WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE
WMU ESSENTIAL STUDIES EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of 22 January 2019

Members Present: Yvonne Ford, Decker Hains, Elke Schoffers, Sarah Summy, Delores Walcott
Members Absent: Leigh Ford, Kevin Knutson, Ed Martini, Staci Perryman-Clark
Ex Officio Member Present: Suzan Ayers
Advisory Members Present: Mervyn Elliott, Matt Provenzale
Advisory Members Absent: Jeanne Baron, Carrie Cumming, Marilyn Duke, Dave Reinhold
Guests: Brian Carnell, Extended University Programs; Katrina Davidson, Extended University Programs

Committee Chair Sarah Summy called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

PROCEDURAL ITEMS
Acceptance of the Agenda
A motion was made by Ayers, seconded by Schoffers, to accept the agenda as provided. Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes – 8 January 2019
A motion was made by Y. Ford, seconded by Ayers, to approve the minutes of 8 January as provided. Motion carried.

Chair's Remarks – Summy
Summy's comments included:
- Recent activities have been centered on preparing for the first WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee retreat scheduled for 25 January. Summy and Elliott merged the attached documents with the 130 course proposals. Each of the six review teams will have approximately 20 courses to review for the first retreat. Some of the online proposals were formatted as text files, with all of the entered information in a single paragraph of text. Provenzale commented that a change in the Course Improvement Form process would reduce the likelihood of this occurring in the future; however, this change cannot take place until after the upcoming deadline for spring 2020 submissions.
- Summy discussed details regarding the approval process that will be in her report at the 7 February Faculty Senate meeting. The question at the December meeting related to the number of steps required to approve a course for inclusion in the curriculum; members of this committee agree that the process should be as transparent as possible. That being said, the committee agreed that the best course might be to wait until after the final spring 2019 retreat to release the entire group of courses approved for the curriculum. There seems to be a perception that submitting courses early was assurance of having them included in the program, which is incorrect. Announcing the courses approved at each retreat has the potential to reinforce this perception. Elliott commented that it might be necessary to ask departments to add additional courses and/or sections in some areas of the

model. This will be determined after the last retreat and using historical enrollment data.
- An additional approval will be added in the workflow for the Program Director to approve courses for inclusion in the curriculum prior to the final approval by the Associate Provost for Assessment and Undergraduate Studies. However, this new approval step cannot be applied retroactively for the courses that have already been submitted. Therefore, Reinhold and Elliott will collaborate approval, and inclusion in the curriculum and the catalog.

WMU Essential Studies
Course Review and Approval Committee Chair's Remarks – Hains
Hains invited committee members to attend the 25 January retreat.

WMU Essential Studies Director's Remarks – Elliott
Elliott continues to review historical enrollment data in General Education courses to determine the number of courses and sections that will be needed.

DISCUSSION / INFORMATION ITEMS
Assessment in D2L Presentation – Brightspace
Brightspace/D2L presented an overview of how competencies or learning outcomes can be assessed within Elearning. Summy provided a brief history of the WMU Essential Studies project, this committee's work, and the timeline for implementation of fall 2019 pilot with full implementation in fall 2020. The desired outcomes and areas of concerns were expressed:
- Aligning student-learning outcomes in D2L so that there is the ability to assess individual students' achievement of outcomes.
- Developing analytics to assess the overall WMU Essential Studies program.
- Concern of the faculty is assessment of individual students' achievement in large classes. This should be as seamless as possible.
- There is no desire to "reinvent the wheel" and hope to learn from the best practices of other institutions.

The Brightspace team stated that it has assisted other institutions in this effort. The instructional designer gave a brief presentation displaying the schematic models for building such a process within the course shells. They emphasized the following points:
- The trick to success is configuring the competencies correctly.
- A small-scale pilot is a key component to enhance the success of the rollout of the entire program.
- The platform will allow mapping details as specific as quiz questions:learning outcomes.
- When asked who does the work of mapping the course activities to the course outcomes to the course, the Brightspace team responded that this is not a service that it usually provides. Carnell and Davidson interjected that their goal is not to have faculty members doing the mapping manually.
- In response to a question to demonstrate how a faculty member would actually do the assessment in the Elearning course, Brightspace offered to have a demo video made showing how the process works within the Elearning course site. A link to the video will be sent to the committee members.

- A preliminary timeline was presented such that the pilot will be ready for fall 2019. However, that would require that a budgetary decision is need by 31 January. There would be a six to eight week lead-time needed for senior engineers. Brightspace recommends an on-site kickoff meeting with its implementation team.
- Since the webinar was recorded, it is available for any committee members who were not able to attend.

After the conclusion of the webinar, the committee briefly discussed next steps:
- Carnell and Davidson felt that the proposal was reasonable.
- Carnell pointed out that, like with other products, there are variable ways to accomplish things within the platform. This is both an advantage and a disadvantage; it allows customization, but also can complicate the processes.
- Carnell and Davidson reiterated EUP's goal to provide support and not to have faculty creating the mapping.
- Walcott suggested requesting funding for a graduate student to help with this work.
- Courses approved at the first retreat will be used for the pilot, in order to move the preparation process forward in the timeliest manner.

ADJOURNMENT

The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee will meet next on 5 February 2019 from 1 to 2:30 p.m., in the Bernhard Center room 205. Chair Sarah Summy adjourned the meeting at 2:40 p.m.

Submitted by: Yvonne Ford, Secretary