

**Western Michigan University
Faculty Senate
Memorandum of Action**

MOA – 17/01

Naming of the Revised General Education Curriculum

Name of Council(s)/Committee(s):

Ad Hoc General Education Design Committee

Approval Date:

January 26, 2017

Implementation Date:

Upon Administrative Approval

RECOMMENDATION:

Name the revised general education curriculum “WMU Essential Studies.”

Mervyn Elliott, Chair, *Ad Hoc* General Education Design Committee

Date: 26 January 2017

Approve Disapprove Other Action
Comments:

Suzan F. Ayers, WMU Faculty Senate President

Date

Approve Disapprove Other Action
Comments:

Timothy J. Greene, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Date

Approve Disapprove Other Action
Comments:

John M. Dunn, WMU President

Date

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RATIONALE

The General Education Self-Study¹ report specifically identified the need to rename the curriculum based on stakeholder feedback from over 200 individuals. This recommendation was also included in Senate- and Administration-approved MOA-16/06: General Education Revision. MOA-16/06 prompted the creation of the *Ad Hoc* General Education Design Committee. As charged, the committee has engaged the WMU community in the process of identifying an appropriate name for the revised curriculum. As part of this feedback cycle, advisors from across campus have recommended selection of a new name for the revised curriculum. The rationale provided was that having two programs running concurrently with the same name but different requirements would be very confusing for current and future students.

In addition to a new framework for providing the curriculum, a completely new way of thinking about general education is being recommended. As such, it will be necessary to move away from the nomenclature-indicative generic content designated as “general education” that serves as the coursework included as part of a well-rounded education beyond the specific work engaged in for major and minor programs. Instead the adoption of a new name that reflects the outcomes-based emphasis of the revised curriculum is being recommended; WMU Essential Studies. The current curriculum lacks intentionality, and while we are familiar with the term “general education” familiarity does not bestow intentionality. The WMU Essential Studies program will replace the current curriculum with more intentionality and connection among courses. Given this, WMU Essential Studies is meaningful and depicts the focus of the revised curriculum.

RECOMMENDATION

Name the revised general education curriculum “WMU Essential Studies.”

ACTION

Implement the use of the name “WMU Essential Studies” upon Faculty Senate and administrative approval of a revised general education curriculum.

¹ <http://www.wmich.edu/facultysenate/committees/adhocgeneddesigncmt>, p. 7