Dear UCR Advisory Council Member:

In 1998, the Advisory Council for the University Center Rochester was established as a consolidation of separate advisory boards for the three higher educational institutions housed at University Center Rochester: Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC), Winona State University Rochester (WSU-R), and the University of Minnesota Rochester (UMR). The newly combined advisory council was a reflection of the close working relationships of the three institutions, and served as a link to address the academic needs of the community.

In 2007, UMR relocated to its own home at University Square in downtown Rochester, and established their own institutional advisory council; however, the UCR Advisory Council remained intact to serve the two remaining institutions at UCR. That same year, the leadership at both RCTC and WSU-R began to meet on a regular basis under a structure called the Learning Alliance. The charge of the Learning Alliance was to develop processes to support the transition of students between the two institutions, and served as a means to work through such issues as articulations, new program development, shared services, and other operational matters.

The working relationship between RCTC and WSU-R is as strong, if not stronger, today as it was in 1998, and the Learning Alliance continues to work through academic programming and operational focuses. Over the years, however, the function of the UCR Advisory Council became unclear to the two institutions and its members. Struggling with understanding its role, the UCR Advisory Council spent the last two years re-evaluating their role and the needs of the two institutions. Although RCTC and WSU-R both operate under the same system (Minnesota State Colleges and Universities), and have similar needs, it became increasingly apparent that they were significantly different.

After careful consideration and discussion, the presidents of RCTC and WSU, and the members of the UCR Advisory Council agreed at their April meeting to dissolve the UCR Advisory Council effective June 3, 2015. This will allow each institution the opportunity to establish individual advisory councils to fulfill their individual needs. Under the new structure, periodic meetings with select members from each council would occur as an opportunity to discuss common topics, and provide an avenue to share updates on each institution. The membership needs and recruitment plans for establishing the new councils will be determined by each institution over the summer, and the new RCTC President’s Community Engagement Council and WSU-R Community Advisory Council will officially become active in the Fall of 2015. The membership for each council will include consideration of the assets that members bring to the council including diversity of gender, geographic representation, ethnicity, and the nature of the occupational and program areas that they represent.

Rochester Community and Technical College President Leslie R. McClellon and Winona State University President Scott Olson extend a thank you to the current and past members of the UCR Advisory Council, for all they’ve done to support their institutions. The knowledge, experiences, commitment, and expertise of the members have been a valuable asset to the two institutions over the years. The leadership of RCTC and WSU-R are committed to moving forward and ensuring that the needs of the community are served.

Sincerely,

Leslie R. McClellon
RCTC President

Scott R. Olson
WSU President