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# November 2018 Faculty Senate Newsletter

**This newsletter covers business conducted during the November 26, 2018 Faculty Senate meeting.**

**Of Particular Importance to All University Faculty**

## **International Rankings Initiative**

CWRU's international rankings have been steadily falling, mainly owing to actions by other institutions to increase their rankings. At the urging of faculty senators, an *ad hoc* committee was created and started meeting in the spring of 2017 to determine steps to reverse this trend. The university engaged Illuminate Consulting Group (an international science, research, and academic strategy consulting firm) led by Dr. Daniel Guhr, and Dr. Guhr presented to the Faculty Senate in October of 2017. Since that time, a smaller group, led by Molly Waktins, Executive Director for International Affairs, has continued working with the consultants. The proposal is the result of the working group's efforts, and they are requesting Faculty Senate endorsement.

Ms. Watkins said the university's rankings have begun to improve as the result of efforts made since 2017, but there is much more to be done. International rankings are impacted by the submission of accurate data, the creation of a sufficient communications plan, and by an investment in faculty research.

The proposal is not a strategic plan, but more of a guide for improving rankings by 2022. It includes 5 recommendations as follows:

- 1. Continue and Prioritize Existing Initiatives** that positively effect rankings, including building the new Faculty Information System (FIS), utilizing bibliometric indexes, attracting and diversifying international students, and employing Illuminate Consulting Group.
- 2. Develop systems to collect accurate faculty data as it relates to international rankings indicators**, making sure to cover necessary information in the Faculty Information System.
- 3. Capture existing faculty scholarship/patent information attributed to CWRU** by requiring ORCID ID and profile for faculty and updating this information as part of the faculty activity report.
- 4. Provide support and incentives for faculty to further their scholarship and increase their individual scholarship reputation in impactful ways.** Support faculty with both financial and non-financial resources to encourage international collaboration and high impact research endeavors
- 5. Create a comprehensive international communications strategy**, targeting international alumni, faculty and institutions, together with both international and domestic employers, all which have connections to CWRU.

Faculty senators expressed concerns about some details, while supporting the goal of raising rankings. For instance, the proposal included some prescriptive recommendations for faculty scholarly activity and did not include a budget for implementation of the key recommendations. The Senate voted not to endorse the proposal until a budget was added.

### **Faculty Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education (FSCUE): GER Initiative**

Professor Steve Eppell, chair of FSCUE, provided an update on the General Education Requirement (GER) Initiative. Last year, the Undergraduate Program Faculty (UPF) schools endorsed a statement supporting the principle of a common general education curriculum for all CWRU undergraduate students. Over the summer and into the fall semester, a basic structure for the GER was drafted. FSCUE sought buy-in from faculty in the UPF schools on this preliminary structure. A GER *ad hoc* subcommittee will be convened, which will include representatives from each of the UPF schools, and the subcommittee will work on developing a more detailed GER curriculum.

The primary changes from the current GER structure are:

- (1) transferring 1 credit from the SAGES First Seminar to create the Explore Seminar; First Seminar to be writing-intensive;
- (2) transforming the 6 credits of SAGES University Seminars into Writing-Intensive Academic Breadth requirements; and
- (3) broadening the definition of Physical Education to include Wellness within a similar 2-semester graduation requirement.

Prof. Eppell requested that senators inform their constituents about the GRE Initiative and let them know that a vote on the final GER proposal is anticipated within the next 6-18 months.

Faculty expressed concerns such as the possible reduction of SAGES instructors, asking faculty to teach a newly-designed one credit-hour Explore Seminar, and how breadth requirements would be impacted if a student decided to change majors.

***More detailed information on all items included in this newsletter are available on the Google site at <https://bit.ly/2UYBLEe>. Once the minutes have been approved (at the following Faculty Senate meeting), they will be posted on the Senate website along with all related documents.***