

**WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE
WMU ESSENTIAL STUDIES EXECUTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of 2 April 2019**

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

Members Absent: Kevin Knutson, Ed Martini

Ex Officio Member Present: Suzan Ayers

Advisory Members Present: Carrie Cumming, Marilyn Duke, Mervyn Elliott, Dave Reinhold

Advisory Members Absent: Jeanne Baron, Matt Provenzale

Guest: Richard Gershon, Faculty Senate President

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

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

Acceptance of the Agenda

A motion was made by Ayers, seconded by Perryman-Clark, to accept the agenda as provided. Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes – 12 March 2019

A motion was made by Ayers, seconded by L. Ford, to approve the minutes of 12 March as provided. Motion carried.

Chair's Remarks – Summy

Summy reported that the committee will meet next on 10 May from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Parkview Room of Floyd Hall to review the approved courses as they make up the WMU Essential Studies curriculum. The committee will have its first look at the curriculum in its entirety.

Summy deferred her remaining time to Ayres to provide an update on committee membership terms. Ayres reported that all members who wish to continue service have been reelected with varied terms based on the members' expressed preferences. In addition, Jonathan Bush and Diana Riggs have been added to represent the College of Arts and Sciences. Also, L. Ford will continue to serve through June 2019.

WMU Essential Studies

Course Review and Approval Committee Chair's Remarks – Hains

No report was provided.

WMU Essential Studies Director's Remarks – Elliott

Elliott's comments included:

- There are 83 courses left to be reviewed at the 5 April retreat of the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee. The committee is confident it will successfully complete the review of all submitted courses at that retreat. The committee has been conducting preliminary reviews at their regularly scheduled meetings, which has helped to complete the review process.

- For courses which were denied upon review by the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee, emails will be sent to the initiator indicating a resubmission deadline in May. Some previously denied courses have been resubmitted and are being processed. To date, resubmissions have been smoothly processed through college level approval.
- The WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee has identified that enrollment caps for Level III courses are not being incorporated. The caps have been suggested to be set at 25-30 students to allow for appropriate assessment. However, there are not specific directions/restrictions defined. Discussion was held. This topic was referred to inclusion on the agenda for the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee's 10 May retreat.
- Elliott has been comparing present general education offerings to the proposed courses for WMU Essential Studies, including language and honors courses which have not been previously included as general education courses.
- At the 10 May retreat a "first look" of the curriculum will take place. Courses will be reviewed to determine how the WMU Essential Studies curriculum will work.

Faculty Senate President's Remarks – Gershon

Gershon questioned what will occur if it is determined that the approved courses are insufficient to meet demand. Elliott provided a brief overview of the process for the 10 May retreat. Part of that process will include analysis of data on the number of course sections and the historical enrollment data, as well as the enrollment for the last year. The data in comparison to the proposed courses should provide an idea of where deficiencies may exist, but surpluses may be harder to identify. Gershon challenged the committee to identify a quick process for corrections. Concern was expressed about shortcutting the established process. Elliott suggested that some approved courses could be easily modified to meet student learning outcomes for a different category. It was determined that the committee will not alter the approval process or standards.

DISCUSSION / INFORMATION ITEMS

WMU Essential Studies Non-English Courses with Prerequisites

A question had been previously raised about courses that are not taught in English being counted toward World Languages if it's part of the major. Perryman-Clark suggested this be handled in the same manner that the committee developed for high credit hour programs, such that students who participate in study abroad courses have credits calculated and added to transcripts after they return at which time the course credit can be designated as WMU Essential Studies credit. The committee determined that would not be possible since the study abroad course must be submitted for approval and designated as part of the WMU Essential Studies program in order to have Essential Studies credits awarded.

Degree Works – Cumming

Cumming explained that the Degree Works software was implemented on campus in 2011. It is a degree auditing tool, shows exactly what students need to graduate and which requirements have been met in real time. Any student having entered WMU in catalog year 2010 or later are in the Degree Works system. The software is accessed

by advisors to conduct graduation audits, and students access it to track their progress toward degree. As of March 2019, there are 9,000 undergraduate student logins. Cumming provided a demonstration of Degree Works. The system shows the student's classification, major, advisor's name, current GPA, and the required courses that have been completed. The registrar's office built a demonstration to show how WMU Essential Studies courses would appear to users. There is also a potential for reports to be generated that could help departments plan course offerings. Feedback, suggestions for layout, and notes were provided to inform changes for future software revisions.

ADJOURNMENT

The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee will meet next on 16 April 2019 from 1 to 2:30 p.m., in the Bernhard Center room 205. Chair Sarah Summy adjourned the meeting at 2:29 p.m.

Submitted by: Yvonne Ford, Secretary