CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY ___ EST. 1826

To:	Case Western Reserve University Community
From:	Kimberly Emmons, Associate Professor of English and
	Chair of the Provost's Commission on the Undergraduate Experience (CUE)
Date:	September 29, 2017
RE:	CUE Preliminary Recommendations – Draft for Comment

The CUE* extends its sincere thanks to the entire CWRU community for continuing to engage in a productive dialogue about the challenges and opportunities for the future of our undergraduate experience. At the end of last academic year, the CUE received recommendations from its five Thinking Groups: Advising & Mentoring, General Education Requirements, Pedagogy, Experiential Learning, and Campus Culture & Environment. These reports, combined with the recommendations of the consultants who conducted an institutional strategy study for CWRU, have informed and enriched our work.

We are pleased to submit the attached draft report – "Enhancing the Undergraduate Experience: Preliminary Recommendations for the CWRU Community" – for campus consideration and comment. This draft report describes six major recommendations that work toward unifying and coordinating the curricular requirements, advising structures, and campus community for CWRU undergraduates. **Although our attention and our recommendations are primarily focused on the *undergraduate* experience at CWRU, we believe that our work has the potential to benefit *everyone* on campus, so we invite the whole campus to read, respond, and engage with these recommendations.**

Opportunities for Feedback

The CUE will gather feedback through the following mechanisms:

- The CUE will work with the Faculty Senate (via its Committee on Undergraduate Education) to request written feedback from the schools/college and the USG

- The CUE will host a series of feedback sessions (October 19-30):
  - **Thursday, October 19, Thwing Room 224**
    - 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m. – Students
    - 1:45 p.m.-2:45 p.m. – Faculty
    - 3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. – Staff/Administration

---

* In January 2016, the Provost's Commission on the Undergraduate Experience (CUE) was established to assess and enhance the undergraduate experience at CWRU. As the first such endeavor since 2001, the CUE represents an important opportunity to shape the educational environment on our campus for the next several decades. Information about the work of the CUE, including previous progress reports, is available online (http://case.edu/provost/cue and http://casfaculty.case.edu/kimberly-emmons/cue).

- o **Friday, October 20, Thwing Room 224**
  - 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. – Open Forum

- o **Wednesday, October 25, TVUC Senior Classroom B, Room 134**
  - 3:00 p.m.-4:15 p.m. – Staff/Administration
  - 4:30 p.m.-5:45 p.m. – Faculty
  - 6:00-7:30 p.m. – Students

- o **Thursday, October 26, Thwing Room 224**
  - 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. – Open Forum

- o **Monday, October 30, TVUC Room 140**
  - 10:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m. – Staff/Administration
  - 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. – Faculty
  - 12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m. – Students

- CUE Liaisons will contact academic departments and university offices to offer to attend scheduled or special meetings to discuss the CUE's recommendations

- Individual comments may be shared with the CUE via email: pcue@case.edu

- Contact information for the Chair of the CUE, including a means for scheduling appointments electronically, can be found online: http://casfaculty.case.edu/kimberly-emmons/cue/

What's Next?

Beginning in November, and continuing into the winter, the CUE will revise its recommendations based on feedback from the CWRU community. As consensus is achieved, formal proposals will be crafted and submitted for consideration to the appropriate governing bodies.

As these major recommendations are being discussed and refined, the CUE will continue to gather feedback on the overall campus environment. Specifically, the Division of Student Affairs will coordinate a series of focus group in fall 2017 and will summarize their findings to the CUE.

The CUE expects to present a final report to the CWRU community in Spring 2018.

Enhancing the Undergraduate Experience

Preliminary Recommendations for the CWRU Community

Provost's Commission on the Undergraduate Experience (CUE)
Case Western Reserve University

September 29, 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 2016, the Provost's Commission on the Undergraduate Experience (CUE) was charged with "formulating recommendations to strengthen the overall value, reputation, and desirability of CWRU's undergraduate experience." Over the last twenty months, we have developed a set of goals for CWRU's undergraduate experience (see Appendix B), engaged consultants to conduct an institutional strategy study, convened five Thinking Groups and reviewed their reports (see Appendix C), and developed a set of preliminary recommendations, which we describe in the following pages.

On this fiftieth anniversary of the federation of Western Reserve University and Case Institute of Technology, **CWRU must take action to fulfill the promise of our origins and to function as a single, cohesive undergraduate institution.** Even as we celebrate the unique constellation of undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs that CWRU offers, we must foster intellectually rich and lasting connections with the institution overall. The individual undergraduate schools and the college – as well as our graduate and professional schools – will emerge stronger if each unit takes steps now to adopt this orientation toward our undergraduate educational mission.

Since the last comprehensive review of the undergraduate experience (2001), CWRU has made significant progress. The university today is a different place than it was two decades ago: our undergraduate student population has nearly doubled; our geographic and global diversity has increased significantly; our selectivity and national reputation have risen dramatically; we have built the Village at 115, the Stephanie Tubbs Jones Residence Hall, and the Tinkham Veale University Center (just to name a few of our recent capital projects). There is much to celebrate.

That said, we should not be satisfied. Too many of our students report too much unproductive stress and too little connection with the campus community. Our retention, persistence, and 6-year graduation rates, as well as the percentage of students who accept our offers of admission are all lower than we need them to be. Our analysis of prospective students' decision-making processes reveals that CWRU holds only limited appeal for too large a portion of our applicant pool. We are not yet reaching our full potential as a premier research institution that educates some of the most accomplished undergraduates from around the world.

The challenges we face are not simple; we cannot continue to operate as we have in the past. To do so would negate the successes we celebrate today and diminish the university as a whole in the future. To thrive as a premier educational institution, we must improve the overall quality of life for our undergraduates.

The CUE recommends focusing on three guiding principles: **unity** (i.e. increasing coherence and cohesion in the undergraduate experience); **preparation** (i.e., providing a continuum of mentoring, from programs that invite students into the university through opportunities that help them move on); and **wellness** (i.e., fostering balance in and attention to all

aspects of students' lives). Taken together, these principles should guide our responses to the challenges we face in enhancing the undergraduate experience at CWRU.

In the last decade, CWRU has done a lot to address student life on campus, including improving facilities and programming, and these efforts should continue. In this report, we seek to complement these ongoing student life efforts by addressing the high levels of unproductive stress our students face. We do this in two ways: by proposing curricular reforms that simplify and clarify the set of academic requirements that all students should complete, and by reorganizing advising to help students navigate the university, develop their personalized undergraduate experience plans, and discover career and community engagement possibilities.

This report details six major recommendations for the university. CWRU should:

- **Adopt a single University General Education Requirement (UGER),** meant to apply to all students, regardless of their major or degree program.

- **Implement an innovative Explore curriculum** that invites students to discover and deepen their understanding of what different forms of disciplinary knowledge reveal about the world.

- **Build traditions to celebrate our unique institutional identity**, by starting each academic year with a day celebrating our connections on campus and with our surrounding communities, and by ending each academic year with a celebration of our undergraduates' capstone projects.

- **Assemble collaborative advising teams** that help all students navigate the university by providing both robust academic advising and comprehensive co-curricular, post-college, and community engagement planning.

- **Review our curriculum to reduce stress and increase flexibility for students**, ensuring that all undergraduates are able to complete the UGER, a major of their choosing, and also pursue other interests (e.g., an unrelated minor or series of elective courses).

- **Foster a thriving campus community,** working together to identify means of connecting and sustaining our unified undergraduate experience.

In addition to these major recommendations, this report contains suggestions and frameworks for other initiatives that will build on our strengths and significantly enhance the future of the undergraduate experience at CWRU. Our students want to change the world; it is our obligation to ensure that they have an environment that encourages and enables their ambitions.

We will seek feedback from the campus community this fall, and we expect to issue a final report in spring 2018, including an update on the progress of any implementation planning

related to our recommendations. In addition, we will continue to collect information about broader student life experiences at CWRU and will summarize our findings in our final report.

We are optimistic about the future for undergraduates at CWRU; we welcome your enthusiastic engagement with these ideas and recommendations (for more information and/or to provide feedback, please visit: http://case.edu/provost/cue, http://casfaculty.case.edu/kimberly-emmons/cue, or email pcue@case.edu).

Acknowledgements

The CUE would like to thank all of the individuals – too numerous to identify individually by name – who have generously committed their time, expertise, and creativity to this process. We are grateful for the many students, staff, faculty, alumni, trustees, visiting committee members, and friends of CWRU who have listened, critiqued, challenged, and improved our thinking. We count on their (and others') continued engagement as this process continues.

THE UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE AT CWRU: A CALL TO ACTION

At Case Western Reserve University, we believe that our undergraduate experience should develop students' skills and competencies, strengthen their intellectual engagement with the world around them, and prepare them to find and develop careers consonant with their goals and aspirations. It should also foster great friendships, encourage students to explore and articulate their personal values, and ensure that graduates develop the curiosity and confidence to succeed professionally, personally, and as citizens of a world characterized by rapid change and increasing complexity.

Successes

Since the last review of the undergraduate experience (2001)[1], CWRU has dramatically increased its national and global reach. Our students now represent a much larger and more diverse applicant pool. Our undergraduate enrollments have grown over 66%; our gender and ethnic diversity has greatly improved; and our international student population has nearly tripled. Using objective measures, our selectivity has gone up considerably since 2001: our mean SAT score has risen by more than 50 points, and our acceptance rate has been effectively halved.

Case Western Reserve University: PCUEL to CUE		
	AY 2001-2002	**AY 2015-2016**
Demographics		
Undergraduate Enrollment	3,381	5,121
Men / Women	61% / 39%	55% / 45%
White / Non-White	73% / 23%	51% / 38%
Ohio Residents	58%	28%
Other US Residents	38%	61%
International Students	4%	11%
Selectivity		
Mean SAT Combined (1600)	1335	1386
Acceptance Rate	71%	36%

Source: CWRU Institutional Research

On national surveys, CWRU undergraduates report significantly more positive educational outcomes related to diversity than their peers at other institutions.[2] For example, in multiple administrations of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), CWRU students were significantly more likely to have serious conversations with a member of a different race. Similarly, CWRU students score higher on positive cross racial interaction constructs[3] and lower on negative cross racial interaction constructs than their peers at other institutions. Such statistics tell only part of the story, and we recognize that we must

---

[1] See the final report of the President's Commission on Undergraduate Education and Life (PCUEL), dated September 2001.

[2] In recent years, these positive findings have been seen across multiple national surveys: College Senior Survey (CSS), Your First College Year (YFCY), and National Study of Student Engagement (NSSE).

[3] Constructs are multiple item indicators used by the Higher Education Research Institute.

do more to continue to improve our diversity and inclusion on campus. Nevertheless, we take pride in the fact that our institution's history is one of positive engagement and intellectual debate on these and other core values.[4]

On national surveys, CWRU students report more positive educational outcomes related to faculty-led research than their peers at other comparable universities. For example, on the 2014 College Senior Survey (CSS), CWRU students indicated they more frequently had opportunities to work on a professor's research project and that they more frequently took advantage of those opportunities.

In addition to positive learning outcomes related to diversity and faculty-led research, an exceptionally high number of our students go on to pursue postgraduate and professional education, and our first destination reports reveal successes in helping students secure employment upon graduation.

2015 AAU Undergraduate Placement Rates				
School	Employed Full-Time	Advanced Study	Placement Rate*	*US News* Rank
Washington University in St. Louis	71.6%	24.9%	96.5%	19
New York University	85.7%	10.0%	95.4%	36
Brandeis University	64.0%	30.0%	94.0%	34
University of Chicago	-	-	93.0%	3
Case Western Reserve University	**50.0%**	**36.0%**	**86.0%**	**37**
Carnegie Mellon University	59.0%	22.0%	81.0%	24
University of Rochester	43.0%	36.0%	79.0%	32
Emory University	42.0%	33.0%	75.0%	20

*"Placement Rate" includes graduates who have accepted employment, advanced study, and/or other opportunities (i.e., it excludes graduates who are seeking employment, but have not secured a position). In 2015, the national average placement rate for college graduates was 76%. Source: CAS Visiting Committee White Paper (in preparation), using data from 2015 institutional first destination reports.

Challenges

Nevertheless, our undergraduate experience is not as strong or as attractive as it should be. Too many of our undergraduates continue to choose CWRU for financial reasons, and our student persistence, retention, and 6-year graduation rates[5] remain consistently lower than we would like. To better understand these challenges, we engaged a group of educational consultants (Art & Science Group, LLC) to conduct an institutional strategy study. This study set out to understand how CWRU is positioned in the decision-making

---

[4] For example, the Western Reserve College Philozetian Society (a student literary society) invited Frederick Douglass to speak during Commencement week in 1854. See:
http://blog.case.edu/archives/2013/02/11/famous_campus_visitors_frederick_douglass.
[5] Persistence and retention are measures of how many students return to an institution year-after-year; they are often used interchangeably; here they are used together to focus on both institutional and student outcomes. *Retention* is an institutional measure; *persistence* is a student measure. The 6-year graduation rate is the standard figure used to compare institutions; it measures the number of first-time, first-year students who graduate from an institution within 6 years of initial matriculation.

processes of prospective students and to identify strategies that would strengthen the undergraduate experience for the future.[6]

The consultants' study found that, among many of our prospective students, CWRU has only a limited appeal. Applicants to CWRU who were asked to rate the university on a "best choice" to "worst choice" scale rated it 6.2 out of a possible best of 10. Those same students ranked their self-identified first- and second-choice schools much higher on the same scale, and the size of the gap between those ratings and CWRU's is of significant concern. The gap suggest that minor improvements to students' perceptions of CWRU (such as those possible from targeted marketing) are unlikely to make much difference in the number of students eager to matriculate. In the same study, a sobering 26% of our known applicants did not mention CWRU when asked by the consultants for a list of the schools to which they had applied. Only 6% of applicants indicated CWRU as their "realistic first-choice school" (for social science, arts, humanities, and undecided students, this number was only 1%).

It is tempting to see these results as the product of successful admissions and marketing campaigns, which have, indeed, transformed CWRU from a primarily regional undergraduate institution to a global undergraduate destination. It is true that our more distant applicants do not yet know us as well as they might, and our appeal is bound to be shallower than institutions whose name recognition has accumulated generations of prestige. **Unfortunately, however, as the consultants' study makes abundantly clear: there is no untapped market of students who, if they knew more about CWRU as it is today, would suddenly see us as their first choice.**

The CUE's review of research on current and recent CWRU students reveals similar patterns of disaffection. CWRU students are persisting and graduating at historically high rates, and at rates better than the national average,[7] but those rates are lower than is predicted by external evaluation formulae. In 2016, CWRU's 6-year graduation rate (the figure used in national institutional comparisons) was 82%, but the predicted rate for that cohort of students was 88%. Our first-to-second year persistence rates have remained fairly constant over the last eight years – 91% (2008) to 92% (2016) – and they have consistently lagged behind those of our private university peers, who have averaged 96% annually over the same period.

Together, these numbers tell a difficult story: too many CWRU undergraduates do not complete their degrees on our campus. Approximately 100 first year students do not return for their second year; approximately 225 first-year students will not graduate from CWRU within six years. These losses, replicated annually by each incoming cohort, weaken our community. **Ensuring more of our students remain at, graduate from, and connect more meaningfully with CWRU should be a top priority.** Not only will such a commitment to our students demonstrate our core values, it will also increase the revenue

---

[6] The Art & Science Group conducted a similar study prior to the formation of the President's Commission on Undergraduate Education and Life (1999-2001). The current study was conducted January-August 2016.
[7] For private, non-profit institutions, the 6-year graduation rate is 66% overall for the cohort entering college in 2009. See: https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_ctr.asp

available for our educational mission. A rough estimate indicates that for every sustainable 1% increase in our retention (approximately 50 more students across all undergraduate classes retained annually), the university can expect to generate over $1 million annually in additional tuition revenue. These funds, reinvested in the undergraduate experience, could make a substantial positive difference.

Six-Year Graduation Rates (2009 entering class)	
University of Chicago	92%
MIT	92%
Duke University	95%
Johns Hopkins University	94%
Northwestern University	93%
Vanderbilt University	92%
Washington University in St. Louis	93%
Emory University	89%
Carnegie Mellon University	88%
University of Rochester	88%
Case Western Reserve University	**81%**
Peer Institution Average	92%

Source: CWRU Institutional Research

The difference between our expected 6-year graduation rate and our actual performance on this measure significantly depresses our national ranking overall, by perhaps as many as seven or eight positions.[8]

CWRU 6-Year Graduation Rates, 2012-2016					
	2012	**2013**	**2014**	**2015**	**2016**
CWRU Actual Graduation Rate	78%	80%	81%	81%	82%
US News Predicted Graduation Rate	86%	89%	89%	85%	88%
Difference	-8	-9	-8	-4	-6
Graduation Rate Performance Rank (250+ institutions ranked by *US News*)	231	232	235	193	235

Source: CWRU Institutional Research

Furthermore, on surveys such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), CWRU students report significantly lower satisfaction with their overall undergraduate experience than their peers at comparable universities. **In 2015, only 80% of our seniors reported that if they could start over they "would *probably* or *definitely* choose CWRU again."**

---

[8] Source: CWRU Retention Task Force

Students who would probably/definitely choose CWRU again		
Year	First-Years	Seniors
2005	81%	69%
2006	82%	70%
2007	74%	78%
2009	82%	71%
2012	84%	81%
2015	87%	80%

Source: NSSE surveys via CWRU Institutional Research.
Shaded (red) responses are statistically lower than peer institutions.

On surveys of CWRU seniors, overall satisfaction with undergraduate education has declined in the last decade. In addition, fewer than two-thirds of our seniors would "probably or definitely" recommend to a high school senior that they attend CWRU.[9]

Senior surveys, by definition, capture only the responses of students who remain at the institution: if we extrapolate from these figures to the initial incoming first-year class (nearly twenty percent of whom will have left the university before they would be included in a survey administered near graduation) we could estimate that only **62%** of our potential seniors are generally or very satisfied with their undergraduate education, and that only **52%** of our potential seniors would recommend CWRU to a high school senior.

Seniors' overall satisfaction with CWRU undergraduate education										
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2010	2013	2016
Generally	62%	66%	63%	62%	59%	61%	62%	53%	-	63%
Very	20%	17%	24%	26%	28%	25%	23%	29%	-	13%
Total	**80%**	**83%**	**87%**	**87%**	**87%**	**86%**	**85%**	**82%**	**81%**	**76%**

Seniors who would encourage a high school senior to attend CWRU										
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2010	2013	2016
Probably	31%	29%	38%	41%	37%	34%	34%	33%	-	26%
Definitely	20%	18%	22%	20%	26%	24%	25%	30%	-	37%
Total	**51%**	**47%**	**60%**	**61%**	**63%**	**58%**	**59%**	**63%**	**68%**	**63%**

Source: CWRU Senior Survey, administered in paper form at commencement rehearsal through 2007; revised in 2013; replaced by CWRU Student Experience Survey in 2016.

These figures illuminate a significant challenge for our institutional reputation: too many of our students would represent CWRU without enthusiasm (or potentially negatively) to their peers and siblings. We must find ways to change this: in today's social-media-saturated world, we cannot afford to lose the valuable recruiting effects of enthusiastic and engaged current and recent students.

---

[9] The use of the "singular *they*" in this report is intentional.

Student persistence and satisfaction are complex variables. In CWRU studies of retention and graduation, no single factor has been isolated in our students' decisions to leave the university. For example: 105 first-year students in fall 2015 did not return for the fall 2016 semester.

Of the students who did not return, reasons given included:

- academic/environmental "fit" (36%)
- academic difficulty (29% - many of these students may return in a future semester)
- personal reasons (11%)
- health concerns (10%)
- financial difficulties (5%)
- other reasons (9% - many of these students may return in a future semester)

Two-thirds of the first-year students who did not return in fall 2016 were in good academic standing; 60% had GPAs of 3.0 or higher; 16.2% had GPAs of 4.0; 78% were male; larger proportions of underrepresented minority students and of international students did not return than of white students. Of the first-year students who did not return for the fall of their second year, we can identify nearly half as having matriculated at other institutions, one-third of whom matriculated at other AAU institutions (i.e., at peer institutions).[10]

Institutional Identity

Highly selective, private research institutions such as CWRU are vying for the most qualified students from across the nation and the globe. Domestically, CWRU draws heavily from the Northeast and Mid-West, both regions with slowing population growth. Over the last several decades, public flagship institutions have made significant investments in their undergraduate programs and services (e.g., Ohio State has built housing to accommodate all second-year students; many public institutions have made investments in honors colleges), which appeal strongly to value-conscious students and their parents. Historically, to enroll our exceptionally qualified students, CWRU has had to provide significantly more financial aid to families that could afford to pay a larger share of their student's educational costs. For domestic students entering CWRU in fall 2016, the average tuition discount rate was 57%, as compared to rates in the mid-40% range at comparable institutions.[11] This is a very real, and ultimately unsustainable, loss of revenue to the university and its undergraduate educational mission.

In addition, CWRU faces challenges related to its identity in the educational marketplace. While CWRU has a relatively strong reputation among prospective students for its Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines, it has difficulty attracting students in other fields, most notably the humanities, social sciences, and arts. **Countering the negative impressions students have of our non-STEM disciplines should be a**

---

[10] Association of American Universities (AAU): https://www.aau.edu
[11] Source: CWRU Enrollment Management.

priority for the university as a whole. This perceived imbalance among disciplines at CWRU is a significant challenge for recruiting: in the consultants' study, top-scoring students and those whom we admit but who decline to matriculate are more likely to prefer intellectual diversity in their academic work.

Intellectual Diversity Preferences among Prospective Students
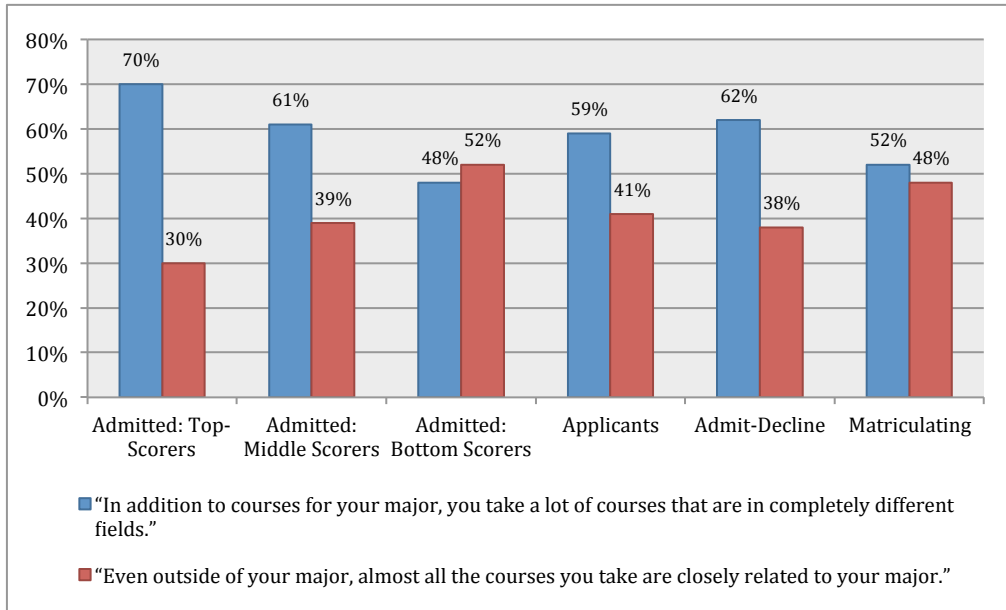
Source: Art & Science Group, LLC, Institutional Strategy Study

On the question of disciplinary balance, the consultants' research suggests that neither doubling-down on STEM nor seeking to position CWRU as a standard comprehensive university is likely to succeed. Instead, they recommend developing a CWRU-specific definition of "comprehensive university." The consultants conclude: **"CWRU will need to stake out a position more toward the comprehensive side of the STEM-intensive/comprehensive continuum than it is currently perceived to occupy."** And, they continue, CWRU should define its "brand" of comprehensive university **by embracing its "intellectual engagement and pragmatic sensibility."**[12]

The consultants recommend that we integrate students' curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular experiences to help them connect their intellectual interests with their lifetime goals and ambitions.[13] Among the programmatic recommendations our consultants made were: an integrated approach to post-college planning (i.e., not a

---

[12] Examples of this combination of intellectual engagement and pragmatic sensibilities cited by the consultants include the Baker-Nord Center's "Humanities@Work" and "Baker Nord Scholars in the Humanities" programs. (See: http://humanities.case.edu/humanitieswork/ and http://humanities.case.edu/baker-nord-scholars-humanities/).

[13] We are adopting definitions suggested by our Experiential Learning Thinking Group for *curricular* (i.e., coursework for academic credit), *co-curricular* (i.e., activities that don't receive credit but that reinforce academic learning, and may sometimes be noted on a transcript), and *extracurricular* (i.e., activities that are unrelated to academic learning, and are neither given academic credit nor listed on a transcript).

separate Career Center model, but rather curricular *and* co-curricular attention to career development); a more explicit focus on career and professional outcomes for non-STEM students; an approach to leadership development that is integrated into the curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular experiences of students, and that is sensitive to different leadership styles; and intensive experiences abroad that are designed to provide meaningful hands-on learning opportunities related to students' interests and career goals.

Campus Ethos

CWRU struggles with creating the strong, cohesive, and vibrant campus community that will help it attract and retain students. Our consultants consistently found that the "key issue" across all groups of individuals queried was a negative perception about CWRU's ethos, which is defined by the following attributes: an active and vibrant campus **social life;** a strong sense of **school spirit** (sense of community and connection); strong participation in **extracurricular opportunities**, including athletics, social and service clubs, student organizations, and cultural and arts events; and **a diverse student body.**

Research reviewed by the CUE supports these findings. CWRU students report lower satisfaction with the campus ethos across a variety of indicators. For example, in the 2015 NSSE, both first-year students and seniors indicated lower satisfaction with a number of factors related to campus environment than did their peers at comparable universities.

"My Institution Emphasizes…"				
	First-Year		Senior	
	CWRU	Comp	CWRU	Comp
Providing opportunities to be involved socially	31%	34%	21%	30%
Providing support for overall well-being	29%	35%	19%	30%
Attending campus activities and events	18%	31%	11%	27%
Helping manage non-academic responsibilities	10%	14%	6%	9%

Source: NSSE 2015

Prospective students clearly prefer a balance between their academic and their social lives. In the consultants' study, **admitted students would choose not to attend CWRU if they perceived CWRU's social life to be entirely "studious"** (i.e., even extra-curricular activities are strongly linked to academics) rather than "studious and social" (i.e., academic work is taken seriously, but students make time for social activities). In a 2012-2013 series of focus group discussions conducted by our Institutional Research staff, students consistently reported dissatisfaction with workload and work/life balance. For example, one student comments: "I will say it's really easy to get caught up in the sheer amount of work you have and then you know look up, the semester has passed by and you find you haven't done many significant things outside of Case."

The 2015 Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Student Survey also contains indicators of students' dissatisfaction with workload and work/life balance. For example: "The workload of Case is much higher than the average of other top engineering institutions. Talking to friends in other engineering programs from all over the country, that is the consensus. Case

students are stressed much longer and to a higher degree than the average engineering student. I understand there are requirements to be met, but the intense workload is not needed. […] It's not healthy. College is supposed to be an experience and it seems to be that the only experience Case wants for us is stress and be in the library 24/7, it's the only way to get through all of the academic work without failing."

For students in the liberal arts, stress often originates not from workload but from a perceived lack of institutional attention and support. In the 2015 HLC Student Survey, students working in the humanities and social sciences made comments such as: "the imbalance between humanities v. sciences is overwhelming" and "as a double humanities major…I felt extremely out of place and undervalued" and "it is abundantly clear to myself and my classmates that we are not a priority to this school because we aren't engineers or pre-med students."

Summarizing a range of survey and focus group data, our Office of Institutional Research concludes that CWRU "students generally report spending more time preparing for class, more time engaged in extra-curricular activities, and less time with unstructured free time across [Higher Education Research Institute (HERI)] surveys. On NSSE's supportive campus environment benchmark, we often score significantly worse than our comparison schools, in particular, 'this campus allows me to thrive socially.'"

In discussions facilitated by the CUE, one student offered a bleak description of the campus ethos: "there's a lot of social activity during orientation and the first few weeks of school, but then winter comes, and we all burrow into our work, and it stays winter until the end of our senior year." As all of this data suggests, CWRU must change its approach to undergraduate education. **While continuing to provide an intellectually rich academic experience, we must focus on improving the overall quality of life for our students.**

Call to Action: A Unified Undergraduate Experience

CWRU's current undergraduate experience is too often described by our own students as including high unproductive stress levels,[14] daunting workloads, and a sense of disconnection from peers, from disciplines outside of their majors, and from the proud history of CWRU. To be sure, this is not the entirety of our undergraduate experience: many of our students achieve exhilarating successes in their creative, scholarly, research, and entrepreneurial endeavors.

But, unfortunately, too many of our undergraduates do not feel fully connected to or supported by our institution. Our research points to myriad reasons for this: students' concerns are as individual as they are. In this diversity, however, we see the strongest argument for a more *unified* undergraduate experience: centralization and coordination of

---

[14] By "unproductive stress" we mean to indicate forms of stress that inhibit performance. We recognize that some kinds of stress actually motivate innovation and creativity; such "motivating" stress will always be a part of an academically rigorous institution such as CWRU.

key aspects of the undergraduate experience will reduce unproductive stress; connect curricular requirements to the departments where disciplinary expertise resides; provide students with consistently reliable resources, information, and support; and foster a stronger sense of community and connection to the university.

The unified undergraduate experience we envision will celebrate the strength and diversity of our disciplines and programs, and it will invite all students to explore and connect with the university in more meaningful ways. Our students need to know that we see them holistically and as an integral part of our community. We need to reduce the barriers to their successes, to strengthen our support for their post-college aspirations, and to explain and promote the ways that CWRU is a uniquely powerful launching pad for their futures. Enacting this commitment will involve major changes to administrative structures, curricula, and models for student engagement and support. As a result of these major commitments, however, we should achieve higher student satisfaction, improved retention rates, higher alumni allegiance, and greater demand from prospective students.

Adopting a unified vision for the undergraduate experience at CWRU should benefit the entire campus. The emphasis on guided exploration (see Recommendation 2 below), especially of academic opportunities on and beyond campus, should result in closer connections among all of the schools. Overall, a more engaged and satisfied undergraduate student body should have tangible and intangible benefits for the entire CWRU community, including more revenue (from alumni giving, lowered tuition discount rates, and higher retention), more school spirit to support recruiting and promotion of CWRU programs, and an increased reputation for the university as a whole.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ENHANCING THE UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE

July 2017 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the federation of Western Reserve University and Case Institute of Technology. Even before federation, which created the single institution we now know as Case Western Reserve University, the two strong, neighboring schools had been collaborating productively. In 1963, *Time* named Western Reserve University one of four regional urban universities poised to earn national recognition (the other three were University of Rochester, Tulane University, and Washington University in St. Louis). These "take-off" institutions were praised for their attention to strengthening undergraduate education, their willingness to pool resources with neighboring institutions, and their commitment to serving their communities.[15] In 1967, the Case-Western Reserve Study Commission concluded its final report[16] with a similarly buoyant expectation for the future of our university:

> [W]e have become optimistic about the federated University's chances for success. It is composed of two going concerns. It begins with a wealth of human resources, impressive physical assets, and a fine record of achievement by its components. It is located in the heart of the great University Circle cultural center. It is in a city, which, whatever its temporary discouragements, has a long tradition of civic progressiveness and leadership. It has a broad industrial and business community to look to for support. Beyond all these assets is the need of the time itself. America is aware as never before of the importance of education to improve the quality of the society and to enrich the life of the individual as well as to maintain the nation's material progress. These assets and needs will come together, we are convinced, to make real in Cleveland the vision of a great university that is shared by so many and that has inspired us.

Fifty years later, CWRU must now take additional steps to continue its progress and to realize its promise. **We must act now to ensure that the university functions as a single, coherent undergraduate institution.** As a complex research university, we have developed a culture that isolates excellence and duplicates structures to the detriment of the overall cohesion of our community. Administrative and budgetary structures compound these challenges. **Our task is not simple, but the rewards for success will not be isolated within the undergraduate schools and the college.** All units of CWRU should benefit from the increased vitality and discovery that can be achieved by working together.

Three guiding principles have emerged from the work of the CUE. Each of these – **unity**, **preparation**, and **wellness** – represents both an orientation toward education and a set of practical imperatives that should guide the steps we take now to enhance the educational experience for our current and future students.

---

[15] *Time*. 5/24/1963, Vol 81, Issue 21, p 88. Via Academic Search Complete (May 2016).
[16] "Vision for a New University" (May 1967)

Unity

The guiding principle of *unity* implies a consistent attention to the coherence and cohesion of the undergraduate experience at CWRU. It includes an unequivocal commitment to diversity and inclusion, broadly construed. This means not only representing and respecting myriad categories of identity, but also challenging ourselves to embrace intellectual diversity and inquiry across the range of activities that makes up the university. In a nation starkly divided by ideology, politics, economics, and social circumstance, we have an obligation to provide students with the resources, skills, and dispositions they will need to engage productively with the world that they inherit and to make it a better place. One of the strongest of these resources should be students' CWRU education: an education that allows students to practice and perfect these essential skills in a safe and supportive environment. Focusing on unity amid diversity will also strengthen the bonds among students, faculty, and staff and build an interconnected sense of genuine community.

The guiding principle of *unity* implies:
- Respecting and engaging with difference in ways that strengthen the CWRU community overall
- Promoting intellectual exploration and respect among and between disciplines
- Designing shared curricular experiences and developing common vocabularies for academic engagement
- Realigning administrative and budgetary structures to support a cohesive, connected, and shared undergraduate experience

Preparation

The guiding principle of *preparation* recognizes and capitalizes on the pragmatic streak in our university culture. As a multi-directional concept, preparation focuses attention on transitions: what students need as they arrive on campus, what they need to navigate the university while they are here, and how they will construct plans for moving on after graduation. The principle of preparation acknowledges the need to think beyond the years needed to complete an undergraduate degree, including attending to the time (and the various kinds of preparation) that precedes students' joining our community. It expects us to prepare students not narrowly for a single job or advanced degree post-graduation, but broadly for a life lived in concert with their individual values and interests. Our goal should not simply be helping our students achieve graduation or employment; rather, it should be fostering a rigorous and sustained questioning of how the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind embedded in our diverse disciplines will shape our students' futures.

The guiding principle of *preparation* implies:
- Designing intentional programs to support student transitions into and beyond the university
- Developing a culture of inquiry that gives students the confidence to learn beyond the classroom and beyond the years of their undergraduate degree programs

- Integrating post-college planning into curricular and co-curricular activities
- Strengthening and using our alumni networks to enhance the undergraduate experience

Wellness

The guiding principle of *wellness* attends to the "whole student," understanding that educational opportunities are not isolated, but experienced within the context of full and complex lives. This principle focuses attention on quality of life, both the "life of the mind" and the "life of the body." Evidence from medicine, social science, and education research points to the importance of adequate sleep, stress reduction, exercise, good nutrition, and access to social support for optimum cognitive performance and emotional health. Simply put: healthy students learn and achieve more (so do healthy faculty, staff, administrators, and alumni). The principle of wellness encourages students, faculty, and staff to attend to their own health and to that of their communities.

The guiding principle of *wellness* implies:
- Adopting a holistic approach to education that includes curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities
- Facilitating academic, co-curricular, extracurricular, and life choices aligned with personal values and goals
- Reducing unproductive stress and anxiety
- Encouraging practices of self-care and supporting work/life balance

In the next sections of this report, we articulate in broad strokes the primary recommendations of the CUE, focusing on how each will enhance the undergraduate experience. A set of appendices provides additional details in the form of draft proposals for discussion and deliberation among appropriate stakeholders.

We encourage readers to review the full body of this report before turning to the appendices. Our recommendations are not designed to stand alone; each depends upon and will certainly be strengthened by the implementation of the others.

CREATING A UNIFIED UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE: MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

CWRU students consistently report more outside of class academic work, higher unproductive stress levels, and less unstructured time than their peers at other universities. In focus groups, students reveal that homework is often experienced as "busy work" rather than as central to their learning. Our campus culture seems to validate students' choices to pursue multiple course overloads, to over-extend themselves in their extracurricular activities, and to feel guilty for spending time frivolously.

Without compromising our academic strengths or the intellectual rigor of our programs, CWRU must find ways to change its culture of over-work. To accomplish this, we offer six primary recommendations that will increase the coherence and cohesion of our undergraduate experience, focus attention on wellness and work/life balance, and develop pathways into and through the university that respect students' backgrounds and future aspirations.

Together, these recommendations create structures that will support a coherent, cohesive, and unified undergraduate institution, one that offers students increased flexibility, intellectual diversity, and community development. These recommendations are the foundation for the future of CWRU.

Recommendation 1: Adopt a single University General Education Requirement

To simplify the curriculum and to support the CUE's "Goals for the Undergraduate Experience," (see Appendix B) **we recommend that CWRU adopt a single University General Education Requirement (UGER), which is intended to apply to all students, regardless of their degree program.** The UGER is consistent with our "single door" admissions policy, which grants students admission to the university and not to a specific School or the College. Although some institutions, usually those larger than CWRU, choose to admit students directly to specialized schools (e.g., of engineering or management), doing so at CWRU is both antithetical to our guiding principle of *unity* and very likely damaging to our ability to counter negative perceptions about our non-STEM disciplines.[17] Further, the goals of general education represent the university's shared commitments to academic inquiry, intellectual diversity, and the discovery and creation of knowledge.

A single UGER simplifies the curriculum for students by ensuring that all courses taken to fulfill general education outcomes will be counted towards graduation in the same

---

[17] Our institutional strategy study found that CWRU cannot currently position itself as a traditionally "comprehensive university." In the consultants' decision modeling analysis, there was no benefit (i.e., in increased applications or matriculations) if students perceived CWRU to be a comprehensive university (strong in all fields of study). The consultants' analysis of our prospective students and of the educational market in which CWRU competes suggests to us that admitting students to separate schools could result in smaller, less academically qualified cohorts of students and/or an increase in the tuition discount rate required to attract the best students (i.e., even less tuition revenue for educational programming).

categories, regardless of a student's eventual degree program. This should foster a stronger sense of intellectual community among our students, and it makes a statement about what it means to be a graduate of CWRU. In addition, the UGER would establish governance structures that respect disciplinary authority and enhance cross-school communication about student learning.

We recommend a framework that includes academic credit in five core areas:

- Student-driven exploration, i.e., the Explore curriculum (see Recommendation 2)
- Intellectual diversity
- Communication and critical thinking skills
- Wellness
- Capstone experience

General oversight, periodic review, and resolution of concerns about the UGER should rest with the Faculty Senate, through its Committee on Undergraduate Education (FSCUE) and/or processes involving its new/existing sub-committees. Day-to-day administration of component parts of the UGER should involve the departments/programs that contain appropriate disciplinary expertise: these departments/programs should be given appropriate representation and authority within the Faculty Senate's oversight mechanisms.

See Appendix D, "University General Education Requirement – Draft Proposal," for more information.

Recommendation 2: Implement Explore Curriculum

Some students arrive on campus with a specific and strongly-held idea of their academic pathway; others are less decided on a route through the university. For both kinds of students, spending time in their first year exploring the options and opportunities afforded by CWRU is essential to their long-term success. For those who enter with a firm sense of their preferred major, CWRU should provide experiences that allow them to test their assumptions and explore the realities of their chosen discipline(s). For those who enter the university with an open mind about their future major, CWRU should provide experiences that encourage broad discovery and programs that fit students' talents and interests.

We recommend the development of a unique collaboration between academic departments and university programs to provide a year-long Explore curriculum for all first-year students. This curriculum should invite students to discover and deepen their understanding of what different forms of disciplinary knowledge can reveal about the world. Students, with guidance and administrative support (see Recommendation 4), could choose from a variety of activities sponsored by departments and by academic and co-curricular programs. We see this as an opportunity for these units (and/or collaborative entities such as the Baker-Nord Center for the Humanities or the Great Lakes Energy

Institute) to showcase the opportunities they offer, but we also see this as a structure that will encourage more seamless integration of existing and new university programming into the first-year experience (e.g., SOURCE research information sessions, additional dialogue and diversity activities, student leadership activities, planning for international activities).

Over the course of the first academic year, students should explore the university through these activities and design a personalized Undergraduate Experience Plan that will help them imagine their CWRU experience holistically, identifying degree programs and activities that will meet their individual goals and aspirations.

See Appendix E, "Explore Curriculum – Draft Proposal," for more information.

Recommendation 3: Build Traditions to Celebrate our Unique Institutional Identity

Students have told us, in focus groups and on national surveys, that they do not have many "rallying points" in the academic year that draw them together and help them feel a strong sense of community on campus. While there are social events that attempt to serve this purpose, we recommend that the entire campus community devote time at the beginning and end of the academic year to celebrate what makes us strong: our university community and our research, scholarship, and creative activities.

We recommend dedicating time – early in the fall semester and late in the spring semester – to activities designed to recognize and celebrate the achievements of our undergraduates. We want to formalize opportunities for the CWRU community to pause together and reflect on what our undergraduates have achieved and to look forward to what they will accomplish in the future. Our initial suggestion is that we suspend undergraduate classes twice in the academic year to help build this tradition of reflection and community recognition. For example:

- **CWRU Day** – At the beginning of each academic year, this day represents a chance to celebrate the CWRU community and to make connections to the larger communities in which we all participate. This day encourages students, faculty, and staff to serve on campus and in the surrounding Cleveland community through collaborative projects and activities. It should end with a celebration of the CWRU community (e.g., a picnic or festival) that reaffirms our appreciation for the diversity of our community's experiences, backgrounds, and talents.

- **Capstone Day** – As the culmination of every undergraduate's academic experience, the capstone represents a major achievement. And, though individual departments and programs are already celebrating these projects, the campus as a whole does not come together to recognize them. We therefore recommend designating a day (which may be at the end of a week of celebration and presentation) to recognize, officially and collectively, our undergraduates' capstone projects.

These two celebrations are inspired by already successful activities on campus – Case for Community Day and Research ShowCASE – that have grown organically over the last several years. We recommend the suspension of undergraduate classes for such events to establish them as traditions recognizing our university values of community engagement and intellectual achievement.

See Appendix F, "CWRU Traditions – Draft Proposal," for more information.

Recommendation 4: Assemble Collaborative Advising Teams

Over the last two decades, we have received consistent feedback that our advising models have not met students' needs. Therefore, to support students in their increasingly complex and interconnected lives, **we recommend assembling a dynamic Advising Team that combines flexibility and breadth of expertise with consistent and holistic support for each student.** Each student's Advising Team should be facilitated by an Undergraduate Experience Coordinator, who will coordinate the multiple forms of expertise to be found on campus, while preserving students' access to appropriate academic advisors for their major(s)/minor(s). The model we propose will help students, faculty, and staff develop a stronger connection to the CWRU community; it should significantly improve retention and student satisfaction; and it will ensure that students explore the resources and opportunities afforded by CWRU.

In this model, each CWRU student will be supported by a collaborative team, anchored by:

- **One (or more) Academic Advisor(s)**, who will develop a strong, mentoring relationship with their students, providing guidance about disciplinary and professional opportunities. An Academic Advisor(s) could be assigned based on intended major and/or at the point of major/minor declaration, as determined by each school/program.

- **An Undergraduate Experience Coordinator (UEC)**, who will work closely with each student, helping them navigate the many opportunities and services available at the university. Every student will have UEC support throughout their undergraduate career, beginning when the student accepts our offer of admission and continuing through the development of an individualized Undergraduate Experience Plan, the selection of appropriate co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities, and the connection of academic and post-college planning processes.

A UEC will serve as the "team captain" for each student's Advising Team, forming relationships with designated personnel in other support offices and programs (e.g., financial aid, educational services, career development, personal librarians) and collaborating with the student's Academic Advisor(s).

This coordinated approach must be supported by a robust and secure system of information sharing, ensuring that students are receiving consistent and reliable advice and providing feedback about the undergraduate experience to the programs, departments, and university offices that can respond. Equally important, information sharing among Advising Team members will create a more effective and efficient approach to supporting students.

See Appendix G, "CWRU Advising Team – Draft Proposal," for more information.

Recommendation 5: Conduct a Robust Curricular Review to Increase Flexibility

The academic stress that students experience at CWRU often arises from heavily prescribed curricula. The lack of flexibility in many majors sometimes leads students to choose excessive credit-hour overloads in order to pursue other interests or to take additional courses in specialized areas of their majors. A review of 2016 graduates of CWRU reveals that about 60% completed more than one academic plan, where *plan* is defined as a major or a minor. More than half of those students (35% of the total graduates) had two or more plans that crossed broad disciplinary areas (i.e., arts & humanities, social sciences, math & science, management, engineering, nursing). These figures validate a commonly-held belief about CWRU undergraduates, namely that a significant number have wide-ranging interests, talents, and ambitions.

We wish to support students' diverse interests, while maintaining the richness and depth of our academic programs. This means carefully balancing degree requirements and advising practices so that students are able to realize their multi-disciplinary goals, while also discouraging practices of "over-credentialing" (i.e., pursuing multiple majors and minors to the detriment of students' deep engagement with a primary field of study).

Students must enter the job market with the knowledge and skills expected of graduates who have majored in a particular field, and they must be well prepared to sit for licensing and other exams in relevant fields. At the same time, however, it should be possible to maintain CWRU's academic rigor while also giving students greater flexibility in their choice of courses within and outside their majors. While this flexibility is fundamental to a liberal education and is already available in the Bachelor of Arts and many Bachelor of Science degree programs, we recognize that for the professional schools this flexibility may be very difficult to achieve. Nevertheless, to address the concerns highlighted in this report, we believe curricular flexibility is essential to enhancing the undergraduate experience at CWRU.

At a minimum, CWRU undergraduates should have the ability to complete the UGER + a Major + an unrelated Minor without exceeding 128 credit-hours (averaging 16 credit-hours per semester for 8 semesters). This is not meant to imply that all students should complete a minor, nor that a minor related to a student's major should be prohibited. Rather, it is meant to limit the overall number of required credits so as to

preserve a *minimum* amount of flexibility for students to pursue additional areas of interest, whether or not these additional courses add up to a minor or other credential.

We recommend that the Schools and the College initiate a robust curricular review at the departmental/programmatic level to revisit and update learning objectives and to identify ways in which these objectives can be met efficiently and with greater flexibility for students. We see this recommendation as an opportunity to provide greater space in the academic program for our students to define their own academic paths, including: the exploration of a variety of subjects, the pursuit of a minor or additional major, or the election of additional coursework within a chosen field of study.

In some areas, this curricular review may lead to the removal of required courses that have been in place for a long time, but are no longer central to an undergraduate education in the field. In others, this may mean identifying multiple course options or course sequences to meet specific learning objectives. The undergraduate schools and the college may also consider whether their "core"[18] requirements might be pared backed or even eliminated to provide greater flexibility at the major level.

The comprehensive review of the undergraduate curriculum should ensure that CWRU courses optimally serve the needs of students; that our degree programs are up-to-date and attractive to students and faculty; and that our programs prepare students to meet the challenges of the future, most of which are unknown today.

See Appendix H, "Curricular Review – Draft Proposal," for more information.

Recommendation 6: Foster a Thriving Campus Community

The undergraduate experience at CWRU is complex: we have high achieving students, world-renowned faculty, exceptional staff, and a vibrant and diverse alumni and affiliated community. We are privileged to be one of the nation's top research institutions. And yet, as this report details, we have challenges to overcome. Primary among these challenges is the need to foster a stronger, more positive campus ethos, which includes an engaged social environment, a strong sense of connection to the university, a variety of extracurricular opportunities, and a diverse and inclusive community.

The five recommendations outlined above are essential steps toward improving our campus ethos. As a package, these recommendations connect advising, general education, and post-college planning in ways that will guide students through their undergraduate experience and give them space to explore and enjoy their campus. Additionally, our recommendations outline structures and strategies to foster collaboration and communication among faculty, staff, and administrators. We must move forward deliberately and efficiently in these major areas.

---

[18] We have used the term "core" here intentionally to establish a vocabulary that differentiates School/College-specific requirements, if they are to continue, from the proposed UGER.

What we do *after* making these changes, however, is likely to make the biggest tangible difference to the quality of life of our undergraduates. If we successfully create more space for reflection, engagement, and balance, but then allow ourselves to fill that space with new requirements, overlapping programming, or competitive stress, we will have wasted this significant opportunity.

The Division of Student Affairs will convene a series of student focus groups this fall to continue the discussion of our most vexed questions:

- How/when do CWRU students feel connected and supported on campus?
- How might we foster a strong and unified CWRU identity?
- What factors contribute to the sense of ever-increasing stress/workload?
- What actions/individuals/programs/geographies promote a positive sense of community on campus?

We invite other groups to ask and answer these same questions, and to share with us their answers. We will incorporate the insights from these discussions into our final report this spring.

See Appendix M, "Campus Culture and Environment – Summary of Feedback," for more information.

SUPPORTING A UNIFIED UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE

Our major recommendations move CWRU toward a more centralized and coherent set of practices around advising and general education. These are necessary steps to begin to change the campus ethos; they will, however, require administrative changes to support them. The recommendations contained in this section of the report attempt to highlight the administrative challenges we see and to indicate several important opportunities for improvement.

Administrative and Budgetary Structures

The history and the administrative/budgetary structures of CWRU both reinforce a decentralized, sometimes fragmented community ethos. Throughout our work, we have consistently heard that university structures act as barriers to educational innovation and especially to collaboration across units and to coordination of the overall undergraduate experience. We note that reporting structures and administrative offices are not aligned in such a way as to make clear *who* (or what group beyond the Provost himself) has a "big picture" sense of the entire undergraduate experience. For example, when discussing recent developments in predictive analytics software and other data-mining efforts, it was unclear to us who or what office would be responsible for the use of such a tool or for acting on any resulting insights. We noted, too, that such systems require much more data infrastructure and institutional research personnel than we currently have in place.

We urge the President and Provost to renew their focus on the undergraduate experience by revisiting structures (budgetary and administrative) to make them more effective.

We recommend an unambiguous reporting structure that either vests a single individual with responsibility for the *overall* undergraduate experience, or establishes another structure to ensure consistent attention to *all aspects* of the undergraduate experience. This individual/structure must have the information necessary to make decisions about administrative/co-curricular programs and the authority to bring academic/curricular matters to the appropriate faculty governance structures.

Campus Geography and Internal Communication

Geography matters on a university campus. Many universities have a "one-stop" location for student services, and the co-location of these offices both reduces the burden on students who need multiple offices and also provides more opportunities for collaboration and coordination of services. We note that many of our undergraduate-serving offices are located in/near Sears on the south side of campus, but that our admissions office resides at the other end of campus (on Bellflower Road); our experiential learning and research offices are split between central and south campus; and our offices serving women, LGBTQ,

international, and minority students are scattered across campus. Last academic year, students suggested to the Faculty Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education's Student Life Sub-Committee that undergraduates found the lack of a central location for student services challenging. They pointed out that some departments are split (e.g., University Health and Counseling Services) and that others are simply not located in highly visible areas (e.g., Career Center).

The question of visibility raises a parallel concern about the lack of clear, consistent, and coordinated messaging about the undergraduate experience. From each of the CUE's Thinking Groups, and in many other settings, we heard numerous calls for sharing information, improving communication, and providing consistent (and positive) messaging about campus activities. Among the suggestions that were raised by multiple audiences and on multiple occasions are:

- **Unified Campus Calendar** – Compile all of our academic, student organization and university-wide events into one, easy to check location. This would involve moving the *Daily* calendar, the OrgSync calendar, and the Launchpad calendar to one common place.

- **Common University App –** Incorporate the unified calendar from above, SIS, Canvas, campus security (Shield), SafeRide, Greenie schedules, athletic event schedules, and possibly the *Observer* into one downloadable smartphone app.[19]

Finally, the physical buildings on campus tell an important story about institutional values. A recent marketing consultation report describes "the diminished state of the buildings housing the humanities and social sciences."[20] The report continues, "the sensory cues are totally off brand for CWRU, representing a brand disconnect when considered against the numerous dynamic and engaging touch points that occur during the course of the entire campus tour." The report urges upgrading the inside of the Mather Quad facilities. We note that a recent substantial interior rehabilitation of Guilford House (home to English, Modern Languages and Literatures, and the Gelfand STEM Center) stopped at the classroom and office thresholds: the building's three classrooms were not included in the project (nor were the restrooms or faculty/departmental offices). We applaud the ongoing renovation projects in humanities, arts, and social science buildings, but urge even more investment to rectify what the consultants describe as a "brand disconnect."

---

[19] The mobile app from Northwestern University provides a model (see: http://www.it.northwestern.edu/mobility/northwesternmobile/). It simply points to the website of the service you are requesting. Even this simply built application streamlines the process of learning about events on campus and quickly finding the resources you need.
[20] The Lawlor Group, July 31, 2017.

Institutional Identity

CWRU's reputation as a "science and engineering school" is certainly a recognition of the strength of those programs, but to attract and retain an intellectually diverse and strong student body, we must address the perception that our other disciplines (especially the arts, humanities, and social sciences) are not equally strong. This perception is frustrating, especially in light of the accomplishments of so many of our faculty in these very disciplines, including but certainly not limited to: 24 Fulbright Scholars, 9 Guggenheim Fellowship holders, 11 American Council of Learned Societies Fellows, a MacArthur Fellow, and a Pulitzer Prize winner.[21]

Some (but certainly not all, or even most) of this complex perception problem could be ameliorated with more balanced, consistent, and positive messaging. On CWRU's "About" web page ("CWRU At a Glance"), the university describes itself with brief statistics (number of students, national ranking, etc.) and with a series of links to each of our schools and the college.[22] In contrast, some of our AAU peers include a longer list of "brags" (Carnegie Mellon University's term) on their landing pages, including brief highlights about various aspects of their universities. For example: Emory University's "Highlights" includes the Emory Center for Ethics and the university's Manuscript, Archive, and Rare Book Library.[23] Washington University in St. Louis's "Facts" page highlights the Edison Theater, the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, and initiatives in Global Leadership.[24] Carnegie Mellon University's "About" page has a rotating banner entitled "Little Brags about Big Ideas," including highlights such as a Tony Award-winning play and the first email "smiley," i.e., the string of characters :-)[25] While CWRU can compete with (and often best) these other institutions in many of these areas, in order to access CWRU's successes, users must navigate several "clicks" away from our landing page(s) and have the knowledge that such programs even exist at our university.

Messaging is important, but other crucial responses to the perception of CWRU as *only* a STEM institution will take careful consideration and significant investments. For example, strengthening the humanities at CWRU is complicated by the national declines in and negative public perceptions about those fields. In May 2017, the American Academy of Arts & Sciences released its Humanities Indicators, which showed continued declines in humanities bachelor's degrees nationally. In 2015, "the [humanities'] market share among all bachelor's degree recipients sank below 12% for the first time since a complete accounting of humanities degree completions became possible in 1987."[26] At the same time, the number and share of Associate's degrees in the humanities (primarily in the liberal arts and liberal studies) has continued to increase. Such national figures suggest that programs that enable students to build on AA degrees to achieve BA degrees in the humanities – as the Cleveland Humanities Collaborative (a collaboration between the

[21] For more faculty honors, see: https://case.edu/ir/facultyhonors/
[22] See: http://case.edu/about/
[23] See: http://www.emory.edu/home/about/points-pride/academic-excellence.html
[24] See: https://wustl.edu/about/university-facts/
[25] See: http://www.cmu.edu/about/index.html
[26] See: https://humanitiesindicators.org/

College of Arts and Sciences and Cuyahoga Community College) aims to do – could have significant positive results.[27] But, such programs require additional advising, mentoring, and transitional support to ensure that students succeed on campus.[28]

Current national attitudes toward the humanities – that they are at best a place to develop "soft skills" in students whose economic successes lie in STEM fields, or at worst a waste of time and public funding – represent an urgent challenge for liberal education. A worldview that fails to value diversity and inclusion, avoids engaging with the structures and histories of privilege, and demeans deep intellectual engagement at every turn is best combatted by a rigorous education steeped in the liberal arts, most especially in the humanities. As an institution of higher education in 2017, we must accept the challenge of educating our students to become ethical, informed, and courageous citizens of an interconnected and rapidly-changing world.

CWRU's Unique Position among Top Universities

In an effort to better understand our position relative to our peer and aspirational peer institutions, the CUE studied a group of ten private institutions against which CWRU often competes. The following data is meant to be provocative. It highlights the complexity of CWRU's challenges: we are not quite like any of our peer institutions.

Undergraduate Programs at Peer Institutions				
School	**Arts & Sciences**	**Engineering**	**Nursing**	**Management**
University of Chicago	Yes	No	No	Yes
MIT	Yes*	Yes	No	Yes
Duke University	Yes	Yes	No	No
Johns Hopkins University	Yes	Yes	No (graduate only)	No (graduate only)
Northwestern University	Yes	Yes	No	No (graduate only)
Vanderbilt University	Yes	Yes	Yes	No (graduate only)
Washington University in St. Louis	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Emory University	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Carnegie Mellon University	Yes*	Yes	No	Yes
University of Rochester	Yes	Yes	No (has dual degree option)	Yes
Case Western Reserve University	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**

*Although these universities offer undergraduate programs in the arts and sciences, they have divided those fields across more than one school. MIT has a school of Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences and a separate school of Science; Carnegie Mellon has three separate schools of Fine Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences, and Science (CMU also has a school of Computer Science that is separate from its College of Engineering).

---

[27] See: http://chc.case.edu/
[28] See also the Baker-Nord Center's programs for humanities students: http://humanities.case.edu/

CWRU has four undergraduate schools: the College of Arts and Sciences and three professionally-oriented schools (Engineering, Nursing, and Management). Among our peer institutions, none has this particular combination, though some have additional pre-professional programs (e.g., schools of architecture, education, music, etc.).

In 2005, the Carnegie Classifications of Institutions of Higher Education were significantly revised to provide six parallel classifications: Basic (the traditional Carnegie Classification framework), Undergraduate Instructional Program, Graduate Instructional Program, Enrollment Profile, Undergraduate Profile, and Size and Setting.[29] The group of peer institutions against which CWRU often competes varies across a number of the Carnegie classifications, but all of our peers share the foundational Basic classification of "Doctoral Universities: Highest Research Activity." All of our peers also share our "high graduate coexistence" trait in their Undergraduate Instructional Program classification.

There are, however, significant differences between CWRU and our peers in enrollment profile, whether or not the institution has a medical/veterinary school, and the focus on the Undergraduate Instructional Program.

School	Enrollment Profile	Comprehensive Graduate Instructional Program	Undergraduate Instructional Program
University of Chicago	majority graduate	with medical/veterinary	arts & sciences focus
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	majority graduate	no medical/veterinary	balanced arts & sciences/professions
Duke University	majority graduate	with medical/veterinary	arts & sciences plus professions
Northwestern University	majority graduate	with medical/veterinary	arts & sciences plus professions
Johns Hopkins University	**majority graduate**	**with medical/veterinary**	**balanced arts & sciences/professions**
Vanderbilt University	majority undergraduate	with medical/veterinary	arts & sciences focus
Washington University in St. Louis	majority undergraduate	with medical/veterinary	arts & sciences plus professions
Emory University	majority undergraduate	with medical/veterinary	arts & sciences focus
Carnegie Mellon University	majority graduate	no medical/veterinary	balanced arts & sciences/professions
University of Rochester	majority undergraduate	with medical/veterinary	arts & sciences plus professions
Case Western Reserve University	**majority graduate**	**with medical/veterinary**	**balanced arts & sciences/professions**

Source: Carnegie Classifications 2015 update (data drawn from 2013-14)

On the *US News* "Best Colleges" website, each school's profile includes a section on undergraduate academic life. The introductory text for this section offers four key statistics: undergraduate enrollment, student-faculty ratio, classes enrolling under 20 students, and average first-year retention rate, which *US News* describes as "an indicator of student satisfaction." On each of these measures, CWRU under-performs compared to the group of peer institutions we studied.

---

[29] See: http://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/

School	*US News* Rank	Undergrad Enrollment	Student-Faculty Ratio	Classes <20 Students	First-Year Retention
University of Chicago	3 (tie)	5,844	5:1	77.6%	99%
MIT	7	4,527	3:1	63.7%	98%
Duke University	8 (tie)	6,639	6:1	73.0%	97%
Johns Hopkins University	10	6,524	8:1	73.0%	97%
Northwestern University	12 (tie)	8,314	7:1	77.3%	97%
Vanderbilt University	15	6,883	8:1	66.2%	97%
Washington University in St. Louis	19	7,504	8:1	63.3%	96%
Emory University	20 (tie)	6,867	8:1	60.6%	95%
Carnegie Mellon University	24 (tie)	6,454	13:1	65.0%	96%
University of Rochester	32 (tie)	6,304	10:1	70.9%	96%
Case Western Reserve University	**37**	**5,121**	**11:1**	**58.9%**	**93%**
Peer Institution Average	**-**	**6,586**	**8:1**	**69.1%**	**97%**

Source: *US News Best Colleges Website (accessed September 2017):* https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges

Fundamental to the quality of the undergraduate experience is the number of engaged faculty members and the availability of strong and exciting courses across all of our disciplines. As on so many other quantitative measures, CWRU's faculty size lags behind that of our peers. Using the five liberal arts departments represented by CUE faculty members (i.e., English, Chemistry, Psychology, Theater, and Economics) as a sample,[30] we queried the Academic Analytics database for 2015 tenure-track faculty in each department.[31] The results remind us that we are relatively smaller at the departmental level than most of our peer institutions.

School	English TT faculty	Chemistry TT faculty	Psychological Sciences TT faculty	Theater TT faculty	Economics TT faculty
University of Chicago	33	31	28	-	29
MIT	-	26	-	12	37
Duke University	26	25	31	2	47
Northwestern University	36	49	35	20	38
Johns Hopkins University	9	20	12	-	20
Vanderbilt University	35	38	26	5	39
Washington University St. Louis	27	24	30	5	24
Emory University	33	24	33	6	26
Carnegie Mellon University	26	27	22	24	45
University of Rochester	20	21	15	-	19
CWRU	**16**	**19**	**17**	**7**	**10**
Peer Institution Average	**27**	**29**	**26**	**11**	**32**

Source: Academic Analytics – 2015 Department Listings (College of Arts and Sciences)

---

[30] We did not include the pre-professional departments (Chemical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Nursing, or Nutrition) whose faculty members also serve on the CUE because we did not have access to those departments' Academic Analytics data at the time of this report's drafting.

[31] Such comparisons are complicated by different institutions' departmental structures. This is a rough comparison using Academic Analytics categories and figures, provided by the College of Arts and Sciences. We recognize that the numbers are not precisely accurate (e.g., the number of faculty listed in Psychological Sciences for CWRU counts both Psychological and Communication Sciences faculty; Washington University in St. Louis has a department of Performing Arts, not Theater; Carnegie Mellon lists a School of Drama, not a Theater department; etc.).

Beyond faculty size, the diversity of our campus is a significant resource for our educational mission. A 2016 study of CWRU students' moral development found that diverse experiences are highly valued by our undergraduates. Students "described the importance of coming to a new and more diverse place, being away from their more homogenous family and community, and being with new people who have new points of view."[32] The university's Diversity Snapshot report helps visualize our current campus diversity, while making clear that we must continue to work to make our community more diverse and inclusive.

	Full-Time Faculty*		Full-Time Staff		Undergraduates	
Total	1,268		2,973		5,125	
Male	771	61%	1,194	40%	2,828	55%
Female	497	39%	1,779	60%	2,324	45%
Minority+	270	21%	881	30%	1,798	35%
Non-Minority	998	79%	2,092	70%	3,354	65%
International	23	2%	247	8%	641	12%
African American	39	3%	554	19%	223	4%
American Indian	2	0%	5	0%	4	0%
Asian	192	15%	232	8%	1,015	20%
Hispanic/Latino	34	3%	72	2%	314	6%
Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	0	0%	1	0%	4	0%
White	973	77%	1,839	62%	2,582	50%
Two or more races	3	0%	17	1%	238	5%
Unknown/not specified	2	0%	6	0%	131	3%

*Board-appointed faculty who are university employees
+US Citizens & permanent residents identified as African American, Native American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Native Hawaiian
Source: Institutional Research Fall 2016 Diversity Snapshot (https://case.edu/ir/cwru-facts/diversity/)

As a means of comparing relative diversity of college campuses, the *US News* Best Colleges website offers a diversity index for schools using a scale from 0 to 1, where scores closer to 1 indicate a more diverse student population. The *US News* index uses the total proportion of minority students, not including international students, and the overall mix of groups on campus.[33] CWRU's diversity index score (0.58) is among the lowest in our peer group. Numbers, however, tell only part of the story, and CWRU's commitment to diversity and inclusion is central to who we are as an institution. While there is always room to do and to learn more, the CUE has heard from a variety of sources and constituencies that CWRU emphasizes both diversity and inclusion and effective dialogue across difference. We recommend building on these foundations not only to recruit and retain more diverse students, faculty, and staff, but also to use our educational programs to celebrate and benefit from the rich diversity of experience our community brings together.

---

[32] See: Jeremy David Bendik-Keymer, Adam T. Perzynski, Janelle Duda-Banwar, and Joshua J. Terchek, "A Qualitative Study of Moral Development of Students at Case Western Reserve University," Nov. 2016
[33] See: https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges/rankings/national-universities/campus-ethnic-diversity

School	*US News* Undergraduate Student Diversity Index
University of Chicago	0.63
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	0.71
Duke University	0.64
Northwestern University	0.63
Johns Hopkins University	0.69
Vanderbilt University	0.59
Washington University St. Louis	0.58
Emory University	0.65
Carnegie Mellon University	0.68
University of Rochester	0.52
Case Western Reserve University	**0.58**

Source: *US News Best Colleges Website (accessed September 2017)*

In January 2017, *The New York Times* reported the results of a study that examined economic opportunities for students at US universities.[34] The article's online, interactive tool provides another way to consider how CWRU compares to its group of peer institutions. **CWRU educates approximately five times as many students who come from the bottom 60% of family incomes as it does students who come from the top 1%.** In contrast, Washington University in Saint Louis educates more than three times as many students from the top 1% as it does the bottom 60%.

School	Top 1% ($630K+)	Bottom 60% (<$65K)	Rank (based on ratio btw income groups)	2015/2016 Endowment*
University of Chicago	10.0%	24.5%	114	$6.6B
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	5.7%	23.4%	173	$13.5B
Duke University	19.2%	16.5%	26	$7.3B
Northwestern University	14.1%	16.8%	50	$7.6B
Johns Hopkins University	11.5%	14.5%	53	$3.3B
Vanderbilt University	22.8%	14.9%	14	$4.1B
Washington University in St. Louis	21.7%	6.1%	1	$6.9B
Emory University	14.9%	27.7%	84	$6.8B
Carnegie Mellon University	7.0%	18.6%	119	$1.3B
University of Rochester	6.4%	22.7%	157	$2.1B
Case Western Reserve University	**4.1%**	**20.5%**	**196**	**$1.8B**
Peer Institution Average	**13.3%**	**18.6%**	**-**	**$5.95B**

Source: *New York Times* "Some College Have More Students from the Top 1 Percent Than the Bottom 60" (18 Jan 2017), available: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/01/18/upshot/some-colleges-have-more-students-from-the-top-1-percent-than-the-bottom-60.html
*Source: *US News Best Colleges Website (accessed September 2017):* https://www.usnews.com/best-colleges

CWRU's recent (2017) decision to meet admitted students' full financial need demonstrates our commitment to recruiting and retaining students from all economic backgrounds. This commitment to educating all students regardless of their financial circumstances, as with our commitment to diversity and inclusion, is woven into the fabric of our institutional

---

[34] See: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/01/18/upshot/some-colleges-have-more-students-from-the-top-1-percent-than-the-bottom-60.html and http://www.equality-of-opportunity.org/

identity. Nothing in this report suggests that we should abandon these commitments; if anything, this report recommends that we do more to support students from all backgrounds in achieving their educational goals. CWRU is not an "elite" institution, if you define that by size of endowment or wealth of students and alumni, but it is an extraordinary one. Our origins in the federation of two strong but very different institutions and our current position, providing both liberal arts and pre-professional education with one consistently high standard of quality, make our project of unifying the undergraduate experience complicated, but ultimately all that much more worthwhile.

The provocative comparisons with our peer institutions presented in this section of the report demonstrate the complexity of a notion such as "institutional identity."As we work to position CWRU in the educational marketplace, and as we move toward the comprehensive side of the STEM-intensive/comprehensive continuum of universities, we must consider carefully how we remain true to our core values and our educational mission.

THE FUTURE OF THE UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE: ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The six major recommendations we have described in this report represent foundational changes to our educational practices. In addition, a variety of other opportunities have surfaced throughout our work. This section highlights four areas that deserve additional attention, especially after our major recommendations have been reviewed, revised, and implemented. We present an overview of these ideas here to highlight the creative and innovative possibilities for the future of CWRU's undergraduate experience.

Throughout our discussions, the CUE has noted a need for additional support for pedagogy, broadly construed. **We recommend university fundraising to support pedagogical innovation, individual and collaborative grant-seeking to support new curricular programming, and the recognition of the scholarship of teaching and learning within tenure and promotion evaluations for faculty.**

In addition, to support students' exploration of the university, to build on our long and proud history of experiential education, and to raise the profile of all of our disciplines, we recommend specific university fundraising to support programs and facilities that allow students to plan, build, create, learn, and grow through hands-on activities.

- **Curricular Pathways within the UGER –** Once the framework of the UGER is put in place, we see great possibilities for designing innovative course clusters for students. One such model involves grouping courses around complex world problems, adding experiential learning and study abroad opportunities to complement the academic work. Other universities have developed similar programs as leadership development institutes or research pathways. Such initiatives invite students to tackle complex problems from multi-disciplinary perspectives.

  See Appendix I, "Complex World Problems and Student-Led Solutions," for more information.

- **Innovation Spaces: Laboratories across the Disciplines** – Among the historical strengths of CWRU (and its previous institutional incarnations) is the institution's long tradition of marrying knowledge-creation with various forms of application. We can imagine ways to build on the Explore curriculum (see Recommendation 2) to engage students in all disciplines in practices of **making and doing**. This might include learning from the successes of the Larry Sears and Sally Zlotnick Sears Think[Box] and the Freedman Center for Digital Scholarship (and other ongoing programs and facilities) to create additional (inter)disciplinary maker spaces. It might also include departmental emphases on making and doing within and alongside the traditional curriculum.

  See Appendix J, "Innovation Spaces: Laboratories across the Disciplines," for more information.

- **Guaranteed Undergraduate Engagement Funds** – increasingly, work experience is expected of college graduates, yet some of the most valuable and formative experiences are to be had in unpaid internships, travel opportunities, or research projects. An endowment that could guarantee every undergraduate at CWRU one-time funding to allow them to pursue an unpaid internship, an international work or volunteer experience, a study abroad opportunity, or a research activity would have an enormous impact on the undergraduate experience.

  See Appendix K, "Undergraduate Engagement Funds," for more information.

- **Expand Opportunities for Pedagogical Development –** A large factor influencing student perceptions of the university is whether or not they like their classes. Unfortunately, CWRU devotes very few resources to helping faculty improve their teaching. Currently, we have only one small and underfunded center to help faculty improve their teaching: UCITE. Quite simply, we need to do more. The CUE's Pedagogy Thinking Group recommends several potential collaborations, including an annual Pedagogy Summit, which would be co-sponsored by UCITE and the UTech's Teaching+Learning Technology team.

  See Appendix L, "Innovative Educational Practices" for more information.

MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS: SUMMARY AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

We began this report with three guiding principles: **unity** (i.e. increasing coherence and cohesion in the undergraduate experience); **preparation** (i.e., providing a continuum of mentoring, from programs that invite students into the university through opportunities that help them move on); and **wellness** (i.e., fostering balance and attention to all aspects of student life). Our major recommendations are focused on reducing unproductive stress and increasing campus community and connection. We summarize these important first steps toward enhancing the overall undergraduate experience in the table below.

Major Recommendation	Summary	Expected Outcomes
UGER (see: p. 19 and Appendix D)	A single set of general education requirements that applies to all undergraduates.	• All students will share intellectual experience related to general education goals. • General education curriculum will be simplified and standardized. • Faculty governance will increase communication about student learning.
Explore Curriculum (see: p. 20 and Appendix E)	First-year guided exploration activities, culminating in an individualized Undergraduate Experience Plan.	• First-year students will explore a variety of disciplines and make informed educational choices. • Students' Undergraduate Experience Plans will provide coherence to undergraduate advising and mentoring.
CWRU Traditions (see: p. 21 and Appendix F)	Establish CWRU Day + Capstone Day as opportunities to reflect on and celebrate our undergraduate experience as a unified community.	• Campus community will be strengthened. • Undergraduate achievements will be celebrated and presented to a wider audience. • Academic year will be "book-ended" by meaningful traditions that celebrate our institutional values.
Advising Team (see: p. 22 and Appendix G)	Academic Advisor + Undergraduate Experience Coordinator collaborate to support students throughout their undergraduate experience.	• All students will have equal access to key resources, opportunities, and information. • Work/life balance and wellness will be supported consistently. • Intentional support for student transitions (to CWRU and beyond graduation) will be provided.
Curricular Review (see: p. 23 and Appendix H)	Departments/programs/schools review & revise curriculum to increase flexibility, to design exploration activities, and to integrate post-college planning.	• Students will have more flexibility in their required coursework. • Departments and programs will intentionally integrate curricular and co-curricular activities (e.g., experiential learning and post-college planning) that are aligned with disciplinary goals.
Campus Community (see: p. 24 and Appendix M)	Study factors related to campus community, student connection, and institutional identity.	• All CWRU community members will develop stronger connections with the university.

University Outcomes

As we implement these recommendations and continue to address concerns about campus ethos, we expect to see positive results, including the following:

- Students will be more successful at CWRU and after graduation
- Students will feel more connected to (and supported by) CWRU
- More students will have the overall experience that our best and most successful students currently have
- More students will recommend CWRU to peers
- CWRU will be more appealing to future students
- Student retention and graduation rates will improve
- Revenue to university and schools will go up

Beyond these specific measures of our success, we believe that our recommendations create the structures and processes necessary for future innovation. For example: the administrative restructuring necessary to create collaborative Advising Teams will improve internal communication about the overall undergraduate experience; the curricular oversight of a single UGER will facilitate cross-school conversations about student learning; and the structure of the UGER will support future initiatives that may offer unique opportunities for student research, community engagement, and collaborative problem-solving.

The changes we recommend in these pages are not trivial. They will require our sustained attention and creativity as we seek to value and to leverage the diversity of our people, our perspectives, our knowledge, and our talents. If we implement these changes, however, we will transform CWRU by creating an environment that is not only academically and intellectually rigorous, but that is also engaged, connected, and fun.

APPENDICES

The following appendices provide additional information about the CUE, more detailed draft proposals for each of our major recommendations, and additional materials related to our work.

Appendix A: CUE Membership

Appendix B: Goals for the Undergraduate Experience

Appendix C: CUE Thinking Groups

Appendix D: University General Education Requirement – Draft Proposal

Appendix E: Explore Curriculum – Draft Proposal

Appendix F: CWRU Traditions – Draft Proposal

Appendix G: CWRU Advising Team – Draft Proposal

Appendix H: Curricular Review – Draft Proposal

Appendix I: Complex World Problems and Student-Led Solutions

Appendix J: Innovation Spaces: Laboratories across the Disciplines

Appendix K: Undergraduate Engagement Funds

Appendix L: Innovative Educational Practices

Appendix M: Campus Culture and Environment – Summary of Feedback

APPENDIX A: MEMBERSHIP OF THE CUE

Kimberly Emmons
CUE Chair and Associate Professor of English

Hope Barkoukis
Associate Professor and Interim Chair of Nutrition

Amy Bieda
Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing

Richard Bischoff
Vice President for Enrollment Management

Robin Dubin
Professor and Chair of Economics

Donald Feke
Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Professor of Chemical Engineering

David Fleshler (2016)
Vice Provost of International Affairs

Daniel Lacks
C. Benson Branch Professor and Chair of Chemical Engineering

Prince Ghosh (2016-2018)
Undergraduate, Class of 2019

Frank Merat
Emeritus Associate Professor, Electrical Engineering & Computer Science

Susan Nickel-Schindewolf (2016)
Associate Vice President for Student Affairs

Garretson Oester (2017-2018)
Undergraduate, Class of 2018

Jerrold Scott
Katharine Bakeless Nason Professor and Chair of Theater

Lou Stark (2017-2018)
Vice President for Student Affairs

Lee Thompson
Professor of Psychological Sciences

Blanton Tolbert
Associate Professor of Chemistry

Nishant Uppal (2016-2017)
Undergraduate, Class of 2017

Molly Watkins (2017-2018)
Executive Director of International Affairs

Jeffrey Wolcowitz
Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Adjunct Professor of Economics

Victoria Wright
Associate Vice President for University Planning and Administration

APPENDIX B: GOALS FOR THE UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE

CWRU undergraduates will gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to address currently unimagined challenges with intellectual rigor, creativity, and integrity. They will achieve distinction as intellectual, professional, and community leaders in a world defined by rapid change and increasing interdependence. They will learn, live, and thrive in an environment that values and promotes both unity and wellness.

Our undergraduate experience will be designed to celebrate CWRU's comprehensive academic offerings, to collaborate meaningfully with the institutions and communities that the campus encompasses, and to enable deeply-engaged and goal-oriented students to connect their academic and co-curricular interests with their long-term ambitions.

As a campus community, we will hold ourselves responsible for challenging each other intellectually and for supporting the free and lively exchange of ideas. We will continue to commit ourselves to diversity and inclusion in their broadest definitions and to promote academic and intellectual freedom within an environment of mutual respect and tolerance. We will design our undergraduate experience to encourage students to examine questions from multiple perspectives, to acquire and apply knowledge in a variety of settings, and to engage responsibly with a wide range of ideas.

CWRU graduates will have the disposition and the tools to learn, to grow, to thrive, and to make the world better. They will be prepared not only for their future careers, but also for leadership roles as engaged citizens of local, national, and international communities. As alumni, they will enrich the university as mentors, advocates, and exemplars of the value of a CWRU education.

To meet these goals, CWRU will offer curricular and co-curricular initiatives that foster:

- **Broad academic engagement**, which includes familiarity with the questions, methods, and knowledge generated within diverse disciplines;
- **Cultural awareness**, which includes understanding the contexts, structures, and values of local, national, and global societies;
- **Critical thinking**, which includes the ability to discover, analyze, and evaluate information presented in a variety of forms (e.g., numerical, rhetorical, visual, textual, and historical information);
- **Problem-solving**, which includes the ability to combine and apply knowledge from a range of disciplines, to engage responsibly with the contexts that define the problem, and to design and advocate for innovative solutions;
- **Effective communication,** which is responsive to varied contexts and diverse audiences and which includes facility with multiple modes (e.g., oral, written, visual, digital, and/or multi-modal);
- **Self-knowledge,** which includes an understanding of the implications of personal values and ways of reasoning, sustained attention to emotional health and physical well-being, and personal integrity and accountability;
- **Collaboration,** which includes the ability to work effectively and ethically with individuals who possess different expertise, experiences, and viewpoints; and,
- **Disciplinary inquiry,** which includes developing field-specific knowledge and skills.

APPENDIX C: CUE THINKING GROUPS

The Provost's Commission on the Undergraduate Experience (CUE) formed Thinking Groups to perform focused studies and provide recommendations in areas perceived to be critical to advancing CWRU's undergraduate experience. Members for each group were selected by the Provost with input from the Deans. These groups began work in January 2017 and reported their recommendations to the CUE in May 2017. The CUE used these reports to develop the major recommendations contained in this report. The original Thinking Group reports may be viewed online here. (Please note: access to the Thinking Group reports is restricted to those with CWRU network credentials. If the hyperlink above does not work, you may also access the document via the web address: http://casfaculty.case.edu/kimberly-emmons/cue).

The **Campus Culture & Environment Thinking Group** was charged with identifying strengths and making recommendations to address weaknesses and exploit opportunities in the current campus culture and community environment. This group considered questions of inclusion and diversity, campus climate, student workload and time commitments, wellness, and school spirit.

Membership:

Hope Barkoukis, Co-Chair	Edwin Mayes
Tim Beal, Co-Chair	Amanda McCarthy
Amy Backus	Jennifer McCarthy
Colleen Barker-Williamson	Beth McGee
Jeff Capadona	Megan Miller
Janice Gerda	Garretson Oester
Brian Gray	John Protasiewicz
Caroline Gray	Mohan Sankaran
Teona Griggs	David Schiraldi
Christopher Jones	Ashley Schuett
Kathryn Lavelle	Lilly Tesfai

The Pedagogy Thinking Group was charged with identifying best practices for delivering undergraduate education, focusing in particular on innovative educational practices that are congruent with the University's goals and aspirations.

Membership:

Irena Kenneley, Co-Chair	Tracey Messer
Blanton Tolbert, Co-Chair	Chris Mihos
Timothy Black	Karen Potter
Evren Cavusoglu	Kurt Rhoads
Chris Flint	Sree Sreenath

The **Experiential Learning Thinking Group** was charged with assessing the current status and making proposals for the future of experiential learning activities at CWRU, as those activities support the University's goals and aspirations. This group will consider the wide variety of experiential learning activities our students pursue (for example: research & creative activity, service learning, community engagement, international experiences, co-ops, internships & practicum experiences).

Membership:

Jennifer Johnson, Co-Chair	Sheila Pedigo
Jerrold Scott, Co-Chair	Drew Poppleton
Rebbeca Benard	Andrew Rollins
Malcolm Cooke	Catherine Scallen
Nancy Dilulio	Peter Shulman
Robert Greene	Molly Watkins
Divya Manocharan	Gary Wnek
Timothy Nicholas	Elizabeth Zimmerman

The **Undergraduate Advising & Mentoring Thinking Group** was charged with using available assessment data about the current status of advising/mentoring on campus and making proposals for the future of undergraduate advising at CWRU, as it should be configured to meet the University's goals and aspirations. This includes examining the structures and practices of academic advising, career and post-college planning, and other forms of mentoring/advising of undergraduate students (with consideration of the numbers of students in particular programs).

Membership:

Kathleen Horvath, Co-Chair	Jim Hurley
Frank Merat, Co-Chair	Michael Mason
Marc Bouchet	Tom Matthews
Donna Davis Reddix	William Oldham
Debbie Fatica	Maryjo Prince-Paul
Don Feke	Roger Quinn
Roger French	John Ruhl
Alberto Gonzalez	Robert Spadoni
Brian Gran	

The **GER Thinking Group** was charged with assessing how well the current undergraduate curriculum meets the University's goals and aspirations. This group focused primarily on the current General Education Requirements (GERs) of the University and those portions of the disciplinary curricula that are meant to provide breadth within the undergraduate experience.

Membership:

Marc Buchner, Co-Chair	Evanne Juratovac
Lee Thompson, Co-Chair	Peter Knox
Hari Baskaran	David Rothenberg
Karen Beckwith	Beverly Saylor
Jennifer Carter	Tiffany Welch

In addition to these Thinking Groups, the CUE established a Google Discussion List, the **CUE Undergraduate Advisory Group**, to increase student involvement with the activities of the CUE. Email invitations to join the Google Discussion List were sent to all students who expressed interest in joining one or more CUE Thinking Groups, and to those students who had been recommended to the CUE by their peers, CWRU faculty and staff. In spring 2017, this list had thirty-six members.

APPENDIX D: UNIVERSITY GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS – DRAFT PROPOSAL

This proposal is guided by the need to invest in disciplinary (departmental) invigoration and to seed new configurations and possibilities for the undergraduate experience at CWRU. We see this proposal as an essential first step toward these goals: it outlines a basic and common framework for the CWRU undergraduate educational experience. That said, many of its details will benefit from additional discussion and review by the faculty and departments with disciplinary expertise in each of the component parts. The following proposal draws heavily on (and in many cases reproduces exactly) the CUE's General Education Thinking Group's report of May 2017.[1]

General Education: Background and Purpose

For more than a century, university education has been characterized by a binary system of broadly based studies across a range of disciplines (i.e., a general education curriculum) and concentration in depth in one field of study (i.e., the academic major). The underlying principles of this system have not changed, even as each of this country's hundreds of colleges and universities has grappled with the problems of periodically adapting their general education programs to changing conditions.

The situation of general education at CWRU is more complicated than it is at many peer and aspirant institutions, where students matriculate in one school or college within the university and thus follow the general education program specific to it. At CWRU, we admit students to the University, not a specific school or college, and we allow them to declare any undergraduate major without the requirement of an additional application for admission. There is no broad sentiment in favor of altering this model. Further, the consensus of the CUE, supported by data from the Art and Sciences Group, LLC and additional studies, is that a deeper sense of community within the student body is an important component of student satisfaction. This suggests strongly that there be an even greater degree of commonality across degree programs in the general education courses that students must complete.

In thinking about this question, we returned to the larger question of what are the goals of a general education curriculum. People offer different answers to this question, but some of the common overlapping themes are:

- To ensure that we graduate students with strong foundational skills
- To foster a culture of creativity, curiosity, and respect for truth
- To prepare students for meaningful careers aligned with their personal aspirations and goals, not only their first jobs but also later career steps, perhaps into jobs that we cannot yet imagine

---

[1] For more information about this and other CUE Thinking Groups, including a link to the May 2017 final reports, please see Appendix C.

- To foster a culture that respects the diversity of talents and perspectives in an increasingly global community
- To prepare students for their lives beyond the workplace as citizens, members of a community, and individuals
- To develop in students the confidence to learn in the future what they need to know as professionals and citizens in a changing world

As we continued to think about these goals for general education, we came to recognize that in many ways they stand apart from the majors and are common across degree programs. **This leads us to recommend that CWRU adopt a University General Education Requirement (UGER) for all undergraduates, one that goes beyond the current goals of the SAGES program to include also common breadth requirements that ensure intellectual diversity in each student's academic program.**

In addition to the intellectual argument for commonality in our general education program, having a UGER will also provide two additional benefits. The first is that it will help foster a stronger sense of intellectual community among our undergraduates. Our students will be able to speak a shared language about their academic programs and the University will be making a statement about what it means to be a graduate of CWRU. The second is simplicity. A unified set of general education requirements is easy to explain to prospective students and their families. It also would lower the barrier to changing majors and degree programs as students gain knowledge about various academic fields and about themselves. Students (and their families and advisors) are often confused when they learn that courses that satisfy requirements in one degree program do not satisfy seemingly-similar requirements in another, and they conclude that these requirements are arbitrary and unfair.

Outline of the University General Education Requirement

To achieve the stated goals, we recommend the following components of a new University General Education Requirement (UGER). This UGER provides a structure by which students will explore the opportunities available to them at the University, develop strong analytic and communication skills across a variety of disciplines, and participate in an environment characterized by intellectual curiosity, creativity, and wellness.

Explore (1 credit)

We seek to create a common experience for all students that will introduce them to the intellectual environment of university life in general and more specifically to the rich intellectual environment they will engage in at CWRU. As they join our community, students should be encouraged to explore and begin to chart their own path across the CWRU landscape. All first-year students should be required to complete a 1-credit-hour Explore course (spread across the first academic year) that introduces them to the wide

range of available educational opportunities at CWRU, in the University Circle area, and throughout Cleveland. (See proposal in Appendix E)

We recommend continuing to block first-year students' schedules during the current SAGES "fourth hour" time slot (i.e., MWF 12:45-2:00) to allow for multiple offerings of Explore activities throughout the week.

Intellectual Diversity (12 credits)

The principle underlying every successful general education program is to enable students to acquire a broad understanding of an array of common spheres of intellectual inquiry. The definition of those common spheres is constantly changing, but the underlying principle, which at CWRU and elsewhere has been called "breadth," remains constant. In order to reflect the much wider scope of the joint culture that our students will share with others—global as opposed to provincial, etc.—we call this category "intellectual diversity."

Having students stretch beyond their majors is central to an effective and meaningful university education (as opposed to a specialized technical/professional education). However, the current educational climate favors specialization: students are expected to know their intended majors early and to take an ever-growing number of required and technical courses in order to succeed. Our own students feel that their workload makes it impossible to engage in much disciplinary exploration, and the national social/political climate has targeted a traditional liberal arts education as a frivolous expense.

We know, however, that a student with a college education that has included breadth in disciplines (as well as the ability to think critically and write on a variety of topics) will likely have a far more successful career over time than those with a narrow, purely technical education. In 2013, the *Harvard Review* described new efforts by Asian universities to develop liberal arts educational practices in response to the experiences of their graduates, many of whom became excellent programmers, but who, nevertheless, could not move into management because they lacked non-technical skills. "The world is complicated," the article concludes, "and while liberal arts education has been under assault as an 'unnecessary luxury,' we know that the problems of today and tomorrow will not be solved by pure technical and vocational thinking."[2] Similarly, James Plummer (the John M. Fluke Professor of Electrical Engineering at Stanford University) advocates for "broadening engineering education to include more liberal arts exposure and more life skills, with the aim of preparing future engineers for unpredictable careers."[3]

---

[2] Lewis, Pericles. "Asia Invests in Liberal Arts: US Higher Education Expands Abroad." *Harvard* Review. 35(1): Summer 2013.

[3] Perry, Tekla S. "The Engineers of the Future Will Not Resemble the Engineers of the Past." *IEEE Spectrum* (May 30, 2017). Available: https://spectrum.ieee.org/view-from-the-valley/at-work/education/the-engineers-of-the-future-will-not-resemble-the-engineers-of-the-past

In a similar vein, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences warns that: "At the very moment when China and some European nations are seeking to replicate our [the U.S.] model of broad education in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences—as a stimulus to innovation and a source of social cohesion—we [the U.S.] are instead narrowing our focus and abandoning our sense of what education has been and should continue to be—our sense of what makes America great."[4] Indeed, the national and global political environment in 2017 makes the project of engaged, inclusive, and ethical education all the more urgent.

We believe that intellectual diversity is essential for all students, regardless of their major or program. By exploring multiple disciplinary ways of knowing, students strengthen their abilities to think critically and to respond flexibly to the unforeseen challenges they will face. CWRU must, therefore, guard against becoming a purely technical/professional institute.[5] At the same time, we would be foolish not to capitalize on the strengths of all of our professional and technical programs. True intellectual diversity requires students to experience multiple disciplinary habits of mind; it encourages students (and faculty) to develop multifaceted responses to complex situations. Intellectual diversity should not be viewed merely instrumentally, as adding "soft skills" to professional programs or giving humanists "technological literacy," though both are desirable ancillary outcomes. Rather, intellectual diversity should be embraced as an opportunity to foster collaboration, inclusivity, and creative problem-solving.

The academic departments of the university can be divided into three broad areas: the natural sciences, mathematics, engineering, and technology (SME), humanities and arts (HUM), and social sciences (SSC). Within these areas (and even within each department), rich disciplinary diversity exists, and we believe that the Intellectual Diversity requirement should describe general education priorities within the three broad areas of the university.

To that end, we define six sub-categories of intellectual engagement – not necessarily congruent with departmental designations – to which we think students should be exposed in their undergraduate experience.

- **Sciences, Mathematics, Engineering, and Technology (SME)**

    - **Science, Mathematics, Engineering, and Technology**: Courses in this category will focus on basic understanding of the scientific method and the application of scientific and mathematical knowledge for practical purposes.

    - **Natural Environment:** Courses in this category will focus on developing an understanding of the scientific processes at work in the natural world and external processes affecting it.

---

[4] Commission on the Humanities and Social Sciences, 2013.
[5] Research conducted by the Art & Science Group, LLC (2016) affirms that there would be no benefit, and indeed there would likely be a net revenue drop, from investing solely in STEM and pre-professional education at CWRU.

- **Humanities and Arts (HUM)**

  - **Literature and the Arts**: Courses in this area focus on critical interpretation, analysis, and production of creative works of literature, visual and performing arts.

  - **Historical Contexts:** These courses have a focus that may be either diachronic or synchronic on the events of human history in all its aspects.

- **Social Sciences (SSC)**

  - **Social and Economic Systems**: These courses will focus on the functioning of human institutions and the relationships of individuals within them.

  - **Citizenship and Democracy**: Courses in this category will focus on the political institutions, governmental processes, and the values and responsibilities of citizens.

Specific learning objectives and guidelines for each sub-category will need to be drafted by appropriate faculty committees as part of implementation (see below), but we recommend that **courses offered to fulfill the intellectual diversity requirement should be departmentally based and should be limited in number.** In other words, all such courses should be departmental courses (i.e., not First or Second Seminars, see below). Further, having a departmental course designation (e.g., ENGL) should not automatically confer Intellectual Diversity credit (e.g., HUM, sub-category 1). Neither should courses in a department be considered only within the two sub-categories of that department's broad university division. Thus, the definitional work of the faculty implementation committees will be essential to clarifying and maintaining the intellectual integrity of this requirement.

Such courses should be easily accessible for all students regardless of disciplinary major, i.e., requiring no pre-requisite courses. Intellectual diversity courses may also serve other purposes, e.g. counting toward majors and minors, at the discretion of the appropriate department(s).

All students should be required to take one course (of 3 credits or more) from each of the sub-categories under each major area. By virtue of completing a major in one of the three broad areas (i.e., SME, HUM, or SSC), students will be deemed to have fulfilled the Intellectual Diversity requirement for that area (whether or not they have taken courses specifically designated in each of the two sub-categories). Therefore, the Intellectual Diversity Requirement comprises four (3 credit) courses, two from each broad area (1 course from each sub-area) that is outside of the student's primary major.

Note: the GER Thinking Group recommended that students be required to take two courses from each broad area outside of their major, but did not specify that those courses must

represent both sub-categories of each broad area. We understand this to be a compromise position to allow students more flexibility with their Intellectual Diversity coursework (i.e., to allow students to complete minors more efficiently). Some of the CUE members agree that this flexibility is more important than requiring students to take courses in each of the defined sub-categories; others argue that the diversity of modes of inquiry represented by the sub-categories should not be combined/rolled-up into the broader disciplinary areas. We encourage additional discussion on this point, and look to the implementation committees (described below) to provide a sustainable resolution.

Communication & Critical Thinking (9 credits)

In addition to promoting intellectual diversity, the UGER should include coursework designed to foster communication and critical thinking skills. We recommend that such courses be based in academic departments, but that there be consistent and shared learning outcomes and assessment practices.

The framework we outline here differs from the recommendation of the CUE's GER Thinking Group by identifying three separate categories of coursework related to communication and critical thinking (the GER Thinking Group identified only two). To provide the most engaging, unified, and intellectually rich experience for students, we recommend:

- **First Seminar (3 credits)** – dynamic topical seminars designed to foster academic inquiry, respect for diversity and inclusion, ethical deliberation, and intellectual community.

- **Second Seminar (3 credits)** – topical courses designed to develop fundamental academic (research-based writing and oral presentation) skills.

- **Writing-Intensive Courses (3 credits)** – departmental courses that include a substantial writing requirement. These courses may include genre- or discipline-specific writing/communication instruction.

First Seminar (3 credits): All first-year students should enroll in a First Seminar in their fall semester. First Seminar should be capped at no more than 18 students,[6] and should focus primarily on academic inquiry, critical thinking, respect for diversity, and ethical deliberation. The expectation is that the seminar format will prepare students through **active discussion** for engagement in a global and culturally diverse world that is

---

[6] Writing Studies scholarship has long recommended writing courses be capped no higher than 20 students. Recent recommendations have lowered that number to 15, based on the faculty time and one-on-one attention needed to provide robust and individualized instruction. See, for example: Alice Horning, "The Definitive Article on Class Size." *WPA* (Fall/Winter 2007). Available: https://www.classsizematters.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/31n1-2horning.pdf and the CCCC Position Statement of Principles for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing: http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/postsecondarywriting.

increasingly interconnected and interdependent. These educational objectives will be addressed within a topical context as is currently done with First Seminar courses. In the same sense, these courses will be required to meet common criteria addressing these objectives.

First Seminars are an extremely important component of the proposed UGER – partly because of their unique location in the curriculum, but also because of the significance of their educational objectives. As a result, our sense is that these courses should be taught by highly motivated and highly qualified teachers who are based in an academic department and who may be found among tenure-track faculty, non-tenure track faculty, instructors, post-doctoral teaching fellows, and/or advanced graduate students. Our best tenure-track and tenured teaching faculty should be encouraged to participate and share their knowledge and expertise with incoming first-year students in these courses.

First Seminars should be supported by supplemental resources, including the Writing Resource Center and other teaching workshops for faculty. In some cases, additional writing instructors (i.e., consulting or collaborating with First Seminar faculty) and/or writing "studio" courses (i.e., supplemental, linked writing courses) may be necessary to support student writers. A faculty committee, including members of the current Writing Program, should establish guidelines on the amount of reading and writing required as well as clear learning outcomes for program assessment purposes and to ensure consistency across the courses. In addition, faculty with appropriate disciplinary expertise should provide guidance and develop models for writing instruction and support in each of the three communication and critical thinking courses (i.e., First Seminar, Second Seminar, and the Writing-Intensive courses).

To foster a stronger campus community, First Seminars should be as inclusive as possible, drawing together students from a range of disciplinary and cultural backgrounds. To that end, we recommend that they should include instruction in persuasive speaking and writing as foundational skills. Research-based writing should not be a major focus of First Seminar. Instead, students should be encouraged to use reflective writing and active seminar discussion to develop their own positions on the topic of the seminar. This should allow all students to select from the same list of topical First Seminars. Multilingual writers may also be required to take an additional English for Academic Purposes course in their first semester (i.e., the current FSAE 100, "Academic English").

First Seminars should be designed and offered by departments, so that First Seminar topics do not conflict with other departmental course offerings in a given semester. First Seminars will all have a common structure to their syllabi reflecting common educational objectives, but will clearly differ in terms of content driven by the departmentally chosen topical area of focus. A department will be able to define a First Seminar course framework (perhaps similar to a "topics" course whose specific content shifts from one year to the next) that would then be taught, from year to year, by different individuals and/or with different topics.

First Seminar instructors will not have formal Academic Advising responsibility (as they do in the current SAGES model), but will nevertheless be important contacts for our first-year students. As such, they will serve a mentoring role and help students make connections across campus (see Appendix G).

Second Seminar (3 credits): Developmentally, students are more prepared to improve their *academic* writing skills after the first semester. Therefore, we recommend that the Second Seminar be defined as the course with the most significant writing outcomes expected and the highest level of writing instructional support provided. We recommend this emphasis in the Second Seminar because students will have had time in their First Seminars to experience the level of discourse and intellectual engagement at CWRU and to develop their own positions through discussion and reflective and persuasive writing. Following those formative communication experiences, students will be ready to develop their research-based writing and oral presentation skills.

Second Seminars may include courses specifically designed for multilingual writers and courses emphasizing foundational writing skills and processes. In the SAGES curriculum, these special courses occur at the First Seminar level (FSCC 100 and FSCC 150). We recommend placing these courses at the Second Seminar level to engage with students once they have had the opportunity to encounter CWRU's academic expectations for inquiry, communication, and deliberation in a diverse and inclusive environment in their First Seminar courses.

Second Seminars should devote significant time to writing and communication instruction and should therefore be supported fully by the Writing Resource Center, workshops for instructional faculty, and additional instructional support mechanisms. Models for supporting students and instructors in Second Seminars – and for the support necessary for First Seminar writers and instructors – should be developed by faculty with the appropriate disciplinary expertise.

Second Seminars should be designed by departments (multilingual and foundations seminars will continue to be offered by faculty in English with appropriate expertise and training). These courses will all have a common structure to their syllabi reflecting common educational objectives, but differ in terms of content, as driven by the topical area of focus.

Writing-Intensive Coursework (3 credits): Each student should take 1 additional 3-credit-hour course with a substantial writing component to foster Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), ideally by the end of the 5th semester at CWRU. There is overwhelming consensus about the importance of instruction in communication skills for all CWRU students. At the same time there is considerable concern that instruction in writing and other forms of communication should take place in the context of disciplinary content that addresses the students' academic goals. The courses that fulfill this requirement should be taught by faculty members within the academic departments of CWRU's schools and the college. To be qualified for this requirement, courses must include a prescribed amount of writing and communication, as approved by a designated faculty committee (i.e., a Writing

Program Committee that reports to FSCUE). The university must also commit to supporting writing through appropriate resources available through the Writing Resource Center.

These courses should be structured so that at least one-third of the class time (i.e., equivalent to at least 1 credit out of a 3 credit course) is devoted to providing instruction in support of the oral and written communication outcomes of the course. As writing research has shown, writing instruction is best accomplished in courses with fewer than 20 students. We therefore recommend that Writing-Intensive courses with larger enrollments make arrangements for smaller group meetings. For example, breakout sessions of 15 students (optimally) to no larger than 20 students, led by an instructor (or teaching assistant). Thus, this requirement may be realized through courses that are enrollment limited to 15 (or 20) students or, in larger courses, wherein substantial opportunities for interpersonal engagement (e.g. seminar-type discussion, peer feedback, and evaluation) occur in smaller groups of at most 15-20 students. For example, a 3-credit course that has a large lecture component corresponding to 2 credits of content and 1 credit devoted to writing instruction and experiences in small groups (no larger than 20) of students may satisfy this requirement.

This course may be used simultaneously to satisfy part of the Intellectual Diversity requirement (see details above) and/or requirements in a major, if the course has also been approved as an Intellectual Diversity elective within one or more of the three areas defined and/or by a major department. We expect that Writing-Intensive courses will be offered throughout the curriculum.

Wellness (1 credit)

CWRU students' undergraduate experience should take place in the context of their overall well-being. We, therefore, recommend that the current Physical Education requirement be changed to a broader Wellness requirement. Students should participate in a wide variety of wellness activities, including skill-based opportunities (e.g., CPR) as well as departmental courses (e.g., Nutrition has proposed offering healthy cooking courses). Opportunities to satisfy this Wellness requirement could include participation in varsity and intramural sports, physical activities that currently exist in the department of Physical Education and Athletics, specifically designated courses (e.g., Nutrition), and special seminars and campus-related initiatives. The scope of course and "activity" offerings should be expanded to include wellness topics such as resilience, stress management, nutrition, healthy lifestyles, and disease prevention.

To convey to students that CWRU fosters their wellbeing and that their participation in these activities is taken seriously, students should be required to earn 1 credit before graduation, by accumulating the equivalent of two semesters' participation in appropriate courses/activities.

Senior Capstone (3-6 credits)

Every major should offer a capstone experience, though the capstone experience may be an elective course within the major rather than a specific requirement. All students should be required to complete a culminating capstone experience within their chosen major, unless other arrangements are made in consultation with the student's major department(s). We see great potential in allowing interdisciplinary and team-based capstone projects, but recommend that department faculty provide oversight and structure for such initiatives. Completion of this requirement will also be a requirement for graduation. Students electing to complete two majors that each require a capstone must complete both, unless other arrangements are approved by both departments.

The Capstone project should, as it currently does, require both a substantial written component and a public presentation.

In order to celebrate the culminating experiences of our students, we recommend that the University set aside one day at the end of each Academic Year when undergraduate classes will be suspended so that students may showcase their projects - a common undergraduate "Capstone Day" (see Appendix F).

Student (Writing) Portfolio

Since 2009, the SAGES Writing Portfolio has served as the primary mode of assessing student learning outcomes related to writing instruction on campus.[7] We recommend that a student portfolio remain part of the UGER, including samples of writing from each of the writing and communication courses, ideally uploaded at the time of their submission in the original courses. We further recommend that the portfolio include the Undergraduate Experience Plan (part of the Explore requirement above) and the written portion of the senior Capstone project. Such an expanded portfolio could make use of e-portfolio software that could serve both the internal (CWRU assessment) and external (student professional portfolio for career searching) needs.[8]

UGER Administration & Governance

The ongoing success of any new general education curriculum will require a deep sense of commitment and ownership by the academic departments and a strong framework for faculty governance of the program. Recognizing the expertise of each department in its discipline, **we recommend that all courses to satisfy components of the UGER be closely aligned with individual departments.** Specially approved and designated departmental courses should satisfy the Intellectual Diversity, Writing-Intensive

---

[7] For previous Writing Portfolio reports, see: http://writing.case.edu/documents/sages-portfolio-reports/
[8] See the CCCC Position Statement, "Positions and Practices in Electronic Portfolios" (rev. 2015): http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/electronicportfolios

coursework, and Wellness requirements, while still bearing their departmental designations.

While First Seminars and Second Seminars should be offered by and credited to departments, these courses should be designated as FSEM and SSEM – i.e., without a departmental designation – in order to encourage student exploration, to foster multi-disciplinary content, to increase the sense of a common student experience, and to facilitate the administration of these common courses.

To implement a new UGER, we will need to establish specific learning objectives for each component and guidelines for approving the inclusion of courses (and, in the case of Wellness, non-course activities) on a list of ways by which a student will be able to satisfy the requirement. We will then need an ongoing process to approve additions to the list, conduct outcome assessment, do periodic maintenance of the list, and recommend modifications to the specific component of the UGER. While the courses to meet specific requirements will be based in departments, we expect that the list of courses approved to meet a requirement may come from a variety of departments, and that an individual department may propose courses for inclusion on different course lists. Therefore, departments will not be the appropriate oversight mechanism.

We recommend that general oversight, periodic review, and resolution of concerns about any part of the University General Education Requirement should rest with the Faculty Senate, through its Committee on Undergraduate Education (FSCUE).

We further recommend that there be a University General Education Subcommittee of FSCUE to carry out the routine part of this work. The subcommittee should be co-chaired by the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and the Dean of Undergraduate Studies, and made up of faculty who themselves each chair a group of faculty with appropriate academic expertise responsible for a particular component of the UGER. The University General Education Subcommittee will play a coordinating role across the several curricular groups, establish common procedures for course approval and outcome assessment, review proposed changes to the learning objectives and guidelines for each UGER area, ensure that students have a reasonable selection of UGER courses to choose from each semester,[9] and monitor budgetary and other resource implications of the UGER.

This governance structure is aimed at balancing respect for disciplinary expertise, consideration of the overall impact of the UGER on the undergraduate experience, and the experience of students in each degree program. It will be essential that the terms of appointment of faculty allow for stability and representation in the committee's membership to ensure consistency over time across the curriculum in the decisions made.

---

[9] For example, nursing students in particular have an extremely rigid schedule which will only become more restrictive and complicated when they move to the new Health Education Campus in 2019.

Initial implementation committees should be formed, reporting to FSCUE, including:

- Writing & Communication Committee
    - Develop learning outcomes for FSEM, SSEM, and Writing-Intensive courses
    - Develop processes for approving courses satisfying the Writing & Communication requirement
    - Recommend transfer and advance placement policies, as appropriate
    - Coordinate with Explore Committee the Student Portfolio
- Intellectual Diversity Committee: SME
    - Develop learning outcomes for courses meant to satisfy the Science, Mathematics, Engineering, and Technology category.
    - Recommend transfer and advanced placement policies for UGER credit, as appropriate
    - Create guidelines for proposals for courses satisfying this requirement, including any limits/restrictions on the number of courses that will satisfy this requirement
- Intellectual Diversity Committee: HUM
    - Develop learning outcomes for courses meant to satisfy the Humanities & Arts category.
    - Recommend transfer and advanced placement policies for UGER credit, as appropriate
    - Create guidelines for proposals for courses satisfying this requirement, including any limits/restrictions on the number of courses that will satisfy this requirement
- Intellectual Diversity Committee: SSC
    - Develop learning outcomes for courses meant to satisfy the Social Sciences category.
    - Recommend transfer and advanced placement policies for UGER credit, as appropriate
    - Create guidelines for proposals for courses satisfying this requirement, including any limits/restrictions on the number of courses that will satisfy this requirement
- Explore Committee
    - Create Explore Coordinator job description
    - Coordinate with the Writing Committee on the Student Portfolio
    - Develop guidelines for departments offering Explore activities
    - Recommend structure and timing for common activities in Explore 101 (i.e., Convocation, Dean's Lectures, or other activities)
- Wellness Committee
    - Recommend guidelines for courses and activities fulfilling this requirement
    - Consult on the most efficient means of granting credit for fulfillment of this requirement
- Capstone Committee
    - Consult with departments about the feasibility and resources needed to ensure that all majors can offer a capstone experience
    - Make recommendations about implementation of this requirement

Faculty who currently hold term-limited appointments (i.e., SAGES fellows, lecturers, adjuncts, etc.) have been an important part of the teaching staff of SAGES; they have made significant contributions to undergraduate instruction at CWRU. The UGER described here will require more faculty resources than currently exist among the regular faculty in the undergraduate schools and the college (i.e., faculty members with continuing appointments at the ranks of Instructor, Senior Instructor, or Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor). Further, the framework outlined here will require additional teaching faculty positions to be situated within the departments (i.e., to offer both departmentally-designed writing and communication courses and regular departmental courses).

As an important part of the implementation of the UGER, **we recommend, in the strongest terms possible, that the school/college Deans, working with the Provost, should develop a plan that provides an ethical transition for those who have been employed in SAGES and that defines future faculty positions that will be necessary to sustain the UGER.**

CWRU General Education Requirements – Comparisons

The following tables illustrate the evolution of general education requirements at CWRU, 2000-2017.

General Education: Student Exploration

Pre-SAGES (Bulletin, 2000-02)	Current (Bulletin, 2016-17)	UGER (Proposed)
--	SAGES First Seminar "Fourth Hour" (1cr)	Explore (1 cr)
--	**1 credit**	**1 credit**

General Education: Intellectual Diversity (formerly, Breadth)
College of Arts & Sciences

	Pre-SAGES (Bulletin, 2000-02)	Current (Bulletin, 2016-17)	UGER (Proposed)
Arts & Humanities	12 cr	6-8 cr	Intellectual Diversity (12 cr): 6 cr in each of the two breadth areas outside of primary major
Social Sciences	9 cr	6 cr	
Natural & Mathematical Sciences	12 cr (Natural & Mathematical Sciences)	6-8 cr	
Quantitative Reasoning		3-4 cr (can also fulfill other major, minor, breadth req)	--
Global/Cultural Diversity	3 cr	3-4 cr (can also fulfill other major, minor, breadth req)	--
Total Credits	**36 credits**	**24-30 credits (12-16 unique*)**	**12 credits**

*Note: in the current CAS GER, two courses (6-8 cr) used to fulfill breadth requirements may also count toward major; the Quantitative Reasoning and Global/Cultural Diversity requirements may also be used to satisfy other breadth requirements and/or Major/Minor requirements. In the proposed UGER, Intellectual Diversity coursework is required in the two broad areas *outside* of the major and therefore cannot be "double-counted."

General Education: Intellectual Diversity (formerly, Breadth)
School of Engineering

	Pre-SAGES (Bulletin, 2000-02)	Current (Bulletin, 2016-17)	UGER (Proposed)
Humanities & Social Sciences	21 cr, including one sequence of 9 cr; and at least 6 cr each in Art/Hum & SS	15 cr (including ENGL 398/ENGR 398; SASS and BETH courses also fulfill this requirement)	Intellectual Diversity (12 cr): 6 cr in each of the two breadth areas outside of primary major – for CSE majors, 6 cr HUM & 6 cr SSC
Natural & Mathematical Sciences	Designated by dep. (3 cr)	Designated by dep. (3 cr)	
Math, Science & Engineering Core	Math 14 cr; CHEM 4 cr; PHYS 8 cr; Engineering 18 cr (44cr)	29 (Data Science), 33 (Computer Science) or 44 cr (all others)	--
Total Credits	**24 credits + Core (44) = 68 credits**	**18 (15 unique*) + Core (29-44 cr) = 47-62 credits**	**12 credits**

*Note: In the current GER, ENGL398/ENGR 398 counts toward the 15 Humanities/Social Science credits, and it also counted as the SAGES Department Seminar (counted under the Writing & Communication requirement above).

General Education: Intellectual Diversity (formerly, Breadth)
Weatherhead School of Management

	Pre-SAGES (Bulletin, 2000-02)	Current (Bulletin, 2016-17)	UGER (Proposed)
Arts & Humanities	9 (Acct) – 12 (Mgt) cr	6-8 cr	Intellectual Diversity (12 cr): 6 cr in each of the two breadth areas outside of primary major
Social Sciences	12 (Acct) – 9 (Mgt) cr	12 cr	
Natural & Mathematical Sciences	17 (Acct) -20 (Mgt) cr	14-16 cr	
Global/Cultural Diversity	3 cr	--	--
Total Credits	**41 (Acct) – 44 (Mgt)**	**32-36 credits**	**12 credits**

General Education: Intellectual Diversity (formerly, Breadth)
School of Nursing

	Pre-SAGES (Bulletin, 2000-02)	Current (Bulletin, 2016-17)	UGER (Proposed)
Arts & Humanities	12 cr	6-8 cr	Intellectual Diversity (12 cr): 6 cr in each of the two breadth areas outside of primary major
Social Sciences	6 cr	6 cr	
Natural & Mathematical Sciences	17 cr	18 cr	
Global/Cultural Diversity	3 cr	--	--
Total Credits	**38 credits**	**30-32 credits**	**12 credits**

General Education: Writing & Communication

Pre-SAGES (Bulletin, 2000-02)	Current (Bulletin, 2016-17)	UGER (Proposed)
ENGL 150 (3 cr) or AP (4 or 5)	SAGES FSEM (4 cr) SAGES USEM x2 (6 cr) Writing Portfolio Dept. Seminar (3 cr)	FSEM (3 cr) SSEM (3 cr) Writing-Intensive (Dept.) Course (3 cr) Student (Writing) Portfolio
3 credits	**13 credits**	**9 credits**

Comparing SAGES to the UGER's Writing Requirement

	SAGES (Current) 16-19 credits	UGER (Proposed) 13-16 credits
First year	First Seminar (4 cr)	Explore 100 (1 cr) First Seminar (3 cr)
Second year	University Seminar (3 cr)	WRIT 200 (3 cr)
	University Seminar (3 cr)	--
Third year	Department Seminar (3 cr)	Writing-Intensive Course (3 cr)
Fourth year	Capstone (3-6 cr)	Capstone (3-6 cr)
Portfolio	Writing Portfolio: Submitted @ end of FSEM + 2 USEM; Reviewed annually by Faculty Committee for Writing Program assessment purposes	Portfolio: Undergraduate Experience Plan, initiated in Explore and maintained online; samples of academic writing including capstone; final submission at end of academic career (to allow for inclusion of capstone project); reviewed by faculty on a cycle appropriate for program/curricular review

General Education: Wellness

Pre-SAGES (Bulletin, 2000-02)	Current (Bulletin, 2016-17)	UGER (Proposed)
2 Sem PHED (0 cr)	2 Sem PHED (0 cr)	2 Sem Wellness (1 cr)
0 credits	**0 credits**	**1 credit**

General Education: Capstone Project

Pre-SAGES (Bulletin, 2000-02)	Current (Bulletin, 2016-17)	UGER (Proposed)
--	Capstone (3-6 cr) – *may be satisfied outside of major*	Capstone (3-6 cr) – *must be satisfied within major*
--	**3-6 credits**	**3-6 credits**

APPENDIX E: EXPLORE CURRICULUM – DRAFT PROPOSAL

Research-intensive universities such as CWRU are dynamic, complicated, and, for most entering undergraduates, mystifying organizations. Students coming from traditional high schools (as most of our undergraduates do) may not be familiar with the differences between anthropology and sociology, or what separates chemical engineering from the study of chemistry (let alone understanding the disciplinary distinctions between chemical biology and biochemistry). Remembering what it was like *not to know* these things should help us design programs and activities that capitalize on the excitement of discovery. We see exploration and discovery as fundamental building blocks for an undergraduate education, and we see an urgent need to provide consistent and sustained support for students' explorations of CWRU, its surrounding communities, and their own interests.

We propose the creation of a common experience for all first-year students that will introduce them to the intellectual environment of university life in general and more specifically to the rich variety of research and scholarship that they will encounter at CWRU. As they join our community, students should be encouraged to explore and begin to chart their own path across the CWRU landscape. **All first-year students should be required to complete a yearlong Explore curriculum, equivalent to 1 academic credit.**

Over the course of their first year, students will encounter the university through a series of planned (departmentally-sponsored) activities, as well as through serendipitous discoveries, and design their own individualized Undergraduate Experience Plan, which will serve as the primary means of coordination among their Advising Team (see Appendix G). The Undergraduate Experience Plan is intended to be a living document, revised as often as is necessary and useful for each the student. It should include reflective prompts to help in the evaluation of curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities; it is not intended to encourage premature major declarations, but rather to encourage students to design their overall undergraduate experience intentionally and in a manner congruent with their personal values and goals.

Because both exploration of CWRU and an Undergraduate Experience Plan will benefit transfer students as well as first-year students, we recommend that transfer students be required to complete portions of the Explore curriculum, including the Undergraduate Experience Plan, in their first semester on campus.

Objectives: Discovery & Design

The first objective of Explore is **discovery;** the second objective is **design**. Students will participate in introductory activities to discover and deepen their understanding of what different forms of disciplinary knowledge reveal about the world. Then, students will design their own Undergraduate Experience Plan. This plan is meant not as a contract but

rather as an opportunity for students to imagine and plan for the steps necessary to achieve their academic, co-curricular, extracurricular, wellness, and post-college goals.

Learning Objectives

By the end of Explore, students will be able to:
- Describe the content and modes of inquiry of various CWRU academic departments.
- Adapt and apply appropriate academic strategies to their learning experiences.
- Identify and use appropriate campus resources and opportunities that contribute to their learning within and beyond the classroom.
- Develop positive relationships with peers, staff, and faculty.
- Clarify their values and identity and articulate how these shape their perspectives and relationships with people who are similar to and different from themselves.
- Initiate a process toward the attainment of personal and professional goals and articulate potential pathways to employability.
- Examine and develop strategies that promote wellbeing and explain how wellness impacts their academic and personal success.

Requirements & Time Commitment

As a 1-credit-hour course, students will be expected to devote 2-3 hours a week throughout their first academic year to Explore, including both time spent in particular activities and time spent planning and reflecting on their experiences. (Transfer students might be required to spend 3-4 hours per week for their first semester, rather than spreading Explore throughout their first year.)

Roughly one-quarter of the time might be devoted to material and experiences in common with all sections of Explore, for example:
- Attendance at the summer common book events, including the book author's lecture at convocation
- A lecture by a faculty member from each of the four undergraduate schools and colleges, perhaps designated as the "Dean's Lecture," intended to highlight the academic opportunities on campus.
- Attendance at the Choices Fair

The remaining time should be spent meeting requirements unique to each student. At the beginning of the semester, students should select these activities in consultation with their Undergraduate Experience Coordinator (see Appendix G).

The following are illustrative examples of activities and requirements students could choose include in their individual plans:
- Each undergraduate school/college and/or programs within them would design events to introduce first-year students to the opportunities within the disciplines.

- For students interested in civic engagement, opportunities to get involved would be provided.
- Career planning resources and activities would be available.
- Study abroad resources and activities would be available.

The size of the first year class and the large number of these meetings will require that many offerings be given in parallel; but, they should be structured in a manner (and given multiple times) to maximize the likelihood that each student will be able to attend sessions of their choosing.

To that end, we recommend continuing to block first-year students' schedules during the current SAGES "fourth hour" time slot (i.e., MWF 12:45-2:00) to allow for multiple offerings of Explore activities throughout the week.

Evaluation

Explore should be graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) basis, to be submitted by the student's Undergraduate Experience Coordinator (UEC), Academic Advisor, or a faculty member in charge of (sections of) Explore. Attendance at activities could be recorded by an electronic attendance mechanism (e.g., card swipe) and/or having students complete short, automatically graded, quizzes in Canvas. Students might earn an "S" grade if they attended a minimum number of activities (including the required/common events), met regularly with their UEC and Academic Advisor(s), and completed their Undergraduate Experience Plan.

Implementation of Explore Curriculum

An implementation committee (see Appendix D) should make recommendations for structure, staffing, evaluation, and coordinating Explore activities.

The development and execution of Explore will require staff support to monitor enrollments and coordinate offerings. Departments/programs would be responsible for developing and delivering the content (programming), in consultation with an Explore Coordinator (staff).

Two systems will need to be created/maintained to support the Explore curriculum: a scheduling tool that will allow students to select/register for specific events (and that would track attendance), and an electronic portfolio platform that would facilitate the student's Undergraduate Experience Plan (see the Portfolio recommendation in Appendix D).

APPENDIX F: CWRU TRADITIONS – DRAFT PROPOSAL

We propose that CWRU suspend undergraduate classes twice each academic year (once per semester) in order to provide alternative activities that create space for reflection and community engagement.

- **Fall Semester: CWRU Day** – building on the already successful Case for Community Day, this day celebrates both CWRU's connection to its local community (i.e., with service projects in the Cleveland metropolitan area) and to its campus-wide community. Students, faculty, and staff could complete service/community projects (between 10 am and 4pm), and then the campus would celebrate together with a picnic or BBQ, perhaps planned and organized by the second-year class* (as a welcome to the first-year class). This day should take as its foundation the tenets of the #YouBelongHere movement, and encourage students to work in diverse teams. It could also benefit from collaborations with Greek Life and the various service organizations on and near campus.

- **Spring Semester: Capstone Day** – The capstone experience is the biggest achievement of an undergraduate's academic career, and the public presentation of that project is an important and celebrated milestone. On this day, departments and programs could organize Capstone presentations in formats that are most suited to their discipline(s). Because undergraduate classes would be suspended, first-through third-year students would have ample opportunity to view the projects presented by their graduating classmates; graduating seniors would have the chance to support each other throughout the day (individual presentations would likely be brief, allowing time to attend peers' presentations). The day should culminate in a campus-wide celebration, perhaps planned and organized by the third-year class* (as a farewell to the graduating students).
  - This will require a Capstone Coordinator (or office) to help with logistics and create a master calendar of events for the day (or week).
  - This celebration should be supplemented with a digital preservation platform for the projects, so they can be archived and shared.

*We recommend involving undergraduate class officers and/or class committees in the planning and organization of these activities to increase their commitment to these traditions and to increase cross-class community.

In addition to these important university traditions, the CUE discussed several other opportunities to facilitate reflection, decrease unproductive stress, and build community through various kinds of scheduling adjustments. These ideas deserve further vetting and consideration: a weekly (or monthly) lecture period to promote attendance at the many important (often endowed) lectures offered on campus; a monthly meeting day to facilitate departmental, undergraduate group, and other meetings; and providing a "long weekend" every month of the academic year (MIT does this by adding a few "student holidays" in each semester).

APPENDIX G: CWRU ADVISING TEAM – DRAFT PROPOSAL

While the 2016 CWRU Student Experiences Survey indicates high levels of student satisfaction with offices such as Undergraduate Studies (92% of students are satisfied or very satisfied), Career Services (85%), and the Center for International Affairs (94%), our students nevertheless consistently report problems with their overall advising experiences at CWRU. For example:

- **15.7%** of respondents disagree or strongly disagree that CWRU advisors provide accurate information (2015 HLC survey); **21.9%** of seniors rated the accuracy of information provided as poor to fair (2012 NSSE).
- **18.5%** of the respondents disagree or strongly disagree that the university works with them to identify an academic program that met their goals (2015 HLC survey).
- **23.0%** of the respondents rated CWRU as poor to fair because they had to go from place to place to get information or approvals (2012 NSSE).
- **21.9%** of respondents rated the availability of advisors as poor to fair (2012 NSSE).

Advising also seems to vary greatly between programs in the same school and even within the same department.

In addition to addressing these concerns, CWRU has the opportunity to envision a more holistic advising system that would connect academic advising with post-college planning and with students' co-curricular and extracurricular lives. Harvard Professor of Education Richard Light reminds us that during a typical week, university students spend the vast majority of their time outside of the classroom. His research with faculty, administrators, and undergraduates across the United States demonstrates that "students who make connections between what goes on inside and outside the classroom report a more satisfying college experience."[1] Light further cautions that universities cannot rely on chance alone to foster these all-important connections. **CWRU must develop coherent pathways to facilitate engaged and connected learning.**

Roles & Responsibilities

There are two primary collaborative roles in the Advising Team: the Academic Advisor(s) and the Undergraduate Experience Coordinator[2] (UEC).

Academic Advisor(s): CWRU has outstanding faculty, who are in the best position to provide students with advice about their disciplines, post-graduation educational programs, and other in-field opportunities. As students determine the paths they wish to pursue, they will be assigned appropriate faculty advisors. At a minimum, this should occur

---

[1] Light, Richard. *Making the Most of College*. Harvard UP, 2001. P. 14
[2] Note: The title "Undergraduate Experience Coordinator" is meant to indicate a broad role in organizing students' overall experiences at CWRU, not to comment on the position title or administrative reporting structure for the individual in the role, both of which should be determined by an implementation committee.

at the point of major/minor declaration (as it does now), but it could also include assignments at the point of *intended* major (e.g., as it currently does for Nursing, Music, and Engineering). **Regardless of eventual major/minor Academic Advisors, we recommend that all first-year students be assigned an Academic Advisor** (i.e., for those schools/programs that do not wish to assign an academic advisor at the point of matriculation, a generalist Academic Advisor should be provided).

Academic Advisors will collaborate with their students' Undergraduate Experience Coordinators (UEC) to ensure that students are receiving advice that supports not only their academic aspirations but also their overall wellness and their post-college plans.

Academic Advisor Responsibilities:
- Assist students in selecting appropriate coursework and activities related to the major/minor
- Advise students on preparing for their capstone projects (as appropriate and as determined by departments)
- Provide students insight and connections into careers possible in the field of study
- Coordinate with the Undergraduate Experience Coordinator

In the current SAGES model, First Seminar instructors serve as students' initial Academic Advisors. In our proposed model, the First Seminar instructor becomes a mentor – still essential as a faculty member leading a small, first-semester, first-year course and therefore likely to have a good sense of their students' progress – but does not assume the official role of Academic Advisor.

Undergraduate Experience Coordinator (UEC): The UEC will work intensively with each student to develop and implement educational, co-curricular, extracurricular, and post-college plans. The UEC will serve as a "team captain," by assembling a cohort of specialists to provide additional support (i.e., financial aid advisors, career counselors, academic support personnel, personal librarians, etc.).

The UEC should be a generalist advisor who knows the student as a whole person, and who can help the student navigate the university and the broader CWRU community. UECs should be assigned to students when they accept an offer of admission, and they should assist in the transition to CWRU and work intensively with students in their first-year Explore curriculum (see Appendix E).

UECs must be familiar with all of the academic programs (at a generalist level), as well as the student services and activities on campus. In addition, UECs should have clear and consistent communication about the overall undergraduate experience, ensuring that insights generated from their work with students reach the appropriate deans and administrators.

UEC Responsibilities:
- Connect with students who have accepted admission before they arrive on campus

- Assist students in completing the Student Checklist times and in developing and verifying their first semester schedule
- Help facilitate (or serve as Instructor of Record for) the Explore curriculum (see Appendix E)
- Serve as a trusted advisor for students
- Facilitate the technical aspects of advising: answering registration questions, providing degree verification, documenting degree progress, and ensuring that advising holds are lifted in a timely manner (in consultation with Academic Advisor(s))
- Provide mentoring and professional success coaching, often connecting students to other resources on campus
- Create frequent opportunities to engage with students to develop a relationship and to do wellness checks
- Engage with parents to assist them in allowing their students to be independent and successful
- Coordinate with the academic advisor(s) and support staff to provide a seamless experience for the students
- Connect students to experiential learning opportunities through existing resources on campus, i.e. research, study abroad, internships, etc.
- Connect students to professional opportunities through the Career Center

Success Communities

A final (and currently evolving) piece of the Advising Team we envision is a series of "Success Communities" that gather together career counselors, alumni, disciplinary experts, and others around common career/post-graduate fields. These Success Communities could become invaluable assets to the Advising Team, connecting with students who share interests in particular fields (e.g., Education, Healthcare, Government, etc.). We see Success Communities as a potential driver of interdisciplinary collaboration: for example, students interested in careers in healthcare might pursue that goal from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds, including bioethics, biology, biomedical engineering, management, medical humanities, psychology, etc. Gathering all such students together – through a Healthcare Success Community's coordinated calendar, information sharing, and career counseling – could facilitate collaboration, innovation, and networking. We encourage additional discussion of these possibilities.

Resources and Staffing

The level of individualized attention suggests that UECs should have no more than 40-60 first-year students. If students remain with the same UEC throughout their four years, each UEC would eventually be working with 160-240 students at all stages of their undergraduate careers. With current undergraduate enrollments of approximately 1250 incoming students each year, this model would require 20-32 UECs.

An alternative staffing model is possible, wherein some UECs "specialize" in working with first-year students and helping those students transition to an "upper class" UEC after they complete of their individualized Undergraduate Experience Plans (and/or after they declare a first major). This would likely require fewer UECs, but loses some of the continuity of advising of the four-year UEC model.

While professional advisors (including many already doing much of this work) will most likely fill the UEC positions, we can imagine opportunities for interested and qualified faculty and staff to take on this role as part of their duties. Such arrangements, if (and only if) they prove appropriate, would have the benefit of increasing communication between academic and administrative departments and student services offices. Such a model would, however, present challenges for the coherence of communication among the UECs as a group, because the faculty/staff "part-time" UECs would have duties and reporting structures that could conflict with their UEC priorities. We encourage further exploration of the possible staffing models, but recommend that all individuals serving in this role should have the expectation of a long-term relationship with the university.

We recommend a committee comprised of appropriate current advising professionals and faculty representatives be formed to consider the best structures and implementation procedures for this Advising Team.

Beyond the human resources necessary to realize this Advising Team, we must invest in an information sharing system that would simplify and coordinate each student's advising activities. For example, to integrate career counseling with the Advising Team, the CUE's Advising and Mentoring Thinking Group recommended Handshake (https://www.joinhandshake.com/). There are a variety of tools available (and more than one system currently in use at CWRU), so we recommend that the committee responsible for defining the final configuration of the CWRU Advising Team also develop a set of requirement for any such program, in consultation with those offices currently managing parallel or overlapping systems.

APPENDIX H: CURRICULAR REVIEW – DRAFT PROPOSAL

The CUE has heard from many sources that CWRU undergraduates experience more unproductive stress and take on more work than their peers at comparable universities. To combat this culture of over-work, the CUE recommends a comprehensive curricular review at the department, program, and school/college level. We especially encourage consideration of the courses that serve as pre-requisites for multiple programs or majors.

The purpose of such a review is to ensure that CWRU courses optimally serve the needs of students (including evaluating appropriate workloads within courses and programs); that our degree programs are up-to-date and attractive to students and faculty; and that our programs are designed to prepare students to meet the challenges of the future, most of which are unknown today.

At a minimum, CWRU undergraduates should have the ability (i.e, the available credits in their degree programs) to complete the UGER + a Major + an unrelated Minor, without exceeding 128 credit hours (i.e., averaging 16 credit hours per semester for 8 semesters). This is not meant to imply that all students should complete a minor, nor that a minor related to a student's major would be somehow prohibited. Rather, it is meant to limit the overall number of required credits (from the combination of the UGER + Major) so as to preserve a minimum amount of flexibility for students to pursue additional areas of interest,[1] whether or not these additional courses add up to a minor or other credential.

We propose that each undergraduate School and the College initiate a curricular review process that is designed to ensure that:

- Degree requirements are up-to-date and modern and prepare student for success beyond college (including integrated post-college planning).

- Students have multiple pathways to complete degree requirements – i.e., programs with significant numbers of pre-requisites should provide alternative "starting points" for students, allowing them to spread large lecture courses, laboratories, or other technical requirements across several years (rather than "frontloading" all such requirements).

- Students at least have the ability (i.e., minimum "elective" space built into their degree programs) to complete an unrelated Minor (15 credits), via a combination of general education coursework and other electives.

- Barriers for timely completion are removed for the cases when students change their career goals during their time at CWRU or come to CWRU with different levels

---

[1] We recognize that for BA and many BS degrees, this minimum flexibility already exists, but that for many of the professional degree programs (especially engineering and nursing) achieving this goal will require significant curricular reconfiguration.

of preparation. Alternate pathways to degree completion should be identified to the fullest extent possible.

- Courses used as foundations for multiple degree programs (e.g., calculus, chemistry) are evaluated to determine if common content can be consolidated or rearranged such that a single first course could lead to multiple differentiated sequences, rather than (as we currently have our curriculum structured) having sequences diverge with the first course, thereby restricting students' ability to change degree programs after they have begun a sequence without essentially losing/repeating credit.

- Course content and delivery is evaluated, with the aim of reducing students' perception of "busywork" and promoting time for intellectual engagement and reflection.

- Course offerings are optimized and regularized, so that students and advisors can predict when required and common elective courses will be offered.

We recommend special attention be paid to first-year students' schedules, such that:

- First-year students should not be required to take more than 4 courses or 15 credits in their first semester of study.

- First-year students should not be required to follow overly burdensome schedules, such as three back-to-back classes of a hundred or more students each. To mitigate these kinds of schedules, departments may be required to offer additional sections of certain course each semester and/or to offer other courses every semester.

Finally, we recommend that departments and programs consider how they can integrate exploration of their discipline and post-college planning into their curricular and co-curricular activities. For example:

- What kinds of activities would best serve the goals of the Explore curriculum (see Appendix E), both for students who enter CWRU intending to major in the field and for students who may not have considered doing so, but would nevertheless benefit from encounters with the knowledge, modes of inquiry, and habits of mind of the discipline?

- How can co-curricular opportunities enhance the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of students in the discipline? What resources are necessary for students to take advantage of these opportunities?

- How can students' post-college planning be integrated into the activities of the department?

APPENDIX I: COMPLEX WORLD PROBLEMS & STUDENT-LED SOLUTIONS

The structure of the proposed UGER lends itself to layering opportunities for unique pathways to completion. During the CUE's discussions, several compelling ideas received general support, but they were seen as needing piloting and further consideration before they could be recommended.

A set of three different ideas were discussed which are all connected under the umbrella of linking classroom learning to the real world (i.e., experiential learning). First, we discussed ways in which students could decide to have a primary major and a second concentration or focused area of expertise to provide additional breadth not immediately available through a specific departmental major or minor. Second, several members of the CUE highlighted the need to provide students with the opportunity to engage in interdisciplinary and collaborative experiences aimed at solving complex problems found in the real world. Finally, several members of the CUE suggested linking coursework and extracurricular experiences to big questions or global challenges.

The following proposal attempts to illustrate how all of these goals could be met by linking courses and extracurricular experiences to pressing world problems.

The Challenges and Complex Questions of Pressing World Issues

According to the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AACU), "A 21st Century liberal education must provide students with the knowledge and commitment to be socially responsible citizens in a diverse democracy and increasingly interconnected world. Colleges and universities committed to liberal education have important civic responsibilities to their communities, their nation, and the larger world. Global learning is the pathway through which students become prepared to fulfill these responsibilities."[1]

Once an overarching commitment to global engagement is made across our campus, collaborative groups could be formed and organized under several large umbrella areas capturing categories of pressing world issues. A few possibilities include: Social Justice, World Conflict and Security, Clean Water and the Environment, Sustainable Energy, Access to Education, Health Disparities, and Global Ethics. This model parallels the National Academy of Engineering's Grand Challenges for Engineers initiative.[2]

One option for structuring our student's engagement with these big questions could be through collaborative student groups, including faculty, students, alumni, and whenever possible, local, national and/or global community members. The collaborative group structure would simply provide linked opportunities for students to become involved in addressing complex global issues. Students could align general education requirements and/or major requirements with extra-curricular experiences and service work. Students

---

[1] See: https://www.aacu.org/shared-futures/guiding-principles; https://www.aacu.org/meetings/global/17
[2] http://www.engineeringchallenges.org/

could take part in the collaborative activities to varying degrees depending on their interest and availability. For example:

- Course clusters could be formed from approved general education courses to create a thematic pathway through the UGER.
- Minors could be created to include more extensive coursework, research, service, and final projects. Students would earn a notation on their diplomas after completing such programs.
- Philanthropy and grant funding could help support student research, travel, and unpaid internships which align with the specific topic.

An experiential learning component related to the thematic areas above could be implemented as part of a research experience to begin in the freshman year. Such a program exists at Miami University of Ohio, known as FYRE (First Year Research Experience). FYRE engages students in a group experiential learning opportunity lead by research active faculty. The structure of FYRE requires students to register for two seminars (2 credits each), which are organized around "research tracks" or thematic sequences that vary depending on resources and faculty involvement. In addition, students commit 2-4 hours per week conducting faculty-mentored research projects.

The Educational Advisory Board (EAB) Academic Affairs Forum published a report titled *Integrating Academic and Career Development Strategies to Scale Experiential Learning and Reflection Across the Curriculum* (2017). This report is rich with examples of how colleges and universities have integrated best practices in experiential learning throughout the curriculum. More specifically, the report provides examples from Northern Illinois University and from Virginia Tech of connecting general education courses to themes that capture undergraduate and faculty interest.

Comparable Experiential Learning Pathways through General Education:
- Miami University of Ohio: https://miamioh.edu/research/student-research/getting-started/fyre/index.html
- Virginia Tech: http://www.pathways.prov.vt.edu/1AboutPathways/options.html
- Northern Illinois: http://niu.edu/plus/

APPENDIX J: INNOVATION SPACES – LABORATORIES ACROSS THE DISCIPLINES

All too often, the word "laboratory" is interpreted as space devoted exclusively to research in the natural and physical sciences. If we focus on the experimentation and discovery that happens in laboratories, however, we can find ways to incorporate **making and doing** into the experiences of *all* students. The so-called "maker movement" – of which the Larry Sears and Sally Zlotnick Sears Think[Box] is a nationally recognized example[1] – has so far been ignored by disciplines whose work rarely involves 3-D printing or machine tools. Perhaps, however, the work of editing a scholarly journal, producing new editions or translations of a text, or sponsoring an international conference might profit from being considered "making and doing" as well.

As we strive to facilitate each student's connection between academic coursework and real world settings, the availability of spaces for experimentation and discovery across the disciplines could provide opportunities to practice new skills, collaborate, innovate, and take risks in a mentored environment. Ultimately, faculty and students should determine how (or if) these spaces are defined, located, and equipped. In some disciplines, an "Innovation Space" might be virtual rather than physical. The following possibilities are meant to be illustrative; full proposals, if they are warranted, should be developed by the associated departments (in some cases, this is already in progress, e.g., Biology[2]).

- An Arts/Humanities "Innovation Space" could gather materials, technology, and expertise in an updated physical and virtual space that allows students to pursue their course-based and independent projects. Students interested in performance and studio arts could borrow musical instruments, stage performances, use art supplies, and/or have access to digital editing and authoring tools (as well as printmaking and traditional book arts supplies). Students interested in humanistic inquiry could access resources (including research databases, primary source materials, digital archives, etc.), receive mentoring (e.g., by faculty and research librarians), and have collaborative workspaces to pursue projects involving local, national, and international scholars, archives (both print and digital), and resources. The English department's Writers House has begun to develop a space for such a cross-pollination of creative, scholarly, and research activities (see: http://writing.case.edu/writers-house/).

- A Social Sciences Center and Laboratory could meet the need for space for undergraduates to explore and apply social science research findings in the real world. An "Innovation Space" for social scientists could include technology, meeting spaces, software, and access to study populations and data. It could include access to experts and community members to provide information on the most pressing social needs. (e.g.: https://news.yale.edu/2017/01/26/makerspace-public-policy-opens-yale).

---

[1] See: https://www.usnews.com/news/maker-cities/articles/2017-05-23/makers-movement-changes-the-educational-landscape

[2] The Biology department is currently proposing Bio[box] to foster creativity and interdisciplinary experimentation outside formal laboratory settings.

APPENDIX K: UNDERGRADUATE ENGAGEMENT FUNDS

CWRU undergraduates have achieved significant post-college successes; our overall placement rate is better than the national average, largely because an exceptionally high number of CWRU graduates go on to pursue postgraduate and professional education. Nevertheless, in some disciplines (both in the School of Engineering and in the College of Arts and Sciences), the number of students "available for employment" (i.e., those seeking employment but not yet employed at the time of the first destination survey) is too high. In addition, we continue to place a majority of students into careers locally (in the Midwest) rather than nationally, despite our growing national and global reputation.

To support the connection between students' academic pursuits and their post-college plans, we propose a major development effort be made to secure funds to guarantee all undergraduates one-time funding – e.g., a $3,500-$5,000 stipend – to compensate for an unpaid internship, research project, or other experience related to their post-college employment.

The Baker-Nord Center for the Humanities and the Career Center are currently piloting a program to provide funding for unpaid internships to humanities students. To make a significant difference in our undergraduate experience, this kind of opportunity should be more widely (ideally universally) available.

Sample University Grant Funding Programs for Unpaid Internships:
- Mount Holyoke: https://www.mtholyoke.edu/cdc/internships
- Emory Scholars Program Internships: http://college.emory.edu/scholars/program/opportunities/internship-opportunities.html
- Washington University in Saint Louis: https://careercenter.wustl.edu/items/stipends/
- Carnegie Mellon University:
  - http://www.heinz.cmu.edu/jobs-and-internships/students/searching-internships/summer-internship-funding/index.aspx
  - https://www.cmu.edu/dietrich/undergraduate/summer-internship-opportunity-grants.html
  - http://www.cmu.edu/career/students_and_alumni/find_a_job_or_internship/Summer%20Internship%20Experience%20Fund.html
- University of Chicago: https://careeradvancement.uchicago.edu/jobs-internships-research/college-sponsored-grants

APPENDIX L: INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

The CUE Thinking Groups, especially the Pedagogy Thinking Group, recommended several innovative educational practices that deserve consideration.

Pedagogy Summit

UCITE and the Teaching+Learning Technology team of UTech could jointly organize an annual Pedagogy Summit. We recognize that UCITE and UTech currently host overlapping educational programming for faculty in the forms of the Glennan Fellowship (UCITE); the Learning Fellowship (UCITE); and the Active Learning Fellowship (UTech). Although different in their implementations, the fundamental goal of these programs is to offer resources, tools and strategies to faculty for improving teaching and course content. We are not recommending that these programs be replaced or consolidated; however, we believe that a synergized effort in the form of an annual Pedagogy Summit will have a broader reach and more impact for the CWRU community.

The Pedagogy Summit could be an annual daylong event to be held in the Tinkham Veal University Center. A few keynote speakers (1-2) might lead plenary sessions related to pedagogy and student-oriented learning (specific themes could be selected each year). UCITE and UTech could organize separate and concurrent breakout sessions for faculty, staff and students. To encourage student involvement, we propose that students organize at least one of the breakout sessions. Students, faculty and staff will reconvene over lunch for panel discussions and to share ideas on creating collaborative learning environments and initiatives.

Comparable Teaching and Learning Summits:
- University of Virginia: http://cte.virginia.edu/programs/annual-innovation-in-pedagogy-summit/
- Carnegie Mellon University: http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/summit/
- Colonial Academic Alliance: http://www.caa-academics.org/2016-pedagogy-summit

Winter Intersession

We encourage the University to explore implementation of a winter Intersession term in January where departments and programs could offer in-depth workshops, interdisciplinary "mini-courses", or other experiential activities for students.[1]

For a 2-3 week period before the start of spring term, departments and programs would provide hands-on interdisciplinary opportunities for students to enhance post-graduate

---

[1] Such an implementation would actually be a return to a previous CWRU educational practice. From 1970-1976, CWRU offered a January term – a model that has since been adopted by some of our peer institutions. See: http://blog.case.edu/archives/2011/01/28/intersession_moving_a_graveyard.

goals in their field of study. Possible examples might include travel abroad programs, interdisciplinary topical seminars, data science "boot camps," community outreach projects, or short lab rotations. Implementing these activities in a period when traditional classes are not scheduled would alleviate class conflicts and allow for more immersive opportunities.

While the intersession is not intended as a period to offer compressed versions of regular courses (such as is done in the summer sessions), students would receive credit for these activities. The university might consider making some intersession credit required, for example requiring students to participate in intersession activities (of their choice) twice during their time at CWRU.

Students would benefit from exposure to material that is essential for their career development within a field, but that is not addressed within coursework for their major. Some examples of activities that could be offered in an intersession format include:
- A workshop on the visual presentation of scientific data.
- A seminar on grant writing for non-STEM majors.
- A studio class on printing and book-binding.
- An introduction to management and accounting concepts for arts/humanities students.

A Winter Intersession would also provide extended travel abroad opportunities for students (i.e., combining with the semester break), without conflicting with other scheduled courses.

Comparable Intersession Programs:
- Miami University of Ohio: https://miamioh.edu/winterterm/
- Oberlin College: https://new.oberlin.edu/office/winter-term/index.dot
- MIT Independent Activities Period: http://web.mit.edu/iap/
- Johns Hopkins: http://intersession.jhu.edu/icourses/courses/acad_courses.asp

APPENDIX M: CAMPUS CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT – SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

All campuses have cultures, but unfortunately our current culture is not all that attractive: it is one of work-related stress. There is a general feeling among students that they need always to be busy and that there is never enough time to get all their work done. Everything is oriented toward future success. Time and energy must always be used productively. Students value taking heavy course loads and too many extracurricular activities, and they often feel guilty about just having fun or otherwise "wasting time." These values are rewarded and modeled by fellow students and faculty.

In addition, there is a strong sense among students, faculty, and staff that the university's institutional structure of relatively unrelated schools, each with its own budget and priorities, works against our goal of building cohesive community and institutional identity. The administrative structures work to silo, not to connect, making a single university culture very difficult to realize. As one student put it, there is no "common middle," spatially or institutionally at CWRU.

The CUE's Campus Culture and Environment Thinking Group provided a range of recommendations to address these issues. We summarize those and other suggestions we received here, as a starting point for additional conversations about student life on campus.

Creating a Unified Campus "Look"
- Have University banners on Euclid, rather than banners promoting the individual schools.
- Have logos and/or a CWRU blue statement wall in the lobbies of every building. The accent walls in Nord provide a good example.
- Many schools (e.g., Johns Hopkins) have a standardized pavement system so that everywhere on campus is identifiable. Many places on our campus use pavers (e.g., the binary walkway), so incorporating that design over a larger area of campus would be a step in the right direction.

Building school pride
- Make the school mascot, Sparty, more pervasive on our campus. Distribute stickers and bobble heads during orientation, and consider a "Sparty Scholarship," with the winner(s) taking on the Sparty mascot at different events (incl. non-athletic events).
- Restructure Convocation so that more students and faculty want to attend. A first step might be to encourage all First Seminar instructors to incorporate the common reading book into their classes; this will encourage the students to actually read the book and be excited about meeting the author. A second step could be to encourage all students and faculty to read the chosen book.
- Establish a central space for students. Our campus is now graced with the beautiful Tinkham Veale University Center. Although this is a wonderful facility, it might not be fulfilling all of the goals of its planners. We recommend forming an *ad hoc* committee, composed primarily of students to see if other spaces are needed.
- Ritualize wasting time, perhaps in the form of a day of cancelled classes. Examples at other schools include Mountain Day at Mount Holyoke College, when students and

alumnae around the world take the day off from work and classes; and Dooley's Week at Emory University, when students write limericks to Dooley, a skeleton mascot, requesting that s/he pronounce particular classes cancelled (professors must comply).

Celebrate the history of the University
- Celebrate the merger. Whether from fear or because of lasting divisions from once-separate schools, we do not discuss, much less celebrate our history. Yet, to a person, students who know the story of CWRU's federation see it as entirely positive and a source of pride. Perhaps the story could be remembered and celebrated in a way that would still highlight the rivalry that was there before the merger (e.g., some creative reinvention of the Reserve vs. Case annual football game).
- Honor and celebrate our many notable alumni and Nobel Prize winners.
- Rather than giving the new dorms house numbers, perhaps they could be named after people who have been important in the history of the University (e.g., Flora Stone Mather, Adelbert Stone, Amasa Stone, and Leonard Case). A student activity could be a research project on the individual for whom their dorm is named.

Connecting Faculty and Students
Foster and reward inclusive interactions inside and outside of the classroom, for example:
- Encourage and reward engaged faculty sponsors for student activities
- Invite faculty/staff to share a meal or a movie with students on campus
- Create a "residential faculty" program, where faculty live on campus and participate in residential life
- Create opportunities for student clubs to share their expertise *inside* the classroom

Supporting Students
- Extend orientation activities into the whole first year experience, promoting these activities through an app and website that includes a unified calendar. Students tend to feel far more connected to other students outside their majors and their residential halls during orientation, but lose that sense of connection once classes begin. Activities might include a week or a long weekend in the fall or spring without regular classes or assignments that combine fun activities with other valuable experiences such as community engagement, alumni mentoring, and ways to connect first-years with students in other classes.
- Have similar activities for the sophomore, junior and senior classes. Currently, only the first year students have special activities, and most of these occur during orientation. Having dedicated activities for each class would help to cement friendships made earlier and improve students' feelings about the university.
- Build stronger alumni networks and facilitate connections among alumni and current students. The recommendation of a week or long weekend of programming without classes could be an ideal opportunity to do so, especially if it were tied to Homecoming.

- Develop a procedure for identifying and actively reaching out to less engaged students personally. The team advising recommendations made elsewhere in this report could be a vehicle for helping these students.

Promoting a Culture of Inclusion and Diversity

The undergraduate experience at a premiere university must prepare students for an increasingly diverse and changing world; but, simple exposure to information regarding inclusion and diversity by itself is not an effective approach. Psychologists have shown that if the entire undergraduate experience occurs in a diverse environment, where the campus culture embraces, respects and seeks to understand human differences immediate and long term student outcomes are improved (Tatum, 2000) in regard to the likelihood that students will continue to seek out and appreciate diversity in their current and post-college lives.

The AAC&U recognizes that transformational learning about human differences inside and outside the classroom will not occur without asking, answering, and discussing extremely difficult questions.[1]

Central to the current report is the AAC&U's description of inclusion as incorporating, "The active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities…" In other words, inclusion must be a central and pervasive element across the campus and in particular for the undergraduate experience. The CUE's Thinking Group's summary recommendation echoes this emphasis on inclusion in the following statement, "Build an environment that proactively represents and celebrates diversity (racial, ethnic, sexual, religious, etc.). As one student member put it, 'it's all about representation'. " The group goes on to recommend the following actions:

- Publicize proud moments in the university's history of inclusion and diversity through exhibits and other media in common spaces, on the web, and everywhere on campus. Include images and stories of people of color who have graduated from the university and/or who have taught or served here. Integrate these stories into celebrations of the larger story of CWRU, recommended above.
- Design and implement a faculty inclusion program to be more programmatically proactive in recruiting and retaining more diverse faculty. Develop strategies to bring inclusion and diversity awareness and strategies through a network of faculty. Begin by highlighting, rewarding, and spotlighting exemplary departments making progress toward demographic and other inclusion goals. Identify faculty champions in each unit or department, and use that network to disseminate readings and activities, enhance the faculty champions themselves, and share strategies across faculty communities.
- Consider converting interdisciplinary academic programs focused on diversity into full departments with their own tenure-track faculty lines (e.g., the program in Social Justice Studies and the proposed program in African and African American Studies).

---

[1] See: https://www.aacu.org/making-excellence-inclusive

- Develop intentional networks for mentoring and advising students of color (key to retention).

Indeed, CWRU has done a great deal to increase diversity and foster inclusion and while some progress has been made, attracting and retaining underrepresented minority students and faculty, breaking down the walls of internal segregation, and improving the sense of a unified campus community are ongoing challenges. Dr. Beverly Tatum is a psychologist and nationally recognized expert on the development of racial identity and race relations in college classrooms. Dr. Tatum's experience in race relations and training as a clinical psychologist led her to develop, "The ABC Approach to Creating Climates of Engagement on Diverse Campuses."[2] (Tatum, 2000)." The letters "ABC" represent Affirming identity, Building community, and Cultivating leadership which represent a tripartite foundation upon which all curricular and co-curricular campus experiences must be built before truly inclusive environment can be realized.

As we work to redesign and elevate the undergraduate experience at CWRU, we have an unprecedented opportunity to build Tatum's ABCs in a pervasive and intentional fashion into the entire undergraduate experience. The proposed UGER provides a strong structure which can support additional layers of curricular opportunities for students to explore racial identity and build community. For example:
- The fall semester Explore course can include self-exploration of personal identity not just career identity.
- The First Seminar, Second Seminar, and Writing-Intensive courses can intentionally build in training and practice engaging with sensitive and potentially volatile topics such as race or sexual orientation. Difficult conversations can take place orally, electronically, and/or in formal writing, with guidance from faculty members.
- The Intellectual Diversity coursework can also be intentionally tied to the ABC approach where students reflect on diversity and inclusion within disciplinary perspectives.

Every aspect of the undergraduate curriculum should be studied and linked whenever possible to explicitly influencing the development of the CWRU student as a person who will go on to be a leader advancing the value of diversity and inclusion.

Promoting a Culture of Wellness

The overarching importance of physical and mental health as contributors for lifelong success, happiness, and productivity cannot be overstated. Converging evidence from medicine, the social sciences, and education research all point to the importance of adequate sleep, stress reduction, exercise, good nutrition, and access to social support for optimum cognitive performance and emotional health. The entire CWRU community should subscribe to and promote a more wholistic, integrative culture of wellness that

---

[2] Tatum, B. D. (2000). The ABC approach to creating climates of engagement on divers campuses. *Liberal Education,* Fall, 22-29.

encourages students, faculty, and staff to engage in and model wholistic wellness. The following ideas were recommended by the CUE for further consideration.

- Create one uniform "Wellness" brand for all wellness programming (for the entire campus). Establish a consistent branding of existing programs will raise awareness of Wellness initiatives, inform stakeholders that CWRU values their wellness, and help create a culture of wellness at CWRU.
- Create a website hosting all University based wellness related activities. Create one, unified "Wellness" website for the entire university to promote a culture of wellness. Understanding that there are different populations with specific wellness needs on campus there will need to be some targeted programming for distinct groups (e.g., students or employees). However, we recommend that all wellness information be centralized to avoid duplication and silos and to build synergies.
- Utilize information from the JJM Mandel Wellness Pathway website (https://case.edu/medicine/wellness-pathway/) of the School of Medicine in creating the universal wellness website for the university. Link to this Wellness Pathway website from the university's Wellness homepage
- Hold an "Annual Fitness Challenge" open to the entire university community to promote a sense of community, campus pride and tradition. University community members would form teams and track fitness activities over several weeks, incentives would include prizes for winners and raffle prizes for participants. Teams consisting of both faculty and students would be encouraged. (Note: This event also connects to the initiatives designed to foster a culture of school pride, engagement and support.)
- Diversify the physical education requirement to a broader wellness requirement with expanded options to include such topics as resilience, stress management, nutrition, healthy lifestyles, and disease prevention.