

**WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE  
WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee  
Minutes of 8 December 2020**

**Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee was called to order at 1 p.m. on 8 December 2020, via Webex video conferencing by Jonathan Bush, chair.

**Roll Call**

**Members in Attendance:** Elissa Allen, Jonathan Bush, Brian Carnell, Decker Hains, Kevin Knutson, Jessica Parker, Diane Riggs, Brian Tripp, Andre Venter

**Advisory Members in Attendance:** James Cousins, Carrie Cumming, Matt Provenzale

**Ex Officio Member in Attendance:** Sarah Summy

**Guests:** Ed Martini, Dean, University College; James Springstead, Chair, OneWMU Faculty Design Team

**Quorum**

A quorum was present.

**Agenda**

It was moved by Summy, seconded by Knutson, to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**Minutes**

It was moved by Summy, seconded by Venter, to approve the 10 November minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**Reports of Officers**

Committee Chair Bush did not provide a report.

Executive Board Ex Officio Summy reported that time was spent defining the duties and responsibilities for the WMU Essential Studies Director position. Still needed are the protocols for the 4-year cycle evaluation process. Three options were offered for WMU Essential Studies being administered as part of the University College in order of preference:

1. The WMU Essential Studies Director would coordinate with the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee, the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee, University College Dean, and the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs. Include strategic planning for the WMU Essential Studies program. The director would hold faculty rank with curriculum experience.
2. Creation of a WMU Essential Studies leadership team. The director would not be a full-time administrator but would have administrative support. The director would report to the University College dean and the Provost's council. This is the previous model that was in place when Mervyn Elliott was the director.
3. The WMU Essential Studies Director position would be held by an assistant dean in addition to additional duties, as is the case with the current interim director.

**Reports of Subcommittees**

WMU Essential Studies Interim Director Cousins reported the need to focus on the two issues of management versus leadership. A collaborative model might be the best outcome. One manager and others who can be innovative. However, a dedicated director is important for the success of the program.

Hains reported that the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee will be meeting Monday to vote on 30 courses for fall 2021.

## **Unfinished Business**

Martini and Springstead reported on the role of WMU Essential Studies being housed within the University College.

- Most important is to make sure that WMU Essential Studies is successful
- WMU Essential Studies will need an administrative home and a director
- The advantages to housing WMU Essential Studies in the University College:
  - maintain technology and smooth the pathways with Elearning
  - advisors familiar with the curricula
  - provides neutral ground for curriculum of the program
- The OneWMU Faculty Design Team purpose is to design the structure for a new college
- Students can move through their degree more quickly and efficiently
- The University College will be a collaboration with holistic student support and assessment
- The University College will affect advising, technology, continuity, and first year student experiences
- OneWMU Faculty Design Team charge is to consider:
  - WMU University Studies Degree
  - WMU Essential Studies
  - Meta-Majors prototypes

## **New Business**

The nature of the director position and its future administrative home were discussed. Chair Bush summarized further action of this committee:

- Director position characteristics should be decided before summer 2021 in order to be ready for the first assessment review
- This committee's role is to provide recommendations to the Faculty Senate which will then make recommendations to the administration

It was moved by Summy, seconded by Tripp, to recommend that WMU Essential Studies be housed administratively in the University College. The motion carried unanimously.

## **Announcements**

It will be important to discuss and vote on the structure, management, administration, and leadership of WMU Essential Studies within the University College. Such discussion will require a prior planning meeting to refine the options with the different criteria, with an explanation of the problems and benefits so that the committee will be able to vote at the next meeting.

The following topics were requested for future meetings:

- Mathematics
- WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee subcommittee work:
  - marketing
  - community college partnership
  - data and rubric review

## **Adjournment**

It was moved by Knutson, seconded by Venter, to adjourn the meeting at 2:10 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The next meeting of the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee will be held on 12 January 2021.

## **Approval**

Submitted by Diane Riggs, Secretary

Minutes approved this twelfth day of January 2021.