



CENTERS AND INSTITUTES COMMITTEE

Minutes of 11 February 2026

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Centers and Institutes Committee was called to order at 10:03 a.m. on 11 February 2025, via Webex, by Bret Wagner, chair.

Members in Attendance: Dustin Altschul, Ron Cisler, Sara Nelson, Matthew Ross, Jana Schulman, Bret Wagner, Lee Wells

Guest: Lisa DeChano-Cook, Curriculum Manager

Ex Officio: Kimberly Buchholz

Quorum

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

Agenda

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

Minutes

The minutes of 14 January 2026 have not been provided.

Reports of Officers

Chair Wagner did not provide a report.

Ex Officio Buchholz stated that the committee's concerns regarding formal definitions (e.g., center classifications) will be discussed during an upcoming shared governance retreat.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

Curriculum Manager DeChano-Cook presented a draft process for reviewing new centers and institutes. The proposed process for the creation of new centers and institutes will be within the curriculum system. The committee reviewed the draft and engaged in discussion regarding potential revisions and additional considerations.

Key points of discussion included:

1. The inclusion of separate fields to clearly distinguish between the Major Focus Area and any Additional Focus Areas
2. The addition of a concise statement outlining the center's or institute's mission and goals to ensure clarity of purpose
3. The incorporation of a general funding plan narrative within the proposal, with the option to submit a more detailed funding plan addressing long-term financial sustainability
4. Clarification of the appropriate routing process, including whether proposals should be routed directly to the respective dean and whether such routing implies formal sponsorship or financial commitment
5. The expectation that proposals articulate how administrative and operational responsibility will be shared across participating departments and colleges
6. Consideration of whether distinct proposal forms or routing pathways are necessary for different classifications of centers or institutes (e.g., university-level centers requiring review or approval by the Board of Trustees).

The committee will incorporate feedback and continue refinement of the proposed process.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

Chair Wagner adjourned the meeting at 11:01 a.m. The Centers and Institutes Committee will next meet on 4 March 2026 at 10 a.m. via Webex.

Approval

Submitted by Lee Wells, Secretary

Minutes were approved on 2 September 2026