WMU ESSENTIAL STUDIES EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of 22 September 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 p.m. on 22 September 2026, via Webex by Elissa Allen, chair.

Members Present: Elissa Allen, Beth Ernst, Anthony Helms, Brian Tripp, Luchara Wallace
Members Absent: Dana Hammond, Matilda McLean, Cody Nielson (substitute for Elizabeth Isidro), Jessica Parker
Ex Officio Present: Decker Haines
Advisory Member Present: Carrie Cumming
Advisory Members Absent: Lisa DeChano-Cook

Quorum

Quorum was not reached

Agenda

The agenda was not voted on due to a lack of quorum. The meeting continued for discussion purposes.

Minutes

The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee 8 September 2026 minutes were not voted on due to a lack of quorum. The meeting continued for discussion purposes.

Reports of Officers

Chair Allen identified revision of the WMU Essential Studies Student Learning Outcome rubrics as the committee's primary work for the academic year. The committee will begin by

completing work on the Science with Lab and Societies and Cultures areas. Members discussed developing a schedule, reviewing the rubrics in batches, and seeking input from faculty who teach WMU Essential Studies courses. Chair Allen will ensure that members have access to the Teams folder and will bring a proposed timeline to the next meeting. Chair Allen also noted the need for additional online WMU Essential Studies offerings, particularly at Level III. Discussion clarified that prerequisites should support appropriate curricular scaffolding rather than create unnecessary barriers for students.

Reports of University Representatives

None.

Officer Elections

Wallace joined the meeting at 1:15 p.m., establishing quorum with six of the nine members needed to establish a quorum.

The election of officers was held once a quorum was established.

Allen nominated Brian Tripp for vice chair. Tripp accepted the nomination.
[MOTION] The motion was moved by Ernst, seconded by Helms. The motion carried.

The election of secretary was tabled because Parker, who had expressed interest in serving, was absent.

WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee Appointments

The election of the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee representative to the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee was postponed. Hammond was identified as the proposed representative but was absent and could not accept the nomination.

[MOTION] It was moved by Helms, seconded by Wallace, to appoint Samantha Collett as the College of Health and Human Services representative for fall 2026 and Amy Dolinsky-Geib as the CHHS representative for spring 2027. The motion carried.

WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee Charges

The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee reviewed the proposed 2026–27 charges. Discussion supported adding charges addressing clear guidance regarding when course revisions are required and improving the clarity and usability of the Student Learning Outcome assessment rubrics.

[MOTION] It was moved by Ernst, seconded by Tripp, to approve the 2026-27 WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee charges as presented. The motion carried.

Chair Allen will present the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committeev2026-27 charges to the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee at its next meeting.

New Business

Helms suggested an honors thesis project to survey instructors about the Student Learning Outcome review process and to help communicate the purpose and structure of WMU Essential Studies to students. Chair Allen will follow up with Helms regarding the idea.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

Chair Allen adjourned the meeting at approximately 1:27 p.m. The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee will meet next on 13 October 2026 at 1 p.m. via Webex.

Approval

Submitted by Elissa Allen, Chair
Minutes were approved on 13 October 2026.