A conversation on SAGES with Peter Whiting

SAGES, the Seminar Approach to General Education and Scholarship, represents a bold new model for undergraduate education at a major research university. SAGES was developed during a three-year pilot, spearheaded by the College of Arts and Sciences, that began in September 2002. In the fall of 2005, it will become the general education requirement—and thus the common core experience—for all Case undergraduates. Peter Whiting, associate professor of geological sciences, was recently named associate dean in the College and will become SAGES program director next year. He has served as co-director of the SAGES pilot with Lee Thompson, associate professor of psychology.

Q: What is SAGES and how does it work?

A: Under SAGES, students take a series of seminars—small, interdisciplinary classes that emphasize discussion and active inquiry—during their first two years. The idea is to encourage close interaction between faculty and students, who come together around a topic of common interest; to help students develop their skills in critical reading, writing, and oral presentation; and to promote engagement in the learning process. In their third year, students take a departmental seminar, usually in their major. And as seniors, they propose and carry out a capstone project that demonstrates the knowledge and skills they have acquired throughout their undergraduate years.

Part of what makes SAGES distinctive is its integrated approach. Unlike “freshman seminar” programs at other universities, the SAGES offerings extend across all four years of the undergraduate experience. SAGES also represents a new collaboration between Case and the cultural and scientific institutions of University Circle. In their First Seminars, students visit these institutions for special presentations and tours, and even engage in original research.

Q: What is your role in SAGES?

A: Lee Thompson and I have been the co-directors of the SAGES pilot. In that role, we have recruited incoming students to participate in SAGES, collaborated with faculty to develop seminars, and managed the program in consultation with colleagues across the university. Next year, when SAGES is implemented university-wide, I will become the program director.

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Two Case chemists have established a research center whose findings may have important applications in the physical sciences, engineering, and biomedicine. The Center for Chemical Dynamics (CCD) belongs to the branch of chemistry which explores how matter changes over time. Its objects of study include individual molecules and the exceedingly small bits of matter called nanomaterials.

The brainchild of associate professors Cather Simpson and Clemens Burda, the Center was created in 2003 with a grant from the Provost’s Opportunity Fund. “Much of the research currently ongoing in the CCD is photochemical and photo-physical in nature,” Simpson said. “One of the latest ideas we are pursuing in my lab is a more efficient photothermal therapeutic agent, using what we know about vibrational energy flow through different types of molecules. The successful conclusion of this project will be a new photoactive drug that will kill cancer cells more effectively than what we have now.”

Burda notes that the Center’s research has the potential to help address environmental as well as medical conditions. The prospects range from “using light to clean up the environment to creating better nanoparticle-based sensitizers for the treatment of breast cancer.”

Simpson and Burda were recently joined in their efforts by their chemistry colleague Mary Barkley, a biophysicist who uses fluorescent dyes to study the relationship between structure and function in proteins and other biological molecules. “We recently started working on an HIV viral protein, and are currently testing our hypothesis about how the virus becomes resistant to one class of anti-AIDS drugs,” Barkley said.

One of the Center’s main goals is to position Case as a regional and national leader in this kind of research. It currently operates a powerful, state-of-the-art array of high-tech equipment to do its work, but with the rapid pace of developments in the field, constant equipment updates are a necessity. “Maintaining and upgrading to make sure the CCD is at the cutting edge of technology is one of the biggest challenges we face,” Simpson said. “In the best of all worlds, our research advances would be limited only by our creativity—not by our access to the necessary equipment.”

The Center’s current research efforts are distributed across several laboratories in the department of chemistry. In addition, CCD members collaborate with faculty in the Case Schools of Engineering and Medicine, and they are working to build collaborations with researchers and educators outside the university as well. “Training of excellent future scientists is a major part of the CCD vision,” Simpson said. “In the longer term, we would like to provide a resource to the northern Ohio region and beyond, to cultivate high-tech research relationships with students and faculty at four-year colleges and even at the K-12 level.”
Q: How does SAGES enhance the learning experience for students?

A: We believe that the seminar is an ideal setting to introduce students to the mission and culture of a research university, to foster an appreciation of diverse perspectives, and to give students the experience of participating in a community dedicated to the generation of knowledge.

I can’t overstate the importance of enabling students to build relationships with faculty from the beginning of their undergraduate years. The faculty leader in a First Seminar serves as the academic advisor for all the students in the class. Then, too, the small-class format—with enrollment limited to seventeen students—allows participation and communication not only between faculty and students, but also among the students themselves.

Q: Who leads the SAGES seminars?

A: The majority of SAGES seminars are led by Case faculty members, who voted overwhelmingly to adopt SAGES as the new general education curriculum for Case undergraduates. But we have also supplemented the ranks of faculty seminar leaders with outstanding individuals from outside the university, with backgrounds in the arts, journalism, medicine, business, and politics. These visitors have diversified the seminar offerings and provided special perspectives that enrich our students’ experience. During the pilot, President Hundert appointed visiting seminar leaders as Presidential Fellows. Additional fellows will be appointed by Mark Turner, dean of the College, once SAGES moves to full implementation next fall.

Q: What does SAGES mean to me as an alumnus of Case?

A: SAGES is receiving national recognition for its approach to undergraduate education. For several years, research universities have been seeking ways to improve the undergraduate experience—to integrate students more fully into the larger institution, to increase their access to faculty, and to afford them early opportunities to engage in research and other kinds of experiential learning. But Case has undertaken the most comprehensive reform of them all. As it becomes even better known, SAGES will raise the university’s standing within higher education and beyond. And, as a result, it will enhance the value and reputation of a Case degree.

Beginning next spring, we hope that when alumni visit the campus, they will stop by SAGES Central on the quad level of Crawford Hall. We are about to renovate the entire first floor, which will house not only our administrative offices, but also an array of technologically enhanced spaces for seminars, faculty-student meetings, and writing conferences. The highlight will be the SAGES Café, a new intellectual and social center for the Case campus, with late-night hours, state-of-the-art wireless communications, and the best espresso in Cleveland!

Q: How can I learn more?

A: Our website (www.case.edu/sages) offers a comprehensive description of SAGES and its rationale. We also welcome email (sages@case.edu) and calls (216-368-5830) from alumni, prospective students and their families, and anyone else interested in our signature undergraduate program.
Case Task Force Plans
A New Alumni Organization

This summer, the Alumni Task Force at Case began developing plans for a single, unified alumni organization. The process formally started on July 24, when more than 100 alumni, students, and staff participated in a weekend forum to discuss goals and aspirations for the new organization. The participants came from across the country and were notable for their diversity: there were graduates from every decade since 1950; representatives of 21 key stakeholders, including the school-based alumni associations, undergraduate alumni association, and Case Western Reserve University alumni association; and members from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds.

The task force will submit a strategic plan to the university’s Board of Trustees in mid-January and expects to announce the structure of the new alumni organization next summer. For more information about the task force, visit www.case.edu/alumni/forum/tf.html.

Supporting WISER

The Governing Board of The Friedman-Klarreich Family Foundation recently presented a gift to WISER (Women in Science and Engineering Roundtable) as an expression of the Foundation’s commitment to promoting education and economic equity for women. The funds are designated for WISER activities which prepare students for careers in corporate life. Presenting the check to Heather Morrison, third from left, associate professor of astronomy and co-founder of WISER, is Sue Klarreich, second from right. Klarreich, who earned an M.A. and Ph.D. in education from Case’s School of Graduate Studies, is administrator of the Foundation, which she and her four daughters established in 1992. Three of Sue’s daughters were able to be in Cleveland for the presentation—from left to right: Kathie Klarreich, Karin Klarreich, and Betsy Kohn. Beth Klarreich Corwin was unable to attend the ceremony.

Alumna Named to Board of Trustees

Virginia “Gini” Nord Barbato, president of the Nord Family Foundation and an alumna of Flora Stone Mather College, has been appointed to the university’s Board of Trustees.

Mrs. Barbato received her B.A. in history from Flora Stone Mather College—the undergraduate women’s college of Western Reserve University—in 1972. She has previously served on visiting and campaign committees for the College of Arts and Sciences and the Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences. She has also been a member of the Case National Campaign Leadership Group.

In addition, Mrs. Barbato has been a trustee of the Cleveland Museum of Art and serves on the board of the Cleveland Opera. She has been an active volunteer with the Cleveland Orchestra, The Cleveland Museum of Art, and Hawken School. She is also a member of the current class of Leadership Cleveland, a program initiated by the Greater Cleveland Growth Association to build leadership resources within the Greater Cleveland community.

Mrs. Barbato’s husband, Randall, is a 1972 alumnus of Western Reserve College and a 1991 alumnus of the Weatherhead School of Management. Her parents, Eric and Jane Nord, are both Case alumni and generous friends of the university. The Barbatos live in Shaker Heights with their three children.
Biology grad selected for prestigious program

Paul Tesar '03 is one of only 11 students nationwide selected since 2001 as a National Institutes of Health-University of Oxford Scholar in Biomedical Sciences. This interdisciplinary program invites outstanding American students to participate in research collaborations involving NIH scientists and Oxford faculty members; the students divide their time between the two institutions and ultimately earn a Doctor of Philosophy degree from Oxford. Tesar, who studied adult stem cells for three years as an undergraduate in the department of biology, will now engage in research on embryonic stem cells. “The Oxford/NIH scholarship is shaping up to be as prominent and important as the Fulbright,” said Case President Edward Hundert. “Like the Fulbright, this scholarship experience has diverse and often powerful impacts not only on the scholars themselves, but also on their colleagues, students, the nation and the world.”

Students earn Goldwater scholarships

Christine Bodner '05 and Jeffrey Kidd '05 have been named as Barry M. Goldwater Scholars for 2005-06. The scholarship program was created by Congress in 1986 to encourage undergraduates with strong academic records and the highest potential to pursue careers in mathematics, the natural sciences, or engineering. Bodner, a native of Castilia, Ohio, is majoring in chemistry with a minor in mathematics; Kidd, a native of Boardman, Ohio, is majoring in biology with minors in mathematics and computer science. The Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation selects up to 300 scholars annually. A total of six Case students have won Goldwater Scholarships over the last five years.

Political science major serves as delegate

Daniel Gray was one of four delegates representing Ohio’s 14th Congressional District at this summer’s Democratic National Convention in Boston. Gray, from Willoughby, Ohio, got the idea of serving as a delegate while taking a course on “Elections, Voters and Political Parties” from Alexander Lamis, associate professor of political science. Gray’s expenses were covered by an Experiential Learning Fellowship, offered to Case students in the arts, humanities and social sciences. He graduates this December.
A new program in the College is offering students the opportunity to explore the history of racial and ethnic minorities in the United States and around the world, to develop a deep knowledge of African and Latin American cultures, and to reflect on the dynamics of racial and ethnic identity in the age of globalization.

Beginning this fall, Case undergraduates can pursue a minor in ethnic studies, with areas of concentration in African-American, Latino/a-American, African, Latin American, and global studies. In addition to several core courses specific to ethnic studies, the program will draw upon existing courses and faculty from several disciplines, including history, anthropology, sociology, and modern languages.

Several new courses were developed this fall for the ethnic studies program, including “Introduction to Latino/a Studies,” taught by Jacqueline Nanfito, professor of modern languages and literatures, and “Introduction to the Study of Race and Ethnicity,” the introductory course for ethnic studies, taught by Atwood Gaines, professor of anthropology, biomedical ethics, nursing, and psychiatry.

“The course is a thought-provoking challenge to assumptions about social differences and systems of social classification,” Gaines said, “showing that such things are not natural, but rather are human creations with significant consequences.”

Rhonda Y. Williams, associate professor of history, explores issues in urban policy, civil rights, and community activism in her new book, The Politics of Public Housing: Black Women’s Struggles Against Urban Inequality (Oxford University Press, 2004). The book traces the development of public housing in Baltimore, from its beginnings under the New Deal to the early 1990s. Williams focuses on the experiences of African-American women who mobilized to demand improved living conditions and achieve class mobility for themselves and their children. Drawing upon dozens of interviews, Williams offers a narrative of political awakening that she regards as an overlooked dimension of the modern civil rights movement.

Joe Koonce, professor and chair of biology, and Nancy Ditulio, biology instructor, were named Education Fellows in the Life Sciences by the National Academies and were selected to participate in the 2004 Summer Institute on Undergraduate Education in Biology, which took place this past August at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Teams from 20 universities assembled for a week of discussions and workshops on interdisciplinary teaching, effective use of information technology in classrooms and laboratories, and the optimal balance between imparting content and providing opportunities for analytical thinking.

Catherine B. Scallen, associate professor of art history, examines the origins of the modern conception of Rembrandt’s achievement in her book Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship (Amsterdam University Press, 2004). Scallen analyzes the writings of nineteenth-century scholars whose judgments regarding the authenticity of paintings attributed to Rembrandt passed largely unchallenged until the 1960s. She also explores the social context of these scholars’ connoisseurial practice, chronicling their relationships with museums, dealers, and collectors during a period when the art market was rapidly expanding.

John Ciofalo, associate professor of art history, was one of twelve scholars selected to participate in a Summer Institute in the Humanities at Princeton University, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The six-week institute, “Opera: Interpretation Between Disciplines,” examined the pervasive influence of opera on other art forms in the 19th and 20th centuries. In addition to asking why opera served as a touchstone for so many artists, Ciofalo and his colleagues explored ways to incorporate opera into the teaching of various disciplines.

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RESEARCH ROUNDUP

Beall Team Finds Natural Selection at Work in Tibet

Cynthia M. Beall, Sarah Idell Pyle Professor of Anthropology, recently led an interdisciplinary team of researchers to Tibet, where they studied a group of Tibetan mothers and their children dwelling more than two and a half miles above sea level. The team discovered that these women maintain relatively high blood oxygen levels—a trait associated with infant survival—even though they live at an altitude where oxygen is scarce. This finding, which indicates natural selection at work in a human population, appears in the online edition of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The research team also included Melvyn C. Goldstein, John Reynolds Harkness Professor of Anthropology at Case; Robert C. Elston, director of the graduate program in genetic and molecular epidemiology in the Case School of Medicine; and Kijoung Song from GlaxoSmithKlein. The National Science Foundation, the National Humanities Institute, and the Henry R. Luce Foundation provided funding for the expedition.

Harvey Team Uncovers Mars Meteorite in Antarctica

Another team of researchers, led by geological sciences professor Ralph Harvey, recently uncovered a piece of Mars in the most inhospitable place on Earth—Antarctica. The researchers, members of a field party from the Antarctic Search for Meteorites (ANSMET) program, found the specimen on an ice field in the Miller Range of the Transantarctic Mountains, nearly 500 miles from the South Pole. Because the 1.6-pound black rock, officially designated MIL 03346, can be studied in the laboratory, it will provide a critical “reality check” for scientists interpreting the wealth of images and data sent back by spacecraft currently exploring Mars. ANSMET is a cooperative effort supported by NASA, the National Science Foundation, and the Smithsonian Institution. Harvey has been the program’s principal investigator since 1991, leading numerous expeditions and participating in several others.

Cancer Survivors Research Project Awarded Grant

Under the direction of sociology professor Gary Deimling, researchers from the department of sociology and the Case School of Medicine have embarked on the second phase of the Cancer Survivors Research Project, a study examining the quality of life of older, long-term cancer survivors. The National Cancer Institute, which funded the initial five years of the project, has now awarded Deimling and his colleagues support for the next five years. The researchers on the project include Case sociology professors Deimling, Eva Kahana, and Kyle Kercher; Karen Bowman, senior research associate in the department of sociology and associate director of the project; and Boaz Kahana, professor of psychology at Cleveland State University. Deimling and Bowman, along with several graduate students, received an “award of excellence” when they presented a paper outlining the group’s most recent findings at this year’s Cancer Survivorship Conference, an event co-sponsored by the National Cancer Institute and the American Cancer Society.

Rosenblatt receives NSF Grant for Liquid Crystal Study

Charles Rosenblatt, professor of physics and macromolecular science, recently received a three-year National Science Foundation grant for his study of “Symmetry and Molecular Architecture in Liquid Crystals.” On his faculty web page, Rosenblatt writes, “Most people are first drawn to liquid crystals by their beautiful optical textures: stars, curves, splotches, and zig-zags, all in a palette of colors rivaling the most ostentatious paintings of modern art. On closer and more scientific inspection, one finds that liquid crystals are generally composed of rod-shaped molecules, which exhibit an intermediate degree of order between solid and liquid.” Rosenblatt’s study involves collaborations with researchers from the University of Halle in Germany, Göteborg University in Sweden, and the National Synchrotron Light Source at Brookhaven National Laboratory in New York. With this latest grant, Rosenblatt has received more than 20 years of uninterrupted NSF single investigator support.
Here are a few of the public events being offered by the College of Arts and Sciences during spring semester, 2005. Events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. For more information, and a list of many more events, visit www.connection.case.edu/case/content/eventList.cfm.

Music and Culture Lecture Series  
**Friday, January 21, 2005**  
4 pm in Clark Hall Room 206, 11130 Bellflower Road  
*The Father of the Blues in American History: W. C. Handy*, Richard Crawford, University of Michigan

**Friday, April 8, 2005**  
4 pm in Guilford House Parlor, 11120 Bellflower Road  
*Music and ‘The Complex Whole’: Musical Values and Cultural Values in Three Societies*, Bruno Nettle, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Sponsored by the Department of Music

Samuel Rosenthal Center for Judaic Studies Events  
**Wednesday, January 26, 2005**  
4:30 pm in Clark Hall Room 206  
*Rethinking the Problem of Edith Stein: Jew and Catholic Saint*, Zev Garber, Rosenthal Visiting Fellow, Spring 2005

**Sunday, April 10, 2005**  
7 pm in Thwing Ballroom, 11111 Euclid Avenue  
*An Evening with Madame F*, Claudia Stevens, actor-singer-composer  

Sponsored by the Rosenthal Center for Judaic Studies

Case Conversations on Children in Research and Policy  
**Tuesday, February 1, 2005**  
All talks are at 11:45 am in Clark Hall Room 206  
*Mothers Under Siege: Reflection on Research, Policy, and Practice with Mothers with Children in Foster Care*, Kathleen M. Wells, professor, Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences

**Tuesday, March 1, 2005**  
*An Age-Old Challenge in Theory and Practice: Age Integration and the Intergenerational School*, Dale Dannefer, Ph.D., professor of sociology; and Peter Whitehouse, professor of neurology and director of Integrative Studies, University Memory and Aging Center

**Tuesday, April 5, 2005**  
*Charging the Oral Health of Cleveland’s Children*, James A. Lalumandier, associate professor and chair, Community Dentistry  

All talks sponsored by the Schubert Center for Child Development

Women, War, Identity and Music  
**February 3-10, 2005**  
A week-long women’s music festival and lecture series that will feature individual and group concerts with internationally known female musicians (Faytinga Gonin, Evelyne Accad, Kristen Lems) performing music from Arab, African and Asian cultures.

Sponsored by the French and Francophone Studies Program with numerous co-sponsors

**Case Eldred Drama Series 2004-2005**  
*February 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 2005 at 8 pm  
February 13 and 20, 2005 at 2:30 pm*  
**Here Comes Dad**  
Written and directed by Omri Yavin  
*April 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 2005 at 8 pm  
April 10 and 17, 2005 at 2:30 pm*  
**Life of Galileo**  
By Bertolt Brecht, translated by David Hare, directed by John Orlock

The Sixteenth Annual Harvey Buchanan Lecture in Art History & the Humanities  
**Friday, March 4, 2005**  
6 pm in The Cleveland Museum of Art Lecture Hall, 11150 East Boulevard

Into the Lions’ Den with Daniel, Marilyn Stokstad, Judith Harris Murphy  
Distinguished Professor of Art History, The University of Kansas

Sponsored by the Department of Art History and Art

**Humanities Week**  
**March 14-19, 2005**  
A week-long series of events around the theme “Homelands and Security”

Sponsored by the Baker-Nord Center for the Humanities

**Department of Dance**  
**March 17-19, 2005 at 8 pm  
March 20, 2005 at 2:30 pm**  
**Echoes**  
Danceworks by Master of Fine Arts candidate Sarah McCallister  
*March 31, April 1-2, 2005 at 8 pm  
April 3, 2005 at 2:30 pm*  
**Now... Then**  
Danceworks by Master of Fine Arts candidate Richard Dickinson

**Frontiers of Astronomy Lecture Series**  
Presentations are held at The Cleveland Museum of Natural History’s Murch Auditorium, 1 Wade Oval Drive in University Circle, at 8 pm

**Thursday, March 24, 2005**  
*How the Milky Way Galaxy Changed with Time*, Robert Zinn, Yale University

**Thursday, April 4, 2005**  
*The Evolution of Galaxies in Different Environments*, Jacqueline van Gorkom, Columbia University