UCR Advisory Council  
Wednesday, May 4, 2011  
7:30 – 8:30 a.m. ~ CF206

Present: Aaron Benike, Armin Budimlic, Sam Ellis, LuAnn Hiniker, Tom Horvei, Craig Johnson, Julie Nigon, Diane Schwinghammer, Ron Smith, Estelle Souchet Graves, Don Supalla, David Thompson

Absent: John Devlin, Guy Finne, Warren Oslin

Recorder: Judy Kingsbury

Call to Order
Budimlic called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes for April
The minutes of the April 2011 meeting were approved as written.

UCR Annual Review
The 2010-2011 UCR Advisory Council Year in Review report was distributed and Hiniker, Supalla and Johnson each shared highlights in their respective institutions.

Schwinghammer questioned if collaboration was common among community/technical colleges and state universities throughout the MnSCU system. Supalla responded Minneapolis Community and Technical College has a similar partnership with Metro State University, but are experiencing some struggles at this time. Supalla added that he sees more and more collaboration being forced upon the institutions just because of the current financial struggles and politics. For example, MnSCU is studying the possibility of merging Southwest Minnesota State University and Minnesota West (which includes five campuses). In addition, the presidents of Anoka Ramsey Community College and Anoka Technical College retired and a joint interim president has been appointed to serve both institutions. Johnson added WSU is co-developing programs with RCTC, and has a strong partnership with Minnesota Southeast Technical College (i.e. conferring the associate degree for their students, managing the security for their campuses, and sharing IT services).

Nigon stated there is a strong desire to link adult education to higher education and, although it is not easy, significant progress has been made (i.e. developing an articulation agreement between RCTC and Hawthorne Learning Center for prep coursework). Nigon added the ultimate goal is to ensure any student interested in career/college pathways has the opportunities provided to them. Souchet Graves expressed her enthusiasm to see diversity conversations occurring, and encouraged everyone to use the District 535 Superintendent Search process as an opportunity to hold discussions about diversity in the community.

Discussion on the Role, Effectiveness and Direction of the Advisory Council
Budimlic and Schwinghammer requested the Advisory Council members share their ideas on improving the UCR Advisory Council and better serving the needs of the leadership of the UCR partners. Ellis requested the UCR partners share their feedback on whether the UCR Advisory Council was meeting their needs. Supalla responded RCTC has about 275 community representatives (serving on over 20 program advisory councils) providing a broad base of expertise in specific disciplines. In addition, Supalla stated that RCTC is very fortunate to have a strong civic minded community of employees that are engaged with numerous community and civic organizations; and the community of Rochester is in a unique situation with GRAUC advocating for the infrastructure needs of the UCR Campus. Supalla added he believes the presentations have been informative, but is not able to state whether or not the information would have been made available to the College through other venues of collaboration and partnerships.
Hiniker reported that the UCR Advisory Council has opened a lot of doors for the various Extension programs; adding that since the Extension offers non-credit courses, the programs can be developed and implemented quickly. Hiniker also reported that the University of Minnesota Rochester is hosting and housing the Area Health Education Center for southeastern Minnesota, which provides an opportunity to connect with Mayo Clinic, IBM, and higher education.

Supalla reported that RCTC is surveying other MnSCU two-year institutions to get an idea of how other colleges utilize their advisory councils. Supalla added the preliminary feedback indicates that the frequency of the meetings are generally only quarterly or twice a year at the other two-year colleges; hence the formatting of the UCR Advisory Council meetings may need to be reconsidered.

Budimlic stated his participation in the Advisory Council has provided an opportunity for IMAA to learn about the dynamics of the three UCR Partners. In addition his participation has provided an opportunity to align IMAA’s offerings to ensure student success and provide an opportunity for RCTC and WSU-Rochester to recruit diverse students. Budimlic added the selection of the Advisory Council members is an important part of that success; adding there are currently six members completing their terms on June 30, 2011, and it is important to keep focused on securing representation from many areas of the community.

Johnson stated the UCR Advisory Council has been a valuable group, but added the question about the frequency of the meetings and the focus of the group are good points to be reviewed. Johnson added one way he measures the effectiveness of a group is whether he needs to prepare for a meeting or not; adding his experience with advisory councils is the members generally are there to hold the institutions to task. Johnson stated the presentations are interesting, but also need to be relevant to the mission and vision of the UCR partners.

Budimlic questioned if it would be beneficial if the members spent time at the meetings sharing what they believe is working or not working. Hiniker responded the visit to IMAA two years ago was very helpful in understanding the work of IMAA. Schwinghammer added the perspective of the entire southeastern Minnesota was important since the institutions serve more than just Rochester, and the involvement of parents in education is also crucial. Hiniker agreed, adding many rural areas utilize the Extension programs because that is there access to education.

Souchet Graves stated she’s been struggling in the identification of, and scaffolding for, underrepresented students in STEM. Souchet Graves added Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois has been working on a program entitled Project EXCITE, which is addressing the achievement gap between minority and non-minority students in the Evanston schools by providing supplemental educational opportunities for students who are underrepresented in the mathematics and science courses. Souchet Graves stated students are expected to complete Algebra I and be prepared for honors-level high school courses in math and science by the end of the eighth grade. Souchet Graves offered to provide more information to anyone interested in the program.

**Next Steps**

Supalla offered to coordinate a meeting with the UCR Partners (and others from the UCR Advisory Council) to evaluate the effectiveness and role of the UCR Advisory Council and identify key areas in the community that should be represented in the future (i.e. diversity, K-12, health care, hospitality, retail, construction, trades, manufacturing, etc.). Souchet Graves suggested that the religious faith based community be considered in the membership structure.

Everyone was encouraged to forward their ideas/feedback to Kingsbury for inclusion in the discussion of the small group over the summer.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:44 a.m.**