

**WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE
WMU ESSENTIAL STUDIES EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of 18 September 2018**

Members Present: Leigh Ford, Yvonne Ford, Decker Hains, Kevin Knutson, Staci Perryman-Clark, Elke Schoffers, Sarah Summy, Delores Walcott

Member Absent: Ed Martini

Ex Officio Member Present: Suzan Ayers

Advisory Members Present: Jeanne Baron, Carrie Cumming, Mervyn Elliott, Marilyn Duke, Matt Provenzale, Dave Reinhold

Committee Chair Sarah Summy called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

Acceptance of the Agenda

Summy amended the agenda to include an action item to approve the 2018-19 Charges of the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee.

A motion was made by Y Ford, seconded by Haines, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

Approval of the 4 September 2018 minutes

A motion was made by L. Ford, seconded by Hains, to approve the minutes as provided. With one abstention, the motion carried.

2018-18 Charges for WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee

Draft charges developed by the Faculty Senate Executive Board in April 2018 were distributed. Revisions were made to reflect the primary tasks of the committee and items already accomplished. Summy will charge the committee at its 1 October meeting.

A motion was made by Ayers, seconded by Hains, to approve the charges as amended. Motion carried.

Chair's Remarks

Summy's comments included:

- The first faculty workshop for course submission held on 14 September was attended by more than 60 faculty. Summy, Elliott, and Hains attended. Participants appeared pleased and well educated upon completion. Summy noted questions for follow up. Volunteers were requested to assist at future sessions. Currently 21 faculty are registered for the 28 September session.
- Elliott, Hains, Summy, and Reinhold met with Provost Jennifer Bott regarding concerns about resources that had been raised by the Arts and Sciences dean. They arranged for a presentation at the Deans' Council on 25 September.

WMU Essential Studies Director's Remarks

Elliott's comment included:

- President Montgomery expressed his support for the WMU Essentials Study program during the State of the University Address at the Fall Convocation.
- Draft guidelines for course equivalencies were compiled by Elliott, Hains, and Y. Ford and provided to the committee. Discussion of this topic was suggested for the next meeting.
- Elliott met with Bradley Horstman in University Relation to inquire about a public facing website for the WMU Essential Studies Program. The audience for such a website would be current and prospective students and other members of the public and would be a separate from the Faculty Senate webpage that is geared toward faculty. Schoffers suggested that the FS website be added to the alphabetical directory on the WMU website under both E for Essential Studies and W for WMU Essential Studies for ease of faculty reference.
- As part of the WMU Student Success initiative, high enrollment courses with high failure rates have been designated as gateway courses to student success. A number of such courses have been submitted for inclusion in WMU Essential Studies. One strategy being considered is the use of learning assistants, or LAs, in the classroom.
- Lisa Gottlieb from Haworth College of Business coordinates student marketing teams that assist small businesses to develop marketing plans. She has offered to work with this committee to develop a marketing plan for WMU Essential Studies.
- Elliott met with Katrina Davidson from EUP regarding the possibility of linking to competencies in the eLearning system. This has not worked well in the past, but it will continue to be investigated.

WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee Chair's Remarks

Hains reported that the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee held its first meeting on 17 September, with about 25 in attendance.

DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ITEMS

Course Review and Approval Checklist Update

Hains reported that changes were made on the form in response to feedback from the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee.

Feedback and Questions

Topics included:

- Question regarding WMU Essential Studies Courses having prerequisites: Discussion was held regarding the limits of the system in enforcing prerequisites as well as the intent of the model to link the three levels and infuse the learning outcomes across the curriculum. For example, the course in Inquiry and Engagement is intended to be taken before the course in Societies and Cultures, but there are 70 courses suggested for Inquiry and Engagement. Prerequisites can only be listed as courses, not categories, and it is not possible to list that many prerequisites. Some possible approaches to this problem include restrict 3000/4000 level courses to juniors and seniors only, listing recommended skills in the catalog copy for

higher level courses, and monitoring for submissions and cases for prerequisites.

- Concern regarding Quantitative Reasoning rubrics: faculty of Mathematics expressed concerns about the student learning outcomes for the Quantitative Literacy rubric. They felt that the outcomes as written would be difficult to assess in mathematics courses, because of the reliance on data analysis, which is not covered in math courses. Elliott will seek additional feedback.
- Inconsistencies in rubrics: Summy reported that a number of inconsistencies in rubrics, including grammar, punctuation, and missing words, were identified during the workshop. She will meet with S. Brodasky to identify and correct the errors.

ADJOURNMENT

The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee will meet next on 2 October 2018 from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m., in the Bernhard Center, room 205. Chair Sarah Summy adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Submitted by: Yvonne Ford, Secretary