Faculty Senate Speaker Susan McIntosh served as moderator for the Faculty Forum on International Strategy. Approximately thirty-five faculty members attended the meeting, which was held in Sewall Hall, room 309.

McIntosh welcomed the group and explained the role of the Faculty Senate in the Rice Initiatives. She said that after the original task forces selected by the provost finished their work, the Senate’s Working Group on the Rice Initiatives initiated peer review of the white papers. McIntosh thanked Deputy Speaker Tom Killian for chairing the working group, and she named the other members of this group: Matthias Henze, Matteo Pasquali, Dale Sawyer, Robin Sickles, and Moshe Vardi. McIntosh also thanked the task force members for producing the white papers, and she thanked the faculty members who reviewed and submitted comments.

McIntosh stated that one concern raised by reviewers was regarding the level of investment or additional research faculty that will be required for success; there is no quick path to pre-eminence. She also stated that funding for the Initiatives was a reoccurring question. McIntosh said that the $100 million dollar figure stated by Provost George McLendon as needed for the Rice Initiatives will not be funded by his office; fund-raising thus lies ahead for those who wish to be involved. She said that the next steps in the process are to refine, enhance, and/or recast the proposals so that they include the best ideas and all faculty members who are interested in participating in the Rice Initiatives.

Vice President for International & Interdisciplinary Initiatives Carol Quillen addressed the group. She thanked Speaker McIntosh and the Faculty Senate for their work, and she stated that success of the Rice Initiatives will require faculty support. Quillen said that the International Strategy Initiative is different from the other two Initiatives in that “international” is not a substantive topic. However, just like the other task forces, the International Strategy task force sought to identify substantive research areas where Rice could be pre-eminent.

Quillen said that progress in International Strategy serves everyone’s interests at Rice: undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty. The task force members thought that Rice should tackle big problems; build on its research strengths; build on its institutional strengths, particularly its agility; and focus on Asia and Latin America, through networks, not outposts. Quillen described a movement of scholars between Rice and elsewhere through joint appointments and dual degrees.

Quillen said there are four areas on which the task force focused: Global Urban, Global Health, Latin America, and Materials, which she stated is a well-developed proposal that includes collaboration with the best Asian institutions.
The assembled faculty members stated comments and asked questions, which are summarized below:

- It seems that it is the individual faculty stars that shine in these proposals, yet in Humanities, we are building in areas, not people. I am hoping we can build on our people strengths.
- Four years ago, we had lost several Latin American scholars and there was a need to rebuild. President Leebron’s Latin American Initiative began, and we have grown from three faculty in 2007 to 12 or 13 now in Humanities and Social Sciences. What is needed is some sort of structural method to move them together.
- Humanities Dean Nicholas Shumway is globally known for his work in Latin America; he is widely respected.
- A major development in Global Health since the task force finished its work is the addition of Russell Ware at the Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) as director of the Center for Global Child Health. In addition, BCM recruited Peter Hotez, an expert in neglected tropical diseases. These appointments at BCM offer collaborative possibilities with Rice.
- Quillen: For both of these recruitments, being associated with Rice was important. They will both have appointments at Rice. There is significant overlap regarding how we think about Latin America and health, and how we can develop ways to solve problems such as diabetes.
- The Rice Seminars proposal could be expanded so that these types of collaborations could foster future strong ties. We do not have to identify everything at the beginning, but we could build a tank where future topics could be addressed.
- The Materials department has already established a strong relationship with a university in China. At Rice, Materials sits at the intersection of four departments at Rice which share one characteristic; a ranking which stands above 98%. Materials is so diverse, no single university can do it all, not even a large university; Rice is considered to be big in this field.
- Regarding international students, are we considering the support that many will need in language and communication? The Office of International Studies is stretched to the maximum.
- Paula Sanders: For language difficulties, we are working with Adria Baker and others to create programs which will include intensive English language courses in Continuing Studies. We are aware that the current funds and faculty will not cover all of our future plans.
- In the Jones Graduate School of Business, global programs exist—partnerships between U.S. programs and foreign MBA programs. Rice has a real opportunity with the Initiatives—Global Health, Rice Seminars, etcetera—some of which are linked, others are not. We will need a cohesive branding or marketing message.
- Transportation is a major problem in many places around the world. A lot of critical issues exist in this field, plus the potential for economic growth. A piece of this issue was addressed by the task force; moving from two-dimensional to three-dimensional.
- Most people live in cities, which are the areas most affected by interruption, but also the most resilient. In collaboration with the Kinder Institute, a small number of cities have been identified for study.
• The Global Urban proposal might be the right place for all of our efforts. It brings together many disciplines, but it does not have a major source for funding. If Rice could offer its own funding to its faculty, this may be the way to go.
• Quillen: This group of Initiatives gets built independently, but they can work together. We might make very strategic hires who can work across two schools.
• The Rice Seminars might be a way that pockets of Humanists could work together. Could we modify the format from the current six outsiders and two insiders per group? Reply from Quillen: Six visitors is too many. If the provost office pilots the program, four and four is possible; we can be flexible.

McIntosh asked Quillen about the next steps for the International Strategy Initiative. Quillen replied that a workshop is planned for the Global Urban group in which all interested faculty will be invited. They will also be asked about their hiring priorities. The Materials group, which is very diverse, is moving forward. The Global Health group would like to have a university-wide workshop; the dilemma is whether to make it Rice-only or reach out to new people, such as BCM. The Latin America group will have its own workshop. Some of these events will not happen until the fall.

McIntosh thanked everyone for attending, and she said to be watching for emails from the provost’s office. The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.