

From: [WMU Faculty Senate](#)
To: [WMU Faculty Senate](#)
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WMU Essential Studies – Course Instructors Assessment Update

The WMU Essential Studies program has launched! A key aspect of our new general education program is assessment. Over the summer, the Student Learning Outcome (SLO's) rubrics were uploaded into Elearning course shells and are available in the gradebook. These rubrics are to be used to assess student levels of proficiency. Instructors are asked to input their assessment data into the gradebook by the end of the semester. At the end of the 2020 Fall semester, this information will be collected, aggregated, shared across campus, and analyzed as part of a continuous cycle of improvement.

The Higher Learning Commission is set to visit campus this spring and the cumulative assessments representing the entire general education program, along with plans for how we will act on that data, will help demonstrate our commitment to institutional improvement. For all these reasons, MOA 18/02 (passed by the Faculty Senate in May 2018) requires each WMU Essential Studies course section to report assessment data by the end of each term. Those sections that do not report assessment data may be removed from the WMU Essential Studies program.

The submission process for a course to be included in the WMU Essential Studies program was extensive. It included the submission of a curriculum form, assessment plan, and course syllabus. If you need access to any of these documents please email a request to wmu-essentialstudies@wmich.edu. The goal now is to execute these plans and deliver a rubric-scored assessment for each student in your courses. This will be the first time that instructors will be applying the faculty created rubrics to the approved course assessment plan, so we understand that there will be a bit of a learning curve this semester.

The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee working in partnership with WMUx,

is pleased to offer multiple modes of support. We encourage you to make use of these supports early in the semester to avoid a log jam of support requests, and delayed responses, at the end of the semester.

WMU Essential Studies Email: wmu-essentialstudies@wmich.edu is useful for shorter questions (of a technical nature or otherwise) and you can expect a reply within 24-hours during the work week.

Individual Consultations: Brian Carnell, Associate Director of Educational Technology, and his team of instructional support specialists at WMUx are available for one-on-one support sessions. Brian and his team can walk you through the assessment process, offer suggestions about rubric integration, and answer most questions. Email Brian directly to set up an appointment: brian.carnell@wmich.edu.

Group Support: Members of the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee will host virtual group support sessions throughout the semester; the first is scheduled for Thursday, October 8 via Webex. A calendar of future sessions will be announced in the coming weeks. Separate email reminders will precede each scheduled session.

Department/Unit Support: Brian Carnell and WMU Essential Studies Interim Director James Cousins are in the process of scheduling meetings with departments and units across campus. These larger group meetings might be the best option for those looking to coordinate program assessments across a unit's individual WMU Essential Studies sections. To schedule email james.cousins@wmich.edu.

We are grateful for your support of the WMU Essential Studies program. Please do connect with one of the above resources early and as often as needed.

Faculty Senate Office
4060 Moore Hall
Western Michigan University
1903 W. Michigan Ave
269-387-3310
faculty-senate@wmich.edu

