wanda Hadley, Janet Hahn, Decker Hains, Amy Naugle, David Rudge, Daniela Schroeter, David Szabla, Laura Teichert, Andre Venter

Guests: Russ Kavalhuna, WMU President; Luke Kritzman, Western Student Association President

Recording Secretary in Attendance: Sue Brodasky, Administrator

Quorum

A quorum was present with eleven members in attendance, of the seven needed to establish quorum.

Agenda

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

Approval of Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Naugle, seconded by Szabla, to approve the 24 July, 2026 meeting minutes as presented. With one abstention, the motion carried.

WMU President Russ Kavalhuna

President Kavalhuna responded to questions regarding faculty participation in the WMU Administrative Redesign initiative and how its success will be measured. Huron Consulting Group was engaged to identifying opportunities to improve operational effectiveness in support of teaching and learning while reducing costs without layoffs. He emphasized that the redesign recommendations are not final and encouraged faculty and the Faculty Senate to participate in shaping implementation. In response to a question regarding the impact of administrative restructuring on teaching, learning, and research, President Kavalhuna acknowledged that administrative operations inevitably intersect with the academic mission and reaffirmed that academic program review was intentionally excluded from the Huron process. He announced that a University-wide town hall will be held in mid-September to review the recommendations, implementation plans, and opportunities for campus participation.

President Hahn asked what institutional priorities will guide the forthcoming academic review. President Kavalhuna reviewed demographic and enrollment data previously presented to the Board of Trustees, noting declining college-going populations, fewer high school graduates in the Midwest, and the impact of Michigan's free community college initiative. He stated that WMU must distinguish itself to remain competitive and identified three strategic priorities: differentiated academic programs, a distinctive student experience, and a focused R1 research identity. President Kavalhuna emphasized that the academic review will be collaborative and designed to align academic programs with the University's future direction rather than predetermined outcomes.

In response to a question regarding the future of Experience-Driven Learning (EDL), President Kavalhuna stated that EDL remains a promising institutional differentiator and invited the Faculty Senate to help define its role across all academic disciplines.

President Hahn described the proposed Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Academic Innovation and Strategic Foresight committee, which will examine topics including EDL, artificial

intelligence, academic program review, reduced-credit bachelor's degrees, and other emerging academic initiatives. President Kavalhuna supported the committee and noted that innovations such as reduced-credit bachelor's degrees may provide strategic advantages when academically appropriate.

President Hahn questioned academic resources and capacity during organizational restructuring. President Kavalhuna acknowledged the need for additional faculty or staff across many academic units and stated that the University will develop a transparent process for prioritizing future resource allocations aligned with institutional priorities. He invited faculty participation in developing those criteria.

In response to a question regarding the University's financial commitment to the Kalamazoo Event Center, President Kavalhuna stated that WMU is not financing construction of the facility but will negotiate an operating agreement for its use by WMU. He noted that the Event Center is intended to provide a long-term solution for athletics currently housed in aging facilities, including Lawson Ice Arena and Read Fieldhouse.

Western Student Association (WSA) Update

Western Student Association (WSA) President Luke Kritzman provided an overview of WSA's structure and responsibilities, noting that the organization is comprised of executive, legislative, and judicial branches. He highlighted WSA's role in allocating funding to registered student organizations (RSOs) and supporting more than half of the University's RSOs.

Kritzman stated that WSA priority this year is strengthening collaboration with the Faculty Senate and other University units. In response to President Hahn's question regarding WSA priorities, he indicated that WSA intends to formally support the Faculty Senate proposed grading-scale revision through a student government resolution and proposed an early-semester leadership gathering between the Faculty Senate Executive Board and WSA leadership to strengthen communication. Kritzman also identified sustainability as a major WSA priority. He discussed the limited funding

available through the student sustainability fee, the possibility of increasing the fee with a University match, and the potential creation of a senior University leadership position dedicated to sustainability. He further reported that WSA plans to conduct a student review of the University's strategic plan to provide recommendations from the student perspective.

An Executive Board member raised concerns regarding inconsistent student participation on Faculty Senate councils and committees. Kritzman responded that WSA Executive Cabinet members will be assigned to University committees and expressed confidence that WSA will provide representatives for Faculty Senate councils and committees.

Discussion was held regarding greater undergraduate input on the University's Experience-Driven Learning initiative. Kritzman stated that WSA can assist by using its weekly legislative meetings and other student engagement opportunities to gather feedback and facilitate communication between students and the University.

Reports of Officers

President Hahn reported on her meeting with President Kavalhuna, at which it was confirmed that regalia will remain as is for upcoming commencement ceremonies. She mentioned the Emeriti Council and its support by advancement. President Kavalhuna is asking the Emeriti Council to move forward on an offer for a scholarship.

Vice President Rudge reported the Emeriti Council will recognize faculty taking early retirement at the annual event.

New Business

Hahn, Naugle, and Szabla provided an update of the proposed Ad Hoc Academic Innovation and Strategic Foresight Committee. President Hahn reported that work continues on developing the charges and identifying potential membership, and requested recommendations for committee members. Discussion was held regarding

the committee's responsibilities, which are expected to include artificial intelligence, Experience-Driven Learning, reduced-credit bachelor's degrees, and advising the administration on emerging academic initiatives. A primary role of the committee will be to serve as the Faculty Senate's lead body for participating in and advising the academic review process in partnership with the administration. It was noted that the Office of Faculty Development should be considered a resource for the committee's work. President Hahn indicated that a formal proposal, including the committee's charges, will be presented for Executive Board consideration at the next meeting.

Unfinished Business

Review of the proposed 2026-27 council and committee charges. Edits were provided for the Academic and Information Technology Council, Campus Planning and Finance Council, and the Research and Creative Scholarship Council to be reviewed at the next Executive Board meeting.

[MOTION] It was moved by Rudge, seconded by Venter, to approve GSC, IEC, USC, UUCC, CIC PCC, and WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee 2026-27 council and committee charges as provided. The motion carried.

University Committee Reports

Hahn reported that the Digital Accessibility Committee meets weekly. Hadley will assume the liaison position in fall.

Announcements

It was requested that Vice President for Research and Innovation be invited to a future meeting for further discussion of WMU's R1 designation.

Adjournment

President Hahn adjourned the meeting at 12:04 p.m. The Executive Board will meet next on 28 August 2026 at 10:30 a.m. at Ellsworth Hall, room 3201 and via Webex with guests Christopher Cheatham, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Andrew Holmes, Chief Information Officer, Tony Proudfoot, Vice President for Marketing

and Strategic Communications; and Jan Van Der Kley, Vice President for Business and Finance.

Approval

Submitted Sue Brodasky, Faculty Senate Administrator

Minutes were approved 28 August 2026.