WMU Essential Studies

2026-27 Faculty Senate Update

Elissa Allen, WMU Essential Studies Interim Faculty Director



Building on the Comprehensive Review

1

The 2024–25 review provided an important foundation

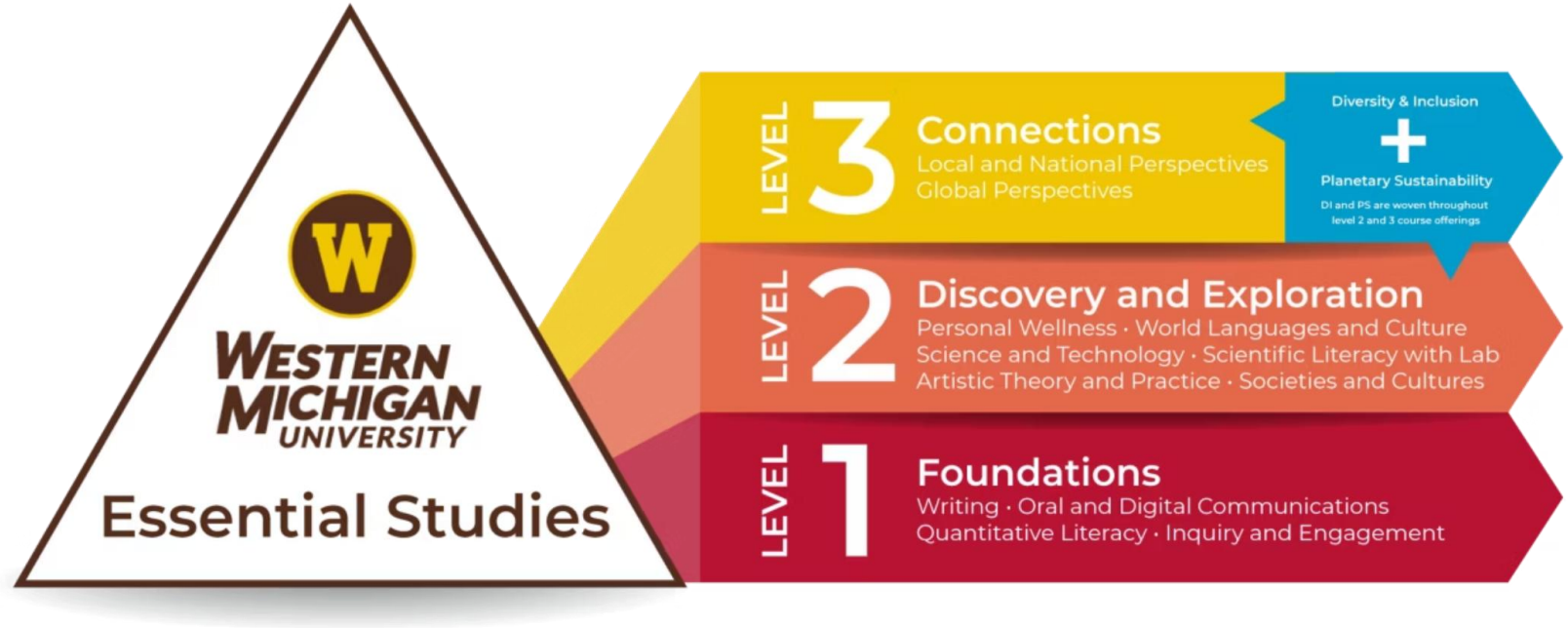
2

Faculty and student contributions continue to inform our work

3

Our emphasis now: putting improvement opportunities into practice

Our Primary Focus: Strengthening Assessment



- **Review category descriptions, SLOs, and rubrics together**
- **Identify duplication, misalignment, and unclear expectations**
- **Develop clearer, simpler, more consistent assessment tools**

A Collaborative, Faculty-Informed Review



Group 1: Foundations | Elissa Allen



Group 2: Wellness, Science & Arts | Brian Tripp



Group 3: Languages, Cultures & Perspectives | Beth Ernst

Next: identify priorities and seek input from teaching faculty.



Improving Access to WES Courses

- Explore additional online and asynchronous offerings
- Particular attention to Level 3 course availability
- Gather advising feedback and enrollment/capacity information
- Identify existing courses that may be candidates for WMU Essential Studies approval

Supporting Course Review and Approval

01

Continue coordination with WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee on course proposals

02

Fall emphasis: new course proposals

03

Spring plan: cyclic reviews of designated categories

04

Improve faculty guidance and assessment-plan resources

Additional 2026–27 Priorities

Clarify transfer-credit procedures, including review of MOA-17/04

Finalize faculty communication website and advisor resources

Review committee role and effectiveness

Explore ways to hear more directly from students

Looking Ahead

1

Develop practical, faculty-informed recommendations

2

Strengthen assessment and course-review processes

3

Improve course access and faculty/advisor resources

4

Report recommendations and progress to Faculty Senate

Questions?

Please feel free to contact me at **elissa.allen@wmich.edu**