

## **From the FSCUE Meeting Minutes, May 3, 2011**

Jeff Wolcowitz, dean, Undergraduate Studies presented a written response from the FSCUE Curriculum Subcommittee to USG resolution R. 20-02, concerning modifications to SAGES requirements. Dean Wolcowitz said that Prof. Peter Whiting, director, SAGES was comfortable with the subcommittee's recommendations.

The FSCUE favored the first part of the recommendation, but wanted to give further thought to the second and third parts. Since the subcommittee's long-term recommendation was quite different than the USG resolution, the FSCUE instructed the Curriculum Subcommittee to consult with USG. Also, the FSCUE asked the subcommittee to explore whether the goal of having sufficient Natural World seminars is feasible before moving on that part of the recommendation.

### *Recommendation from the FSCUE Curriculum Subcommittee Regarding USG General Assembly Resolution R. 20-02: A Resolution to Adjust the SAGES Categorical Requirement*

*The Faculty Senate Committee on Undergraduate Education (FSCUE) received from the Undergraduate Student Government a resolution asking "[t]hat the SAGES program allow students to take two University Seminars of different categories regardless of the category students were placed in for their first seminar." FSCUE referred this resolution to its Curriculum Subcommittee for review, appropriate consultation with the constituent undergraduate-degree-granting schools, and recommendation.*

*The FSCUE Curriculum Subcommittee had an initial discussion of the resolution with Shengbo Wang, its author, and Professor Peter Whiting, Director of the SAGES Program. Following that discussion, the Associate Deans and curriculum committee chairs of the four undergraduate-degree-granting schools were asked to take the resolution back to their schools for whatever they determined to be the appropriate consultation and then report back to the FSCUE Subcommittee. The FSCUE Curriculum Subcommittee then developed and approved the following recommendation:*

*That the recommendation of USG Resolution R. 20-02 be implemented for students who have already matriculated and are subject to SAGES requirements and for students who matriculate prior to August 2012, but that this not become a permanent policy;*

*That the SAGES Program be modified to eliminate the Common Curriculum (CC) thematic group of First Seminars, beginning August 2012; and*

*That students who matriculate in August 2012 or later be expected to take a First Seminar and two University Seminars, one from each of the three thematic groups: Natural World (NA), Social World (SO), and Symbolic World (SY).*

### *Discussion*

*Under our current SAGES requirements, undergraduates must take a First Seminar from one of four thematic groups (CC, NA, SO, SY) and two University Seminars from two of three thematic groups (NA, SO, SY) that are also different from the thematic group of the First Seminar. While the FSCUE Curriculum Subcommittee does not believe that the configuration of the requirement is too difficult for students to understand, the group recognizes that students are constrained differentially in their choices of University Seminars depending on whether their First Seminar was in the CC category or another thematic group, and that students may not fully appreciate the implications of their First Seminar choices when expressing their seminar preferences prior to the start of their first year.*

*However, discussions within the constituent faculties revealed a strong reluctance to abandon the breadth aspect of the SAGES Program, leading to a preference to have the same three thematic areas for First and University Seminars (NA, SO, SY) and to require that students take one SAGES seminar in each of the three areas. Moreover, several faculty members expressed the*

*view that many of the seminar topics that are currently offered in the CC thematic group could be reassigned to one of the other areas.*

*The FSCUE Curriculum Subcommittee recognizes that its recommendation will require an equal number of seminars in each of the three thematic areas, combining First and University Seminars, and that it will take time to develop these. [In 2010-2011, 34 NA seminars were offered, 58 SO seminars were offered, and 61 SY seminars were offered; there were 36 First Seminars in the CC area.] Also, First Seminars in the CC area are already scheduled to be offered in Fall 2011. For these reasons, the Subcommittee recommends reconfiguring the requirement for Fall 2012.*

*The Subcommittee will request a report from the Director of the SAGES Program at the start of the spring semester 2012 on progress generating sufficient seminars in the three thematic areas for 2012-2013, and will determine at that time whether to recommend that the current structure of SAGES and the interim accommodation regarding University Seminars be extended until a later date.*

5/3/2011

The FSCUE voted to approve the following resolution:

*The FSCUE approves the recommendation of USG Resolution R. 20-02 which is to be implemented for students who have already matriculated and are subject to SAGES requirements and for students who matriculate prior to August 2012, but that this is not to become a permanent policy.*

*In regard to the other recommendation drafted by the FSCUE Curriculum Subcommittee on May 3, 2011, the FSCUE recommends that the FSCUE Curriculum Subcommittee consult with USG and others for the purpose of developing a permanent policy.*

The FSCUE will forward this resolution to the chair of the Faculty Senate for immediate consideration by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee so that it might be implemented starting in fall 2011.