

**WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE
WMU ESSENTIAL STUDIES EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of 11 December 2018**

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

Members Absent: Ed Martini

Ex Officio Member Present: Suzan Ayers

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

Advisory Member Absent: Carrie Cumming

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

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

Acceptance of the Agenda

Summy added a discussion item of the Role of the WMU Essential Studies Director in the review and approval of courses.

A motion was made by L. Ford, seconded by Knutson, to accept the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes - 13 November and 27 November 2018

A motion was made by Perryman-Clark, seconded by Y. Ford, to approve both sets of minutes as distributed. Motion carried.

Chair's Remarks – Summy

Summy's comments included:

- The Navigating WMU Essential Studies sessions are complete; 120 faculty members participated over the course of the offering. It is anticipated that one session per semester may continue to be offered.
- Summy and Elliot visited 20 departments to individual answer questions.
- The Faculty Senate Executive Board approved creation of the marketing subcommittee and asked for the list of proposed members.
- A working draft of the baccalaureate writing statement approved by the Faculty Senate Executive Board was distributed.

WMU Essential Studies

Course Review and Approval Committee Chair's Remarks – Hains

Hains' comments included:

- At the last committee meeting, the focus was to clean up outstanding issues. No new courses were reviewed or approved at that meeting.
- Teams and team leads are in place.
- The committee is ready to start on course reviews at the 25 January retreat.
- The Faculty Senate staff is working through issues with access to the shared OneDrive.
- Provost Jennifer Bott has agreed to provide two student employees to prepare the review documents.
- Representatives from each college have been invited to each of the retreats in order to assist in clarifying any questions that may arise.

- The committee recognizes the importance of providing the faculty ongoing reports on the progress of the recommendation/approval process. Various options for a dashboard report following each approval retreat were discussed.

WMU Essential Studies Director's Remarks – Elliott

Elliott's comments included:

- K. Davidson from EUP has been working with Brightspace to determine the capability for monitoring outcomes within eLearning.
- Brightspace will provide a presentation at the committee's next meeting regarding measuring outcomes. The intent is to attach the rubrics and populate eLearning shells so that the outcome assessment is there for faculty to use.
- Elliott would like to have some courses set up for Fall of 2019 for a pilot study.

DISCUSSION / INFORMATION ITEMS

Role of WMU Essential Studies Director in Course Approval and Review

The current electronic curriculum process does not include the WMU Essential Studies Director in the workflow. Ayres suggested that the director review courses that have been recommended for approval by all levels, and identify those that may be problematic before the course is approved by the Associate Provost for Assessment and Undergraduate Studies. Consensus was that the director would be the appropriate position to fulfill this role as outlined in the director position description. Hains suggested that rather than the Faculty Senate staff sending the recommended course to this committee or the associate provost, the course would be sent to the director as an intermediary step, and the director would consult the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee when needed. Summy and Elliott will work with Provenzale to develop a flow chart for consideration at the next meeting.

Feedback and Questions

Knutson questioned if Lee Honors College is submitting courses, to which Perryman-Clark confirmed that 12 of 14 courses have already been submitted.

A discussion was held regarding the concerns raised at the Faculty Senate meeting about WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee level approval in addition to college curriculum committee and dean level approvals. L. Ford noted that there is need for this committee to look at the big picture of the program while moving forward in the approval of courses to assure a sufficient curriculum. Summy stated that she, Elliott, Hains, and Reinhold have been meeting to review course offerings. L Ford elaborated that there seems to a tension between program and individual courses, and questioned how courses can be approved when it is still unknown what the program will look like. It was noted that the committee does not want to have insufficient courses, but also can't allow too many courses. Schoffers suggested the use of terminology such as "recommended" instead of "approved" at the college and dean levels. The role of this committee is to move toward a balance between courses and program. Elliott questioned if there should be more description regarding the intent of the Foundation Level courses specifically for communication, writing, and quantitative

reasoning. L. Ford pointed out that the syllabi for these courses should include topics that meet the student learning outcomes, including a description. The consensus of the committee was that the currently developed materials will be used and monitored.

A question arose about whether the WMU Board of Trustees should approve the WMU Essential Studies program since that body is required to approve new programs. Ayres noted that she had confirmed via the Faculty Senate staff that when the WMU president signs off on an MOA, he is acting as an agent of the Board of Trustees, and a separate approval by that body is not necessary.

ADJOURNMENT

The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee will meet next on 8 January 2019 from 1 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