

First Year Student Newsletter

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Greetings from the Dean

I realize that many of you are in the midst of a rigorous week of midterm exams prior to Spring Break. Best wishes on all of your academic endeavors this week, and I hope that you all have a relaxing break from your studies.

It's hard to believe that half of the semester has almost passed us by. The second half of the Spring Semester is always a busy time with many activities happening around campus, and many decisions to make about the upcoming summer and fall semester. March is an excellent time for reflection. You've learned a lot by now—about yourself, your relationships, and about Case, Cleveland, and the opportunities available to you. It's time to reflect on what you have learned and make plans for your future. What major(s) and minor(s) will you declare? How will you spend your summer? What activities will you explore in the upcoming year? Will you get involved in research or other creative endeavors? How can you enhance and enrich your collegiate experience? How can you make a difference?

As you reflect, also take some time to think about those individuals who have made a significant impact on you. Is there a professor who you believe is an outstanding teacher or a faculty or staff member who has been an influential mentor? If you have met such people and would like to recognize them, please keep in mind that the **Wittke Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching** and the **Jackson Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Mentoring** is accepting nominations until **March 6**. For more information on these awards, go to page 4 of this newsletter.

This newsletter contains a lot of information to assist you in this continued exploration and reflection process. As always, if you have questions, feel free to contact me at julie.amon@case.edu or Steven Scherger at steven.scherger@case.edu.

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Summer Classes and Off-Campus Study Request

Many of you have asked about taking summer classes at institutions other than Case. Can you do this? Yes!

As with most processes, there are policies, procedures and paperwork. Read the information in the handbook, <http://www.case.edu/provost/ugstudies/resources.htm>, and then if you are still interested, come in to Sears 357 to pick up the **Off-Campus Study Request Form**. In order to complete the Off-Campus Study Request, you must collect course descriptions for the course(s) that you are interested in taking. The course(s) will be evaluated by Dean Claudia Anderson.

The deadline for submission of the request is **April 15**. Most universities and colleges begin to post summer schedules in February and March, and you need to submit the form when you have actual course offerings to review. However, the sooner you complete the form, the sooner you will be notified if the course you are interested in taking has been approved. For those of you who live in Cuyahoga County, please pay special attention to the specific residency restrictions listed on the Off-Campus Study Request Form.

Don't forget that Case also offers summer courses and the tuition is half price for them! Classes are offered as eight-week, six-week, five-week, and four-week sessions. You can check out the courses currently planned for the Summer through the Searchable Schedule of Classes in SIS or by visiting <http://www.case.edu/academics/summer/index.html>

Case also offers a new three-week intensive term called **May Term**. The term follows the end of Spring Semester Finals and concludes before the regular summer session begins. Most of the courses are not offered during the academic year and are opportunities for students to go into the community, neighboring states, and beyond. For more information regarding May Term courses visit: http://www.case.edu/academics/summer/may_term.html

Summer Information Fair

March 24 and 25, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., SAGES Cafe

Do you have questions about summer courses at CWRU? The fourth annual SUMMER INFORMATION FAIR has the answers! The information fair will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 24 and 25, from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. in the SAGES Cafe. Come learn about summer courses. Fun giveaways. Raffle to win \$50 Barnes and Noble gift cards and other prizes.

For complete information about summer courses visit <http://www.cwru.edu/academics/summer/>

MAJOR DECLARATION

At this point, many of you have declared, many more have a major in mind but have not completed the declaration process, and finally a smaller number of you are unsure of your academic interests. For those who have decided upon a major, it is to your advantage to have completed and submitted the paperwork for officially declaring your major with Undergraduate Studies before the end of March in order to meet with your new advisor for Summer and Fall Semester registration.

Most students declare a major by the end of their first year. However, students still in the process of exploring academic options are not required to declare within this time frame. It is important to recognize that in order to have a successful and engaged first year experience, all first year students should work toward the clarification of academic interests.

YOUR MAJOR CAN BE CHANGED IF YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND LATER. If you change majors later on, that's fine -- many students do change (or add) majors as they discover new interests. It's also OK to change your mind later and "undeclare." **IF YOU'RE TRULY UNDECIDED**, continue to explore, to talk with your advisor and other faculty members, and to use the resources of the Career Center (Sears 206, <http://studentaffairs.case.edu/careers/>). Steven Scherger and I would also be happy to discuss your interests and this process. So long as you are actively engaged in exploring your interests and in making a decision, you can declare your major in the future. You should not be concerned about making a "wrong" decision about declaring a major. However, the best decision to make is an informed decision, so be intentional about talking to people, reviewing information, and understanding requirements before you make a decision. The advantage of declaring a major is the close and formal connection that is established between students and academic departments.

Those of you who have not declared yet, but are ready to do so should follow the steps listed below as soon as possible.

1. Obtain the Major Declaration Form* in the Office of Undergraduate Studies, Sears 357 (also available in the Wade and Fribley Commons). Take the form to the department representative in your intended major for his/her signature and assignment of a major advisor.
2. Students interested in Pre-Medicine/Pre-Dentistry and/or Pre-Law should be sure to mark the respective boxes on the declaration form.
3. Once completed, bring the yellow form to the Office of Undergraduate Studies, Sears 357. **The declaration of major is not official unless it is submitted to the Office of Undergraduate Studies.**

* A separate form must be completed for each major that you declare.



Summer and Fall 2009 Course Registration

Once you return from Spring Break, you should plan to meet with your faculty advisor to begin selecting your courses for Summer Session and Fall Semester. Registration for **Summer Session** courses will begin on **Monday, March 30**, which will be followed by **Fall Semester** registration **Friday, April 17**. For students who have a selected a major, but not officially declared it, you should complete the paperwork sometime over the next couple of weeks in order to be assigned a faculty advisor who can provide you with the most knowledgeable advice regarding your major.

Merit-Based Scholarship Opportunity Application Deadline—April 27, 2009

Case Western Reserve University will award a limited number of scholarships for 2009-2010 and subsequent years to students who are currently enrolled at Case and who have compiled a record of achievement, participation, and leadership that distinguishes them from their peers. The following scholarships will be available for the 2009-2010 academic year: One Trustee Scholarship, Two President's Scholarships, and Four Provost's Scholarships. **The deadline to apply for these scholarships is April 27, 2009.**

To be considered, students* must complete an application and submit a recommendation from a faculty member. Recipients will be selected in June. For additional information regarding these merit-based scholarships, the application process, and other scholarships opportunities for current students, go to <http://www.case.edu/provost/ugstudies/scholarships/S-merit.htm>

Students who already receive a Trustee, President's, Provost's, Provost's Special or Dean's Scholarship are **not eligible for these merit-based scholarship as they may not receive additional or greater merit-based scholarships than the ones already held.*

Scholarship Retention

Case merit-based scholarship (Full-tuition, Trustees', President's, Provost's and Dean's) renewal is based on two requirements: a minimum number of hours earned after enrolling at Case and a minimum cumulative scholarship grade point average**. The cumulative scholarship GPA requirement is **2.50 at the end of the first year** and 3.00 at the end of each succeeding year. Scholarship recipients will be required to have earned **at least 24 semester hours at Case in the first year**, 54 semester hours by the end of the second year, and 84 semester hours by the end of the third year. Recipients of **Provost's Special** Scholarships must maintain academic good standing to be eligible for continuation of their scholarships.

****Scholarship Grade Point Average:** *All courses completed for an evaluative grade at Case are included in the computation of the "scholarship g.p.a." The "scholarship g.p.a." matches the student's cumulative g.p.a., unless the student has used the Repeat Option. If a scholarship recipient has used the Repeat Option for any courses, the original grades in courses will be included in the computation of the cumulative average for the purpose of determining eligibility for scholarship continuation.*

Maintaining Good Academic Standing

Academic standing comprises two elements: credit hours earned at Case and grade point average (GPA). In order to achieve good academic standing by the end of the spring semester, first year students must earn **a total of 21 credit hours and a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 1.75.**

Course Repeat Option

If you are dissatisfied with a grade that you received, you may choose to repeat that course. Upon completion of the repeated course at Case for an evaluative grade (A, B, C, D or F), the first grade will remain visible on the transcript, but will be removed from the calculation of the cumulative grade point average and the original semester in which the grade was earned. The second grade will then be used for calculation into the cumulative grade point average, even if it is not the better grade. If the Course Repeat Option is applied, the student's transcript will show the comment "GRADE NOT COUNTED. COURSE REPEATED." directly below the course.

The Course Repeat Option may be exercised subject to the following conditions:

1. A student may not use the Pass/No Pass option in a course that is being repeated.
2. An academic action that occurred under the earlier grade is neither reversed nor removed from the record as a result of a change in the semester or cumulative averages that results from the repetition of one or more courses.
3. All grades earned at Case Western Reserve University, including those grades removed as a result of the application of the Course Repeat Option Policy, will be applied to the Scholarship GPA that is reviewed in order to determine Case Western Reserve University merit-based scholarship retention.

**Incomplete Deadline for Fall 2008 Semester
March 27, 2009**

If you received a grade of "I" (Incomplete) for the Fall Semester, it is your responsibility to meet with your professor and make arrangements to complete the unfinished work as soon as possible. All incomplete work must be completed and a grade change submitted to the Office of Undergraduate Studies **no later than March 27, 2009**. Any "I" not made up by this date will be converted to a grade of "F."

Any request for an extension must be submitted well in advance for review by the Dean's Committee. A request for extension should be submitted to Dean Jeffrey Wolcowitz in Sears 357 and must be accompanied by a supporting note from the professor in the course involved.

Withdrawing from a Course

As a first year student you may withdraw from a course(s) up until the last day of classes—**April 27**. In order to withdraw from a class, you must complete a Drop/Add Form (available in Sears 357, Wade and Fribley Commons, or Yost 110) and get the signature of your advisor. Once that is complete, come to the Office of Undergraduate Studies in Sears 357 or the R.U.S.S Hours in Wade or Fribley, for a Dean's signature. After you secure a Dean's signature, you must take the form to the Registrar's Office in Yost 110 for processing.

First year students who withdraw from a course in their first two semesters of full time enrollment will not have the withdrawn course listed on their official transcript. However, the transcript will indicate all attempted hours, including those representing a course(s) that was withdrawn.



Spring Midterm Grades

Professors are expected to have submitted your midterm grades to the Registrar by Monday, March 9. Therefore, during Spring Break you will have the opportunity to log on to SIS to view your midterm grades.

Your faculty advisor will be able to view your midterm grades on-line during the week of March 9. Therefore, you should feel free to contact your advisor for an appointment to discuss your progress thus far in the semester once you return from Spring Break on March 16. Remember, this is a good time to pause and reflect on your academic progress and decide if you need to make any changes to your study strategies. At this point in the semester, you definitely still have time to affect some positive changes. Please review the following list of tips to see if any might be appropriate for you.

- Talk to your professors regularly during office hours to ask questions and to get to know him/her. If you are not happy with your performance on an assignment, ASK HIM/HER WHAT HAPPENED!
- Use SI Sessions and Free Tutoring Sessions offered through Educational Services for Students (ESS).
- Meet with ESS staff members to assess your individual time management and study strategies. ESS can be contacted at 368-5230 or in Sears 470.
- Reflect on the amount of time you are spending "studying." Is it enough? Are you studying during the time of day at which you are most alert? Could you use your study time more efficiently and effectively?
- Consider forming a study group with your peers.

For more tips check out Educational Service for Students' one-page SuccESS Strategies designed to improve academic performance: <http://studentaffairs.case.edu/education/resources/onepagers/>

Spring Final Exams Schedules

By now you should have reviewed your spring final exam schedule. It is important that you consult your course syllabi and the on-line final exam schedule. Final exams dates **will not** be altered to accommodate travel plans. You can find the Final Exam Schedule on the Registrar's website at

<http://www.case.edu/provost/registrar/exams/exam2091.html>. Make sure you confirm your exam schedule and make your travel, work or school plans accordingly.

4/27	Last Day of Classes
4/28 – 4/29	Reading Days
4/30	Final Exams Begin
5/7	Final Exams End

NOTE: No student will be required to take more than two final examinations on a single day. A student who has three final examinations scheduled for a single day should go to the Office of Undergraduate Studies and obtain the assistance of Dean Jeffrey Wolcowitz in arranging to take one of those examinations on an alternative day during the final examination period. Similarly, a student with conflicting examinations should seek the assistance of the Dean Wolcowitz in arranging to have the time of one examination changed.

Financial Aid Application Deadline
May 15, 2009
You Must Apply Each Year!

The application process for financial aid for the **2009-2010** academic year has begun. The aid year covers summer session 2009 and the fall and spring semesters. The application deadline is **May 15, 2009**, and applications completed after that date will be awarded with remaining funds available.

All applicants for financial aid must complete the 2009-2010 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at www.fafsa.ed.gov using the Federally-assigned Personal Identification Number (PIN). Both the student and a parent must sign the form using the PIN. Families should not complete the 2009-2010 FAFSA until they have completed their 2008 Federal Income Tax Return 1040 to ensure that the figures reported on the FAFSA are accurate.

Making mistakes on the FAFSA may delay your application. The most common errors are listed below. As you complete the FAFSA, try to avoid these mistakes:

- Leaving fields blank- enter a "0" or "not applicable" instead of leaving a blank.
- Using commas or decimal points in numeric fields, always round to the nearest dollar.
- Listing incorrect Social Security Number or Driver's License Number
- Entering the wrong federal income tax paid amount- obtain this figure from the Federal Income Tax Return, not the W-2 form(s).
- Listing Adjusted Gross Income as equal to total income- these are not the same figure.
- Listing marital status incorrectly- the answer reflects the status on the day the FAFSA is signed.
- Listing parent marital status incorrectly- the custodial parent's marital status as of the day the FAFSA is signed should be reported. If the custodial parent is remarried, the stepparent's information must be provided.
- Leaving the question about drug-related offenses blank.
- Forgetting to list the college-our school code is 003137.
- Forgetting to sign and date- be sure that you and your parent sign the form electronically with your PINs.
- Entering the wrong address- use your permanent home address, not your campus or summer address.

Materials that will help you complete the FAFSA include:

- Your Social Security Number (from your Social Security card)
- Your driver's license (if any)
- Your and your parents' 2008 W-2 Forms that show the amount earned
- Your and your 2008 Federal Income Tax Return 1040
- Any untaxed income records such as Social Security, Temporary Assistance to
- Needy Families, welfare, or veterans benefits records
- Current bank statements
- Current business and investment mortgage information, business and farm records, stock, bond, and other investment records
- Documentation that you are a U.S. permanent resident or other eligible noncitizen.

The Pre-Application Worksheet will help you collect and verify the information for your application before you submit it. The Worksheet is available at www.fafsa.ed.gov or in the Office of University Financial Aid in Room 417A Yost Hall. If you need assistance completing the FAFSA, please contact the Office of University Financial Aid.

Financial Aid Application (cont.)

The 2009-2010 Case Form, available in briefCase at <http://finaid.case.edu>, and FAFSA are required of all applicants. Some applicants will be selected for verification of the information reported on the FAFSA. These students will be contacted by the office to submit signed copies of student and parent 2008 Federal Income Tax Returns, W-2 Forms, and to complete a Verification Form. Students with special circumstances are encouraged to contact the office directly for information on submission of information about their situation.

Students receiving academic scholarships only are NOT REQUIRED to submit the FAFSA for renewal of the award(s). Renewal is based upon academic performance, not financial need.

SAGES Writing Portfolio

It is never too early to begin preparing your SAGES Writing Portfolio. Students who fail to plan properly will find it difficult to meet the requirements of the Writing Portfolio as you will be required to submit past work from each of your seminars: an essay from your First Seminar, an essay from a University Seminar, and a research essay from a University Seminar. For further instructions regarding the SAGES Writing Portfolio visit <http://www.case.edu/sages/portfolio.htm>

One of the best preparations you can take now for the Writing Portfolio is to secure your papers. It is highly recommended that you save copies of your papers in the file folders at filer.case.edu. Each student is given 500MB of free space through the service, which should be more than enough for you to store all of your SAGES papers, as well as essays and assignments from other courses you may want to keep for further applications to professional and graduate schools.

**R.U.S.S. (Residential Undergraduate Studies Satellite
Monday—Wednesday; 6:00—8:00 p.m.; Wade and Fribley**

Have a quick question? Need to withdraw from a class? Wondering about how to get connected to academic opportunities? Come visit with representatives from the Office of Undergraduate Studies at R.U.S.S. Offices in Wade and Fribley, Mondays – Wednesday from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

RUSS Offices will be closed during the week of Spring Break from March 9 – 11. Normal R.U.S.S. hours will resume the following week on March 16.

Contact the main Office of Undergraduate Studies at 368-2928 or <http://www.case.edu/provost/ugstudies/walkinhours.htm> to check about weekly walk-in availability.

**Wittke Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching
Jackson Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Mentoring
Nomination Deadline: Friday, March 6, 2009**

Do you have a favorite professor who deserves to be recognized for outstanding teaching? Has a faculty or staff member mentored you during your time at Case? Would you like to see these individuals recognized for their outstanding commitment to you as a student? Nominations for the 2009 Wittke Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching and the 2009 Jackson Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Mentoring are now being accepted. For more information and to make an on-line nomination, go to: <http://studentaffairs.case.edu/awards/wittke/>
<http://studentaffairs.case.edu/awards/jackson/>

Study Abroad



Information Sessions

University of Edinburgh, Scotland

Thursday, March 5, 2009
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Sears 354

Danish Institute for Study Abroad

Tuesday, March 31, 2009
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Sears 350

Brethren Colleges Abroad

Wednesday, April 1, 2009
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Sears 354

Writing Resource Center News

Consultants at the **Writing Resource Center (WRC)** are currently assisting many first-year students with their writing projects this term. The WRC welcomes students at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming and drafting, to revising and organizing, to sharpening expression. Visit the WRC at one of four locations: Nord 404, SAGES Café, Kelvin Smith Library, and Bellflower Hall. To learn more and to make an appointment, visit www.casewconline.com.

WRC Campus Workshop – Research & Documentation

Friday, March 20, 12:30 – 1:45 p.m.
104 Bellflower Hall

Worried about your upcoming research paper? This workshop will help to answer your questions about researching a topic and finding and citing your sources

Upcoming at the WRC

Do you have what it takes to be CWRU's next **Writing Idol**? Look for more information on this exciting Writing Week contest in April!

**Common Reading Program
Recommend Books for 2010
Deadline: Friday, March 6**

This past summer your class was asked to participate in the 2008 Common Reading Program by reading *The Reluctant Mr. Darwin* by David Quammen. Do you know of a book by a current author that you believe would interest, challenge, and enlighten students as hopefully Quammen's book did for you? If so, then now is your chance to recommend it! The Common Reading Selection Committee is currently accepting recommendations of fiction and non-fiction books for the Common Reading for 2010. If you would like to make a recommendation go to <http://studentaffairs.case.edu/orientation/reading/>.

The Committee is looking for books that will engage incoming students, encourage the sort of reflection that leads to dialogue and discussion, present issues of enduring human concern, and contribute to the intellectual and cultural life of the campus.

**Educational Services for Students (ESS)
Presentation Workshop Series**

Educational Services for Students (ESS) has introduced a workshop series to help students enhance their presentation skills. Students can learn ways to organize their work, understand their audience, use appropriate visual aids, and speak with confidence.

Workshops are offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. in the Sears 480. For more information go to: <http://studentaffairs.case.edu/education/resources/presentation.html>

**Appointments**

Make one at
<http://tutortrac.case.edu>

Website

Find all our services at
<http://ess.case.edu/writingcrew>

Drop Box

Email your paper to
SAGESWritingCrew@gmail.com

Instant Messenger

Send an IM to
SAGESWritingCrew
Mon – Thurs, 9 pm – 11 pm

Writing Guide

Student-written advice at
<http://ess.case.edu/sagesguide>

Adobe Connect

Get live long-distance help at
<http://ess.case.edu/resources/sagesguide/connectcrew.html>

Facebook

Search "SAGES Crew"
to fan our page

**2009 – 2010 Room Selection Process
Housing Application Deadline: Monday, March 16**

Information regarding the 2009-2010 Room Selection Process, which is currently underway, can be found at <http://studentaffairs.case.edu/living/housing/selection/>

Housing applications must be completed online, making it easier for groups of students to sign up together, and for students currently residing off campus to participate. We are also providing most forms online for you to download. Finally, we have provided a room selection flowchart to guide you through the process and determine what option is right for you!

If you have any questions, contact the residence life staff in your building for assistance. You can also send an email to housing@case.edu.

**Greek Week 2009
March 29 – April 5**

Each spring, the Office of Greek Life sponsors a week of competitive, philanthropic, and social events called "Greek Week." Coordinated and planned by undergraduate student leaders, it is a time to celebrate being Greek and show chapter pride with the entire Case fraternal community. Events include the "Can Castle" food drive, Pyramid, Banner competition, and Obstacle Course. The largest and most competitive event is the Rope Pull.

For more information regarding Greek Week and corresponding events, visit <http://studentaffairs.case.edu/greek/ritual/greekweek>

**Disability Resources Presents:
Disability ≠ Inability Movie Matinee Series
March 6, 4:00 p.m., Sears 435**

As part of their awareness campaign, Disability Resources will be continuing its *Disability ≠ Inability* Movie Matinee Series on March 6, at 4:00 p.m., in Sears 435 by showing *Emmanuel's Big Gift*. The movie tells the story of how Emmanuel brings dignity to people with physical disabilities in Ghana and inspires people with and without disabilities around the world to face and overcome challenges.

Snacks and soft drinks will be served. A discussion will follow. Students, faculty, and staff are all welcome to attend.

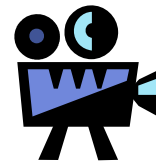
**19th Annual Unity Banquet & Scholarship Benefit
'An Evening with Kirk Franklin'
Friday, March 27, 2009**

The theme for this year's banquet is *An Evening with Kirk Franklin*. Song writer, record producer, music director, singer, and pianist, Franklin's remarkable career has been instrumental in changing the landscape of contemporary gospel music. He is known worldwide as the leader of urban contemporary gospel choirs such as the Family and God's Property. He has won five Grammy's, 34 Stellar Awards, and 12 Dove Awards. He has also won two BET Music Awards, four NAACP Awards, and a Soul Train Award. With 12 million albums sold and over 20 #1 singles on Gospel radio.

We are excited to share that these benefit ticket prices have not changed in 4 years! For University family & Cleveland communities, ticket prices are as follows: \$60 (1/26 – 3/6), \$70 (3/7 – 3/20), \$80 (3/21 – 3/25)

For more information regarding the Unity Banquet & Scholarship Benefit, visit <http://studentaffairs.case.edu/multicultural/>

Movies



All movies listed below will be shown at Strosacker Auditorium. For more information, go to <http://films.cwru.edu/>

3/18	I Love You, Man 7:00 p.m.
3/20	Quantum of Solace 7:00 p.m., 9:30 p.m., 12:00 a.m.
3/21	TBA
3/27	The Pursuit of Happyness 7:00 p.m., 9:30 p.m., 12:00 a.m.
3/28	Beauty and the Beast 7:00 p.m., 9:00 p.m.

**Have A Great
Spring Break!**