
PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE**Minutes of 16 September 2026****Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Professional Concerns Committee was called to order at 12:30 p.m. on 16 September 2026 via Webex by Michael Kahwaji, chair.

Members Present: Jennifer Foster, Michael Kahwaji, Melinda McLean, Don Thursby, Marian Tripplett, Amy Zufelt.

Members Absent: Carrie Barrett, Thomas Gorczyca.

Advisory Members Present: Joe Erskine, Elizabeth Snider, Eric McConnell

Ex Officio: David Szabla

Quorum

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

Agenda

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

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Zufelt, seconded by Tripplett, to approve the 2 September 2026 minutes as distributed. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Kahwaji did not provide a report.

Ex Officio Szabla did not provide a report.

Reports of University Representatives

Erskine presented the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities report, noting that the office is currently recruiting volunteers.

McConnell provided the University Ombuds report, stating that this past summer was the busiest on record for the Ombuds Office, with an approximately 10% increase in activity. The office is exploring potential factors contributing to the increase. McConnell also reported that the student-initiated withdrawal period has been extended by two weeks for 16-week semesters and by one week for summer semesters.

New Business

Chair Kahwaji led a review of the Professional Concerns Committee 2026-27 Charges. Charge #1 was noted as continuing work for accessibility of learning materials/products, and Charge #5 will be completed jointly by Kahwaji and Zufelt per the timetable.

Unfinished Business

None.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Zufelt, seconded by Foster, to adjourn the meeting at 12:45 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Professional Concerns Committee will meet next on 21 October 2026 at 12:30 p.m. via Webex.

Approval

Submitted by Marian Tripplett, Secretary

Minutes were approved on 13 October 2026.