Official Student Communication

There is an expanding dependence on electronic communication among students, faculty, and staff at RCTC. This is motivated by the convenience, speed, cost-effectiveness, and environmental advantages of using email rather than printed communication. Because of this increasing dependence and acceptance of electronic communication, RCTC has an Official Student Communication Policy and Procedures. The intent of the policy is to utilize electronic mail as a means to communicate important information to our students in a timely manner. All students enrolled in credit bearing course work are assigned an official RCTC e-mail account, and official college communication shall be sent to these accounts.

The Office of the Vice President of Student Development and Services is the keyholder of the official student e-mail addresses. All items for student wide distribution must be submitted to Roxy Roadway according to the guidelines listed below. The Office of the Vice President of Student Development and Services has the right to deny requests based on these guidelines.

Guidelines:
* Items must be submitted to Roxy Roadway in electronic format.
* The use of attachments is discouraged.
* The use of web links is strongly encouraged.
* Requests must be received at least ten working days prior to the intended e-mail distribution date.

Examples of Appropriate Student Wide Distribution:
* Communicating Student Life Activities and information
* Communicating important deadlines (drop/add, payments due date, last days to withdrawal, etc.)
* Surveys that are sanctioned for UCR/RCTC purposes.

Examples of Inappropriate Student Wide Distribution:
* Information unrelated to UCR/RCTC business
* Solicitation
* Promoting political viewpoints
* Messages containing confidential information such as grades, financial aid awards, etc.
* Emails that violate the Official Student Communication Policy.

The Official Student Communication Policy is attached. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Roxy Roadway at 285-7127.
**Marketing Fact**
72% of persons 18-34 years old report that they've seen or heard an RCTC promotion in the past 60 days. 63% of the market as a whole have seen or heard an RCTC ad. (Knowledge & Awareness Survey, Spring 2006)

**Condolences**
Condolences to Tara Hammill (adjunct BTEC instructor) whose mother, Joleen Voeltz, passed away on January 5th.

Condolences to Carol Naatz (Facilities Scheduler) whose father-in-law, Anthony W. "Tony" Falk, passed away on January 9th.

It is with sorrow we announce the passing away of Eugene Passe on December 24th, husband of former vocational technical institute horticulture program faculty Fran Passe. Mr. Passe was 79 years old.

It is with sorrow that we also announce the passing away of James Robert Murphy on January 12th, husband of retired Job Service Officer Jan Murphy. (Although Jan officially worked for the Minnesota Job Services, she was housed at the campus and assisted many of our students in obtaining employment.) Mr. Murphy was 74 years old.

Our thoughts are with these families during these difficult times.

**Hucke Benefit**
As many of you may know, Danielle Hucke, daughter of Steve (Physical Education Instructor and Coach) and Dawn Hucke, was diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma back in May. She is currently undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

A benefit is being organized by friends and the community for **Saturday, February 17, 2007 from noon - 5:00 pm at Byron Middle School.** The event includes a carnival/entertainment, meal and a silent auction. A flier with more information is attached to this week’s *Crossings*.

In addition, monetary donations will be accepted. Anyone wishing to make a donation should forward their check, payable to “Christ Lutheran Church % Danielle Hucke Benefit” to the Office of the President (SS202) or via intercampus mail at Box 1.

As many of you know, we often make reference to the *RCTC Family!* Please consider attending the benefit and/or making a monetary donation to truly reflect that we are a *Family* that cares about each other!
Supalla Scribblings

This week the House Higher Education and Workforce Development Policy and Finance Division heard from two-year college students. Testimony included personal stories of high debt, the need for better technology and the high cost of textbooks. The rising cost of tuition is one issue we will hear more about over the next few months. On Tuesday, January 16, Chancellor McCormick and Office of the Chancellor staff will present the $177 million biennial budget request to the Senate Higher Education Committee. RCTC will serve as “poster child” for the system’s health care initiative. College representatives will be on hand to showcase two posters highlighting our activities in nursing education, health information technology, center of excellence and web-based basic health care learning. MnSCU’s weekly legislative updates are now available at:  http://www.mnscu.edu/about/legislative/updates/weeklyupdates/2007/index.html

First day of the semester registrations indicate that spring semester enrollments are down 4.4 percent from last spring semester’s first day numbers. Although the numbers might change slightly over the next few days, its likely spring quarter enrollment will be down about 4 percent. Best guess calculations indicate that total RCTC enrollment for 2006-07 will be down by approximately three percent compared to last year. Enrollment declines are likely the result of a number of converging factors: hefty tuition increases, robust economy, increased competition (especially Minnesota School of Business), decline in customer service satisfaction, marketing and public relations strategies (especially recent press focused on the University of Minnesota Rochester) and change in the cancellation for non-payment policy. If you have other ideas on why RCTC’s enrollment has declined more significantly than the average of other two-year colleges in the system, or suggestions to immediately bolster enrollment, please let me know.

The winter sports season is in full swing and if you haven’t seen the Yellowjacket men’s and women’s basketball team in action, you’re missing some excellent entertainment. Both teams are doing extremely well in conference play. The players’ technical skills, hustle and conduct on and off the court will make you proud. And, if you’re a wrestling fan, come out and support the Yellowjacket grapplers. Fans in the stands are noticed by both athletes and coaches. Whether it’s the success of a sporting event, play, concert, math competition or Student Lobby Day at the Capitol, that success reflects positively on RCTC.

Chancellor McCormick recently sent a letter highlighting system accomplishments to various MnSCU constituencies. In the letter, he cited the following accomplishments:

- Adopted a new strategic plan that focuses on increasing access and opportunity, promoting and measuring high-quality learning programs, advancing regional and state economic needs, and adding a new emphasis on innovation
- Minnesota Online served more than 42,000 students in 2005-06, an increase of 11,000 students over 2004-05
- Established a “Power of You” program to encourage more students to properly prepare for college, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, St. Paul College and Metropolitan State University began offering free tuition to eligible high school graduates in Minneapolis and St. Paul through
- Established four Centers of Excellence…strategic information and security, health science education and practice and two in manufacturing and engineering…involve 17 of the system’s colleges and universities (including RCTC)
- Formed the Friends Action Network (FAN), a grassroots network of faculty, staff, students, alumni and community members committed to building public support for MnSCU’s legislative request is signing up members

Research and common knowledge say that students who are engaged with their school have a better chance at success. This is especially important at the community college level, where students are more likely to be juggling work and family along with their course load. This year’s CCSSE survey results show a difference in the experiences between part-time and full-time students. Part-time students are less likely than full-time students to discuss grades or assignments with an instructor, use e-mail to communicate with an instructor or talk about career plans with an instructor or an advisor.

In December, a panel of political, business and higher education leaders laid out a sweeping proposal for overhauling the nation’s educational system. It calls for squeezing $67-billion from the current system and using that money to prepare some students for community college by the end of the tenth grade, to change the way elementary and secondary teachers are trained and recruited, and to pay those teachers more. The report, Tough Choices or Tough Times, is published by Jossey-Bass and can by purchased online from the publisher.

Thought for the week…

Actually, much customer service training is “how to be” rather than “how to do.”

-- Mike Barger, VP, JetBlue Airways

Celebrate the Martin Luther King holiday by viewing Kevin Dobbe’s interactive art in the Atrium.
New Policy Approved
The RCTC Administration recently approved an "Apprenticeship Elective Credits Policy" which states sixteen of the required twenty elective credits of the AA degree (Liberal Arts and Sciences) could be satisfied through proof of successful completion of a state or federally approved apprenticeship program. A copy of the entire policy is attached to this week's Crossings.

Remember: It is the responsibility of every RCTC employee and student to familiarize themselves with, and adhere to, state, system, and college policies. All MnSCU and RCTC policies are available through the RCTC website at http://www.rctc.edu/policies.

Club Meeting
Martial Arts Club will meet on Wednesday from 8:00-10:00pm in SC108.

Minutes
Pages 5-7
Rochester Community and Technical College  
AFSCME Labor/Management  
Minutes for Monday, November 27, 2006 - 10:00 a.m. – AT109

Present: Administration: Arntson, Bequette, Cram, Gilrsrud, Hansmann, Supalla, Weber  
AFSCME: Clark, Conway, Edwardy, Lunning, Martin (Business Agent), Staloch, Tucker  
Guest: Monson  
Recorder: Judy Kingsbury

ITEM 1 (AFSCME) New Emergency Hires Working Hours – Hansmann reported four temporary employees have been hired recently to cover permanent employees out because of illness or work restrictions. Staloch questioned if the temporary employees were being assigned to routine jobs; with the more specialized assignments being assigned to permanent employees. Monson and Hansmann confirmed they had asked for volunteers and currently have three candidates, but currently a temporary is working on the loading dock. Martin encouraged the specific jobs be assigned to permanent employees; hence providing them an opportunity to gain knowledge in those areas, resulting in benefits for the permanent employee and the College. Action: Monson and Hansmann will re-evaluate the assignments as suggested by AFSCME.

ITEM 2 (AFSCME) Snow Shoveling Assignment – Hansmann distributed the overtime snow shoveling roster. Martin questioned how the snow roster aligns with the seniority roster to ensure an equal opportunity. Martin suggested an assignment list be developed with the duties and normal hours of work. Hansmann questioned how that would affect the turnaround time requirements. Martin clarified it would not be affected because it wouldn’t be a split shift, but rather overtime. Martin also confirmed a “do not call” list can be maintained for those that don’t want to be considered. Staloch added several individuals are trained to run specific equipment and a separate list would be beneficial for those individuals. Martin also stated the list could be maintained by classification so groundskeepers are first called to run special equipment. Martin also suggested the number of inches of snow necessary for work should not be defined in the roster, but rather should be an internal decision. Tucker questioned what would happen if there weren’t enough workers willing to come in for overtime. Martin clarified that the employer has the right to call an employee back and have them come in if they are understaffed; hence an employee can turn down overtime until it becomes mandatory. An additional discussion occurred on the safety of employees being called in during bad weather. Martin confirmed any worker’s compensation issue would be handled by the Department of Employee Relations. Action: Hansmann and Monson will rework the roster and share with AFSCME via e-mail.

ITEM 3 (AFSCME) Snow Removal Gear – Hansmann reported gear will be purchased (i.e. coats with reflective tape) and remain on campus for work related use. Martin responded any kind of sharing of personal protective equipment is not in the best interest of the employees. Hansmann confirmed each individual would have their own gear, but to ensure they are only being used for state use, coats and gloves would remain at the College. Boots, however, could be worn home. ACTION: Appropriate equipment will be purchased with the understanding any excessive wear of gear will be investigated.

ITEM 4 (AFSCME) Position Description – Martin announced the item may be resolved through another avenue. Action: No Action.

ITEM 5 (AFSCME) Telecommuting Policy – Arntson reported the policy is awaiting faculty feedback. Action: No Action.

ITEM 6 (AFSCME) Orientation/Training for New Employees – Arntson announced a new employee orientation is held at the beginning of each semester, but non-faculty also meet individually with the Human Resources Staff to discuss benefits. Monson added the safety coordinator conducts safety training with new hires. Conway suggested the new employees be highlighted in the Crossings to introduce them to the other employees. Action: Arntson will include new employee information in Crossings.
ITEM 7 (AFSCME) Length of Filling Job Openings – Conway shared concerns from co-workers on the process and length of time it takes to fill a vacancy for a retirement or resignation; noting the delay adds additional responsibility and pressure on others in the department. Arntson responded the process is shared with the supervisor of the areas, but agreed to share the information college-wide. Supalla shared his own frustration with the length of time it is taking to fill positions, noting some of the delays are local and others are a result of delays at MnSCU. Action: Arntson will provide information college-wide on the status of the filling of vacancies.

ITEM 1 (Admin) Contracting of Services – Hansmann announced, at the request of academic support staff, consideration was made to hire a part-time individual from ABC, Inc. to handle the mail and duplicating errands, but, after receiving the full request, it appears to be a lot more responsibility than originally envisioned. Hansmann stated non-academic support will be asked for their input and the request is on hold at this time. Action: No Action.

ITEM 2 (Admin) Campus Closing Update/Holiday Break – Hansmann reported there are enough maintenance employees working during the break that there is no need to contract out services for the Sports Center, but additional female employees are still needed for cleaning of the women’s restrooms during the day. Action: No Action.

ITEM 3 (Admin) Construction Update – Hansmann provided an update on the recent construction projects: Memorial Hall Roofing Project is complete; Heintz Center asbestos abatement will be performed in the commons area; Health Science Center is on schedule; and the Migrant Clinic is scheduled to open in January. Hansmann announced a project manager has been identified for each project. Any questions should be referred to Monson. Action: Monson will share an asbestos abatement schedule college-wide.

ITEM 4 (Admin) Employment and Search Committee Update – Arntson distributed the search team listing. Action: No Action.

ITEM 5 (Admin) IPP Process – Weber announced a mid-year review of FY07 IPPs is being conducted, and the FY08 IPP process is scheduled to launch in mid-February. Enhancements to the FY08 process include the addition of Customized Training and Student Life budgets in the process. Hansmann added non-academic departments are required to complete annual self-assessments. Action: No Action.

ITEM 6 (Admin) Equipment Policy – Martin suggested qualifiers for specific use of state issued cell phones for personal use be reviewed based on recent interpretations by the Department of Employee Relations. Action: Arntson will review the DOER interpretation as it relates to the use of state issued cell phones for personal use.

ITEM 7 (Admin) UMR Expansion Update – Supalla provided an update on the UMR expansion, noting any moves wouldn’t occur before late summer. Preliminary discussions have indicated the Uof M Extension and some UMR programs (nursing and bachelor of fine arts) will probably remain at the UCR campus for the foreseeable future. Supalla added UMR does not have a lease agreement with RCTC, but rather is responsible for the debt service of the Science/Technology Building. UMR plans to continue paying that debt service until it expires in 2012; at which time a lease will be renegotiated for any programs remaining at UCR. Action: No Action.

Adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

NEXT MEETING: February 5, 2007 – 10:00 a.m. – AT109
Rochester Community and Technical College  
Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF) Faculty Shared Governance Council  
Minutes for Tuesday, November 28, 2006 – 2:00 p.m. – AT109

Present: Administration Cram, Hansmann, Supalla  
Faculty Gust, Israelson, Marconett, Martinez, Wright (Chair)  
Recorder: Kingsbury  
Guest: Kathleen Dahl, Beth Arntson

ITEM 1 (F) Telecommuting Policy Response – Dahl (Chair of the Distance Education Subcommittee) distributed the subcommittee’s written position to reject the proposed Telecommuting Policy. Specifically, the response noted the policy applies more to staff, and doesn’t appropriately work for faculty teaching online. The subcommittee suggested a separate policy for faculty that aligns with the faculty contract. Wright added, if the faculty references were eliminated from the policy, there would be no need to bring the policy back to FSGC for further discussion. ACTION: Supalla will visit with Gilsrud and Arntson before a final decision is made on the Telecommuting Policy.

ITEM 1 (A) Zoomerang Survey – Cram announced activity assignment reviews were being completed for faculty with activity assignments, and indicated a desire to use the online Zoomerang Survey as a tool during the review process. Cram’s desire is to survey both peers and students during the process. Although Marconett concurs the input of such information would be useful, concerns were raised on whether it violates union contract language, noting peer review is currently not part of the faculty evaluation process, and faculty with activity assignments cannot be treated any differently. Arntson responded the process requests feedback, but Cram would still do the evaluation of the faculty member. In addition, Arntson announced Bequette is leading a workgroup to re-evaluate the faculty evaluation procedures. Wright questioned what rubric would be used for the evaluation. Supalla responded that currently a Zoomerang Survey is used as a tool for all non-faculty employee evaluations, noting it is a great way to gather broad based input. Martinez questioned if faculty could choose the tools used for their evaluation. Cram responded the other tools include input from students, a list of personal goals/accomplishments, and personal observations. Marconett stated only the peer review is a concern. Israelson questioned how the input is only used as a tool. Cram responded the data show accountability and the information on the surveys are shared with the employees, but never placed in the personnel files. ACTION: Administration will not use the peer survey tool until faculty further consider the process.

ITEM 1 (A) Biennial Budget – Supalla announced the MnSCU Board of Trustees will be submitting a $177 million biennial budget request, along with a 4% state-wide average tuition increase cap. In addition, MnSCU will submit a $33 million emergency bonding bill, including $30 million in HEPRA funds. Included in the HEAPR request is funding for asbestos abatement at the Heintz Center. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 2 (A) Bonding Proposal – Hansmann reported MnSCU scoring for the bonding proposals will be conducted in January, and RCTC has submitted two proposals (workforce co-location center and classroom community center). Supalla stated Senator Kiscaden is encouraging MnSCU to include the Regional Public Training Center on their bonding list, but Office of the Chancellor Staff are not currently in favor of having it on the MnSCU list. Hansmann concluded by reporting that smaller initiative projects are being consolidated into one initiative, which includes remodeling of the RCTC anatomy and physiology labs and a large classroom. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 4 (A) Policy
a) Satisfactory Academic Progress – Wright requested the policy revisions be reviewed by the Academic Affairs and Standards Council. Cram noted the policy changes have financial aid ramifications, and is required to follow state/federal regulations. ACTION: Wright will have the AASC Chair put the policy on their next meeting agenda.

b) Equipment Use Policy – Hansmann reported the policy was drafted because of information recently shared by MnSCU General Council at a Staff Development session. Wright requested clarification on the use of state issued cell phones. Supalla responded AFSCME stated new interpretations/language may be available from the Department of Employee Relations, and Administration is investigating. ACTION: Awaiting clarification on the use of state-issued cell phones. The policy will return for another review.

c) Fees – Hansmann announced the policy is being finalized to align with MnSCU’s revised policy. ACTION: The policy will be reviewed and brought back to January meeting.

Adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: January 23, 2007 – 2:00pm – AT109