



WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee

Minutes of 14 April 2026

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee was called to order at 1:02 p.m. on 14 April 2026, via Webex video conferencing by Elizabeth Isidro, vice chair.

Members in Attendance: Elizabeth Isidro, Jessica Parker, Brian Tripp, Luchara Wallace, Beth Ernst

Member Absent: Anthony Helms, Lindsay Jeffers, Dana Hammond

Advisory Members Present: Lisa DeChano-Cook, Carrie Cumming, Elissa Allen

Advisory Members Absent: Jonathan Bush

Ex Officio: Janet Hahn

Quorum

A quorum was present, with seven members in attendance of the six required for a quorum.

Agenda

[MOTION] It was moved by Ernst, seconded by Tripp, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Ernst, seconded by Tripp, to approve the minutes as provided. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Vice Chair Isidro reported that she had no formal report.

Ex Officio Hahn expressed appreciation for faculty leadership and service on councils and committees.

Reports of University Representatives

Chair Allen, serving as interim WMU Essential Studies Faculty Director, provided contextual remarks about ongoing work and clarified that several agenda items were exploratory in nature and not intended for rushed approval. She also noted that the year-end report does not require a formal committee vote.

Curriculum Manager DeChano-Cook reported that upcoming transfer course lists would be shared in the fall.

Unfinished Business

Student Learning Outcome (SLO) Rubric Revisions: The committee discussed draft revisions to SLO rubrics for Science with Lab and Societies and Cultures as part of a broader effort to improve clarity and usability. Key discussion points included:

- Clarifying lab expectations, including applicability to online and virtual labs.
- Differentiating lab-based sciences from science without lab.
- Addressing the absence of a distinct SLO for Societies and Cultures.
- Implications of modifying SLOs for existing courses and catalog-year continuity.

The committee agreed that additional discussion and operational planning are needed before taking formal action. This item will continue in future meetings.

Transfer Course Review: DeChano-Cook and Allen presented a list of transfer courses reviewed for WMU Essential Studies alignment. After discussion, including student impact considerations, the committee agreed to adjust one course placement.

[MOTION] It was moved by Ernst, seconded by Parker, to approve the transfer course review document, including moving Introductory Statistics to Quantitative Literacy, and approving all listed courses as amended. The motion carried.

New Business

Year-End Report--Chair Allen presented the draft year-end report and invited written feedback from committee members. Members requested additional time for review. The report is due at the end of May.

College of Arts and Sciences Designee Proposal: The committee discussed a proposal to allow additional advising designees for larger colleges. Considerations included accountability, catalog-year enforcement, and consistency across colleges. No action was taken; the item will be revisited in the fall.

WMU Essential Studies Career Pathways: Preliminary discussion addressed the idea of grouping WMU Essential Studies courses into thematic pathways for students. Concerns included perceptions of course endorsement and unintended prescriptiveness. The committee agreed to defer further discussion until fall, with input from additional stakeholders.

Course Review Committee Term Limits: The committee discussed whether advising representatives on the course review committee should have term limits similar to those of faculty members. Members agreed that further information is needed regarding current faculty practices and governance structures. This topic will return to the fall agenda.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Tripp, seconded by Ernst, to adjourn the meeting at 2:15 p.m. The motion carried. The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee will meet next in the fall semester.

Approval

Submitted by Jessica Parker, Secretary

Minutes were approved on 8 September 2026