
The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.

1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings, and degree levels of the institution.
2. The institution articulates the purposes, content, and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.
3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.
5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work, and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution’s mission.

Argument

Each of CWRU's degree programs is predicated on academic inquiry. These programs provide broad learning experiences intended to help students develop the intellectual perspectives and specialized skills needed to excel in their chosen career paths fields and/or serve as engaged members of society.

1. CWRU's vision statement asserts, in part, that the university will “provide students with the knowledge, skills and experiences necessary to become leaders in a world characterized by rapid change and increasing interdependence.” General education requirements provide the educational framework for accomplishing this goal for the undergraduate programs. CWRU's Seminar Approach to General Education and Scholarship (SAGES) program serves as the common core for general education at the undergraduate level. Through a series of seminar-style experiences, SAGES is intended to provide a foundation for CWRU's undergraduate degree programs.

Layered on top of the SAGES core are general education requirements differentiated as appropriate to the four schools offering undergraduate degree programs at CWRU. Each school has specified different categories of general education requirements that are intended to ensure that students studying in its majors are provided a broad educational foundation as well as preparation for success in their intended area of study. For example, engineering students are required to take several courses in mathematics, physics, and chemistry, as well as engineering core courses, as part of their general education requirements. In contrast, liberal arts students take general education breadth requirements in the social sciences, humanities, and global and cultural diversity. Specific major field requirements are layered on top of the school-based general education requirements. Undergraduate students may undertake focused study outside the area of their primary emphasis to earn a minor, which furthers their range of study and expands their preparation for the future. In addition, all undergraduate students are expected to complete two semesters of physical education activity as a university degree requirement.
The fact that several of the schools/programs offering undergraduate education at CWRU are accredited by field-specific professional organizations, and that the Ohio Board of Regents authorizes degrees at CWRU indicates that the general education requirements at the university are recognized as being appropriate for higher education.

Periodic reviews and careful faculty governance processes are used to ensure that general education requirements of the university remain appropriate and effective. For the undergraduate programs, the Curriculum Subcommittee of the Faculty Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education reviews any changes to the undergraduate general education requirements that are proposed by the undergraduate schools. In addition, procedures for modification of the SAGES program have been established.

The First Destination Surveys, which are conducted annually through CWRU's Career Center, show that CWRU students are routinely gaining admission to graduate and professional schools as well as obtaining gainful employment upon graduation. See the examples from 2013 and 2014. These results would indicate that the general education required at CWRU is a successful foundation that prepared students for their future disciplinary studies.

2. The SAGES program was developed through a collaborative process that engaged broad faculty input. A SAGES Task Force operated in the 2003-04 time-frame and produced both Phase I and Phase II reports that included extensive description of the philosophy underlying the intellectual content of the program, as well as the mechanics of its implementation. SAGES was adopted by faculty votes in each of the four undergraduate schools in 2004.

The administrative leadership of SAGES was delegated to a Director of SAGES (currently Professor Peter Whiting, who also serves as Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences), with the budget for the SAGES program coming through the Office of the Provost. Initially, a set of committees with representation from the four undergraduate schools were to work with the Director of SAGES to assist in the oversight of First Seminars, University Seminars, and Writing Portfolios. The Faculty Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education (and specifically its Curriculum Subcommittee) has inherited responsibility for SAGES oversight.

The SAGES program undergoes periodic reviews to ensure that the program is effectively meeting its intended goals, and to look for areas of improvement. These reviews draw on input from faculty and students from across the institution. One such review was completed in 2011, and another review (expected to begin in 2015) is called for in CWRU's strategic plan.

The SAGES program is intended to provide students with a foundation in critical thinking, written and oral communication, the use of information, quantitative reasoning, engagement with ethical issues and diversity, and exposure to experimental and theoretical approaches to understanding human culture and behavior, scientific knowledge, and methods of research. The detailed learning outcomes for the SAGES program have been developed through a subsequent collaborative process that invited broad input from across campus. The effectiveness of the SAGES program in improving students' writing is evaluated annually by the SAGES Writing Portfolio Committee. (See the committee's 2014 report, for example.)

3. Learning outcomes for the SAGES program and each of CWRU's degree programs are posted and accessible on an internal website accessible to the CWRU community. These learning outcomes indicate that the goals for CWRU's academic programs include: mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; collecting, analyzing, and communicating information; and developing lifelong skills. Examples are provided from the programs in Physics, the Masters in Positive Organizational Development, and the Doctor of Dental Medicine. A full set of the learning outcomes and assessment
from all of the university's degree programs is presented within a pdf-extract of the internal website used as a workspace for those developing outcome assessment practices for their academic units.

One of the university’s core values is academic excellence and impact, with creativity and innovation on the part of students as hallmarks of the education programs. These values are manifested in several different ways throughout the university's degree programs. All undergraduate degree programs require the completion of a SAGES capstone projects tied in with the SAGES general education program emphasizing critical thinking, creative work, and communication of that work including regular writing and a public presentation.

Summary statistical reports on students' perceptions of their academic progress indicate that learning outcomes are being met. These data are extracted from full reports from the College Senior Survey and the Your First College Year surveys posted on CWRU's Institutional Research website. Longitudinal studies of student engagement benchmarks from the National Survey of Student Engagement (administered by the CWRU Office of Institutional Research) show that a large percentage of undergraduate students perceive that they are engaging in intellectual inquiry and acquiring, applying, and integrating broad learning and skills. Increases in benchmarks between the freshman and senior years in the categories of enriching educational experiences, active and collaborative learning, and student-faculty interactions are evident.

Information literacy is infused throughout program curricula and library support services. The Kelvin Smith Library assists students with identifying and locating appropriate resources starting with the initial SAGES course in the student’s first semester through the Personal Librarian program, and subsequently through targeted programming.

4. Data on enriching educational experiences from the 2012 National Survey of Student Engagement as well as other sources indicate that CWRU undergraduate students include diverse perspectives in class discussions and writing assignments, and that the institution has contributed to their understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds. See the diversity report from the 2013 Your First College Year (YFCY) survey, and the 2014 YFCY diverse experiences report, for example.

The general education requirements for the College of Arts and Sciences include a full course in global and cultural diversity. Courses that satisfy this requirement must explore one or more cultures outside the United States or address in a substantive way ethnic, gender, sexual, religious, or other cultural practices within the United States. Enrollments in courses of this type are monitored and show substantial numbers of CWRU undergraduates are taking advantage of these courses.

Many of the graduate and professional degree programs directly address aspects of human and cultural diversity. For example, see the competency on communication within the medicine curriculum, which stresses effective communications with culturally diverse patients and families. Also the Collaborative Home for Oral Health, Medical Review and Health Promotion (CHOMP) program in which advanced practice nursing and dental students work in inter-professional teams with underserved or vulnerable populations.

The CWRU campus regularly ranks as one of the most LGBT-friendly campuses in the country. The LGBT Center provides numerous learning opportunities for CWRU students, faculty, and staff members including Safe Zone training. Safe Zone training is designed to educate the community about LGBT issues and how to create and protect a community of respect for LGBT faculty, staff and students.
Similarly, the Office of Inclusion, Diversity and Equal Opportunity (OIDEO) provides diversity awareness workshops and consultations for faculty, staff and student groups. The Sustained Dialogue program is available to CWRU students through joint sponsorship of OIDEO and the Division of Student Affairs. This is an initiative through the national Sustained Dialogue Institute, and has the goal of developing student leaders to engage differences as strengths to improve campus environments.

The Center for International Affairs promotes Study Abroad opportunities to students and also provides Faculty Seed Grants to support faculty efforts to internationalize education for both undergraduate and graduate students. In addition, there are many formally recognized international student groups at CWRU, which are advised by faculty and staff members.

Some of CWRU's academic programs are directly focused on global and cultural diversity. Examples include the Global MBA program, International Law programs, and Global Health programs. An International Studies major is available at the undergraduate level. Significant numbers of undergraduate courses that contain international content are offered each year. See, for example, the listing for 2014.

A focus on global and cultural diversity is also embedded in the general education requirements for undergraduates. For example, one goal of the SAGES First and University Seminars is to provide students with broad knowledge and increased appreciation of the importance of diversity in their cultural past, social world, and natural environment. (See the instructions for developing SAGES University Seminars.)

5. CWRU's Carnegie classification is that of a "Research University with Very High Research Activity." As such, CWRU's faculty and students do contribute directly to scholarship and the discovery of knowledge for the benefit of society.

CWRU students have many opportunities to engage in research and creative work. The SOURCE (Support of Undergraduate Research and Creative Endeavor) office is available to assist and prepare undergraduate students to engage in research and creative endeavors, and to guide and, where appropriate, to supplement institutional, departmental, and divisional work with this effort. Many seniors responding to CWRU's First Destination Survey report they have taken advantage of these opportunities. CWRU also publishes an undergraduate research journal, Discussions. This is a peer-reviewed journal run entirely by CWRU students.

Three times a year (near the end of the fall, spring, and summer terms) undergraduate students involved in research under faculty mentors present their projects through the SOURCE Symposium known as Intersections. The full range of research conducted by CWRU faculty, postdoctoral students, graduate and undergraduate students is presented annually at the Research ShowCASE. See the program booklet for the 2014 Research ShowCASE for examples of the breadth of research topics being pursued at CWRU. In the spring of 2014, the Intersections poster session was combined with the Research ShowCASE. All of these events are open to the public. This provides additional opportunities for CWRU students to gain experience presenting and explaining their work to others, which contributes another important component to their learning experience.

Another example of student creativity at CWRU is the Case Reserve Review. This literary and photographic magazine is supported by the Division of Student Affairs and features original poetry, prose, and photography from undergraduate and graduate students.

Students in the PhD programs are required to prepare a dissertation that represents a significant
contribution to existing knowledge in the student’s field, and at least a portion of the content must be suitable for publication in a reputable professional journal or as a book or monograph. On the professional school level, students in the School of Law produce four professional journals. Doctor of Management students (typically senior professionals) at the Weatherhead School of Management conduct rigorous research on issues of management practice and are required to prepare and submit their research papers to appropriate high-quality academic conferences for review and presentation. Experiences in research and scholarship are also required for all MD students.

Twice a year CWRU publishes THINK magazine, which highlights examples of the types of ongoing research and creative endeavors occurring across the university involving faculty and students. In addition, annual reports, research sites, news release sites, and alumni magazines produced by the schools highlight additional examples of faculty scholarship. See the examples provided for the College of Arts and Sciences, the Case School of Engineering, the School of Dental Medicine, the School of Law, the School of Medicine, the School of Nursing, the School of Applied Social Sciences, and the School of Management.

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