UCR Faculty Lecture Series
Join us on the fourth Thursday of every month at 1:00pm in the Hill Theatre for a lecture by a distinguished faculty member from one of the three UCR institutions. Following the lecture there will be an informal reception in the Quiet Lounge/Art Gallery at UCR.

The lecture series starts this Thursday!
February 24 – 1:00pm – Hill Theatre
Darlene Voeltz
Up and Coming: Emerging Entrepreneurs of Developing Countries

For more information on this lecture and upcoming topics, see the attachment to this week’s Crossings.

Blood Drive on Campus
If you are going to be on campus Monday and have some extra time, please consider donating blood.

Mayo Clinic Blood Drive
Monday, February 21, 2005 – AT301 – 8:30am to 3:00pm

An additional blood drive is scheduled for Tuesday, March 1st. Please encourage students to donate.

RCTC Employee Wellness invites you to express your gratitude during RCTC Wellness Acts of Kindness Days February 22-24th 2005. RCTC is a great place to work, but there may be times when we feel isolated or need a reminder of how essential we are as an RCTC employee and a person. Participating in the Random Acts of Kindness Days is the perfect opportunity for you to take a moment to show appreciation and kindness of fellow coworkers. (See attached examples below). A display in the Atrium will be available for posting “random acts of kindness” comments, stories and experiences. To kick off the Random Acts of Kindness Week celebration, the Wellness committee will be offering snacks in the Atrium on February 22nd from 10:00 am until gone. For a list of examples of random acts of kindness, see the attachment to this week’s Crossings.
Marketing Fact
Of students who first enrolled at RCTC in the Fall of 2000, 25.1% so far have graduated and 26.6% have transferred to other institutions (compared to 13.9% graduated and 39.0% transferred out at Metro Area Community Colleges) [MnSCU Office of the Chancellor Research and Planning].

Condolences
Condolences are extended to Jerry Asleson whose mother, Gertrude, passed away on Sunday, February 13th. Our thoughts are with Jerry and his family.

If You Love Us, Shout!
As you may know, there is discussion on Capitol Hill regarding the future of Upward Bound, Perkins and another Department of Education programs (Student Support Services could be next). This is serious because the demise of Upward Bound and Perkins could be the beginning of many student support programs being eliminated. Funds for Upward Bound would be eliminated in an effort to finance an expansion of the president’s No Child Left Behind program to benefit high-school students. Upward Bound and Perkins serves students who otherwise may be left behind by the current administration’s program. Upward Bound and Perkins has benefited millions of under served students from urban and rural communities who might not have had access to the American dream of going to college. Congress could still opt to restore funds that the President eliminated for Upward Bound and Perkins. You can help by writing a letter to your state legislators and showing your support of Upward Bound and/or Perkins as an integral part of RCTC or by telling them how Upward Bound and/or Perkins has impacted the lives of the students it serves. Don’t delay, Shout! Thank you. (A list of Legislators is attached to this week’s Crossings.)

Thank You
My sincere thanks to everybody that sent cards and sympathies for the death of my brother-in-law. Your thoughts and kinds words were very much appreciated.

Michelle Pyfferoen
I’m keying this edition while sitting in St. Paul waiting for a breakfast meeting with a dozen southern Minnesota legislators to begin. Six regional MnSCU presidents, Chancellor McCormick, and governmental relations staff will be urging House and Senate members to increase the Governor’s recommended higher education budget. I’m very concerned the Governor Pawlenty’s 2006-07 budget recommendation fails to provide adequate funds to cover the growth in student enrollment in the MnSCU system over the past three years. Not funding the enrollment adjustment would be precedent setting. Please join me in urging our elected officials to support the budget request approved by the MnSCU Board of Trustees, which includes the $130.8 million base adjustment for enrollment and $66.5 million in new initiatives. This is a balanced approach that asks the Legislature and the people of Minnesota to invest in students, it still requires that students continue to invest in their own education, and it anticipates reallocating more than $50 million in existing resources to fund priority initiatives. I would also ask that you support Senate File #707 and its companion bill in the House. This bill, commonly referred to as the student-supported “Tuition Freeze,” would appropriate $62,900,000 from the general fund to the Board of Trustees to supplement instructional appropriations in lieu of tuition increases. This appropriation would only become available if the Legislature funds the entire MnSCU budget request.

There was good news out of St. Paul on Wednesday when the House Capital Investment Committee passed its bonding recommendation…and the committee recommended $10,945,000 for the UCR Health Sciences project. The Ways and Means Committee, the final stop before the full House votes, is expected to take up the bill on Thursday evening. If things go as planned, by the time you read this, the bill will be awaiting House approval anticipated next Tuesday. Then, the legislation will be on its way to a joint House/Senate conference committee that will work out the differences. Several weeks ago, the Senate included $12.7 million in its bonding bill for the UCR project. Keep your fingers crossed!

Student Success Day…It’s a Jungle Out There…was a great success. Almost 500 students participated in excellent breakout sessions presented by talented faculty and staff, heard a great keynote presenter share thoughts on how to deal with procrastination, enjoyed refreshments, consulted with teachers and joined in the fun. Many students and staff told me how pleased they were with the attendance, the quality of the presentations and the sense that a day outside the classroom/lab could be very productive. My heartfelt thanks to the extraordinary effort of the planning task force, the Student Ambassadors whose jungle décor was top notch, the presenters and volunteers, and the many students and staff who participated. I even had a couple of faculty and staff tell me the format for the day was so positive, that it should be used as a model for at least one of our upcoming staff development days. Congratulations to all who joined the safari!

Congratulations…

- Jean Marconett was presented with a Breaking Barriers Award in the Rotunda of the State Capitol on February 8. The award honors individuals and organizations that have broken barriers, overcome challenges or made significant contribution to womens’ sports.

- ViAnn Olson’s “The Token Heathen” is included in the book STORIES TEACHERS TELL. The book is a wonderful collection of stories about the vocation of teaching, with its successes and failures, of both students and teachers.

- The United States Department of Education has informed me that the RCTC student loan default rate for fiscal year 2003 stands at 5.5 percent. This is an excellent rate, well within established standards, and is a credit to the good financial counseling work of our Financial Aid Team.

- I hope you marked your calendar and plan to attend the three upcoming presentations that are part of the UCR Faculty Lecture Series. The sessions will all be held at 1 p.m. in Hill Theatre. Make every effort to hear Darlene Voeltz (February 24), Ruth Casper (March 24), and Mike Mutschelknaus (April 28). Presenters have already been identified for a fall semester lecture series. Many thanks to Julie Rodakowski and her colleagues who have put together a very worthwhile program of lectures. For more details go to http://www.roch.edu/facultylectureseries.
On February 15, the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation recognized nine organizations as the state’s best examples of responsive workforce training and education. RCTC’s Workforce and Business Development Center was recognized for excelling in all six criteria established by the Foundation’s “Voices of Southern Minnesota” Program. Congratulations to Michelle Pyfferoen and the entire Workforce Development Team!

Thought for the Week…

*Teachers open the door, but students must enter by themselves.*

-- Anonymous

I trust you opened many doors this week…and hope that students took advantage of the opportunity.  

*Don*
Rochester Community and Technical College
Minnesota State College Faculty (MSCF)
Faculty Shared Governance Council
Minutes for Monday, February 7, 2005 – 11:30 a.m. –AT109

Present: Administration Bequette, Cram, Hansmann, Supalla
Faculty Israelson, Marconett, Wright (Chair)
Recorder: Kingsbury
Guest: Beth Arntson

ITEM 1 (F) and ITEM 2 (A) Year Long Schedule – Israelson shared concerns he’s heard from faculty regarding the scheduling template, with the primary concerns relating to four-credit courses, potential six hour lapse time contract violations, and the difficulties for students that drive a distance or work. Israelson also noted a feeling of “being punished” by the faculty, and frustration for not having the template shared with faculty prior to distribution. Israelson questioned if the template has flexibility. Bequette responded the template was prepared as a suggestion to fix the irregularities that exist, and to better utilize classroom space on campus. Bequette also noted current scheduling only reflects a 40% roll over from fall semester to fall semester, and hopes a more efficient schedule would increase the roll-over to 80%. Bequette added administration is open to suggestions that will improve student learning and maximize room utilization. Everyone agreed the faculty concerns arose from a misunderstanding, that a consistent schedule (same time and room) for a course is in the best interest of students, and that some exceptions may need to be made. ACTION: Israelson will inform faculty that the schedule template is only a suggestion and other model suggestions will be taken under consideration. The scheduling will be flexible to allow for variations which do not fit the template.

ITEM 1 (A) Search Update – Arntson reported 32 searches are underway with 25 search teams, and advertisements have been placed for all but a few positions. Arntson also announced the media services responsibility for the sabbatical replacement of the Media Services/Library Coordinator may be handled through a work-out-of-class assignment. Marconett questioned how a sabbatical replacement classification is determined. Bequette responded several issues are taken under consideration, including whether the sabbatical is for one year or one semester, if current part-time faculty are available in the pool for consideration, etc. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 5 (A) Non-Seniority Assignments of Faculty to Teach – Bequette reminded everyone that the contract does not support seniority consideration for fall and spring assignments, and stated his position to not support a mechanism based solely on seniority. Bequette added he does not believe it is a major issue in the majority of departments, but it may be in larger departments, and respectfully requested those department chairs take his suggestions under consideration. ACTION: Information Only.

ITEM 3 (A) Student Complaint Task Force Update – Marconett announced a task force has been formed and met to address recommendations for improvement of the complaint process, and a proposal will be shared at Faculty Senate before being brought back to Faculty Shared Governance Council. Wright expressed a concern that students believe they can get resolution by going directly to the President’s Office; he stressed that conflicts should be resolved at a lower level before reaching the Vice President or President. Supalla agreed, noting, however, that students do have the right to meet with a vice president or president. Students will be questioned as to who they have already talked to and whether they have taken other steps to resolve their concern prior to making an appointment. Supalla also noted statistics have shown that enrollment has increased, yet complaints at the President’s level have declined, which reflects resolution is being handled at an earlier step. ACTION: A final student complaint process will be finalized prior to the Student Handbook publishing deadline to ensure any new steps/processes are included in the upcoming publication.
ITEM 4 (A) Student Success Day – Bequette announced final plans are being made for the upcoming Student Success Day, and thanked the planning committee for the great job they have done to prepare for the event. Bequette also announced steps are being made to determine the number of students who participate in the activities and evaluations will be completed by both students and faculty/staff. **ACTION: Information Only.**

ITEM 6 (A) Budget – Hansmann announced MnSCU’s position is to not focus on the Governor’s recommendation for special initiatives funding or the lack of enrollment adjustments, but rather focus on obtaining the full biennial budget requested. Supalla added that the Governor’s budget proposal is an adjustment to the base rather than one-time money. **ACTION: Information Only.**

ITEM 7 (A) Capital Bonding – Hansmann announced the Health Science project is on the list for capital bonding projects should a bonding proposal be approved by the Legislators in 2005. Hansmann and Supalla also announced two new projects have been submitted (Classroom Community Center and Co-located Workforce Center), however neither project scored high. Although the Workforce Center has the support of MnSCU and the DEED Commissioner, concerns have been raised that Rochester has obtained funding for more projects over the past few years than most other parts of the state. **ACTION: Information Only**

ITEM 8 (A) Stadium at UCR – Hansmann announced a community group is working with college representatives to investigate the feasibility of installing artificial turf, 1,000-4,000 stadium seating, and air-dome that would cover the playing field from November through March. Emphasis was placed on the College’s proportion being limited to a specific dollar amount (i.e. $50,000) and renting the remaining use to generate operating revenue. Funding is being considered from public funds (sales tax), private donations and corporate sponsorships. The cost of the project could be between $2-4 million. **ACTION: Information Only.**

ITEM 9 (A) Fitness Center Proposal – Hansmann distributed copies of a Wellness Proposal that would increase staffing, expand hours of operation and be funded from vending concession revenues. **ACTION: Information Only.**

ITEM 1 (F) Concurrent Enrollment – Wright went on record to say he believes there is a reason to approach concurrent enrollment with caution, adding the concept does not have faculty support. Wright encouraged administration to enter into such endeavor slowly, noting he doesn’t believe there is any benefit to the College. Supalla agreed the issue should proceed with careful consideration, however both the Minnesota Governor and national publications indicate concurrent enrollment is futurist. Wright expressed concerns with high school faculty teaching college level courses. Supalla responded any individual with appropriate licensing and credentials should be allowed to teach college level courses. Bequette added discussions are being held in the math area for a possible pilot by fall of 2006. **ACTION: Information Only.**

ITEM 10 (A) UCR Campus Closing – Supalla announced the results of the UCR Winter Break Closing Survey are attached to today’s agenda. Wright responded the issue appears to be more directly affecting the other contractual bargaining units, hence had no response to the survey results. **ACTION: Information Only.**

ITEM 1 (A) Curriculum Redesign – Bequette announced RCTC may be interested in conducting a pilot in the science areas if MnSCU funds an RFP to redesign curriculum. The concept originated out of Dr. Carol Twiggs presentation to the MnSCU Board of Trustees that challenges colleges/universities to redesign the instructional approach while improving student learning and reducing instructional costs. Wright responded the Twigg report took place mainly on four year universities and additional information is being researched regarding the results from the two-year college studies. **ACTION: Information Only.**

Adjourned at 12:45 p.m.