Mark Your Calendar…

UCR Facilities Master Plan - Open Forums
Tuesday, September 14, 2004
9:00am-Charter Room OR 12:00 noon-Charter Room
OR 2:00pm-HC114

Several UCR employees and community members served on the UCR Facilities Master Plan Steering and Advisory Task Forces over the summer to begin work on the UCR Facilities Long Range Master Plan. The purpose of the Facilities Master Plan is to assist us in:
1) Prioritizing campus needs and developing a plan for implementation;
2) Promoting integrated decision making related to academics, facilities technology, financial planning;
3) Creating a centralized, up-to-date repository for information;
4) And analyzing trends related to community and students needs - create a plan for the future.

Please join Don Supalla and Marilyn Hansmann at one of the upcoming Open Forums to review the draft of the latest long range master plan, and share your thoughts/questions regarding the plan.

New Program Meeting
Interested faculty, staff, and students are welcome to join me to discuss possibilities for a new RCTC Mass Communications Program. This preliminary planning meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 16, from 9-10:30 am and will be held in the Charter Room/4th Floor College Center. If you are interested but unable to attend, let me know and I will be sure you are included for future meetings.

-Barb Mollberg

UCR Blood Drive Dates
Tuesday, September 28; Wednesday, October 27; Tuesday, November 30
AT 301 (new location). Open to students, staff, faculty, and the public. Walk-in appointments are available. To schedule a specific time, call the Mayo Clinic Blood Bank at 284-4475.
Weekly Funny

SNAPSHOTS at jasonlove.com

Bob was having another no-hair day.

East Building – Air Quality
This past spring and summer several staff had reported becoming ill after being in the East Building. The building was tested for mold and none was found inside the building. Facilities staff also tested the air outside of the building near the air intakes and significant mold was found in the outdoor air. In an effort to ensure that this mold is not being drawn into the building we have installed ultraviolet filters on the air intakes. These filters will destroy any mold that is drawn into the building. The other filters on the air handling system are changed every 4 – 6 weeks to trap any larger particulate from being circulated inside the building. Please contact facilities with additional concerns.

Yellowjacket Football
Mark you calendar to attend RCTC’s Homecoming Game on September 25, 2004 at 3:00pm. All home games are played on the UCR Campus! The Yellowjackets won their first home game against Vermillion on Saturday 23-6. Other home games are: October 2nd and October 30th.

MERCHANDISE FOR SALE: Show your team spirit! Yellowjacket merchandise is available for sale during the home games and also by e-mailing the coach at brad.laplante@roch.edu.

Items available: mock football jerseys $25; t-shirts $10; sweatshirts; caps; polo shirts; etc.!

You Are Invited!
RCTC music department and digital arts faculty member Kevin Dobbe, invites you to the next Rochester Orchestra and Chorale concert on Saturday, September 25 at 7:30 PM in the Mayo Civic Center Presentation Hall. The concert will open with an original composition by Kevin.

Kevin is on sabbatical this semester and is currently writing works which will include an interactive sound-video work which will be at the Rochester Art Center for a month starting in late October, as well as a composition for the Rochester Orchestra and Chorale on their February 5 concert.

For ticket information for the September 25 concert please go to: http://www.roandc.org/ or call 507-286-8742 (28-MUSIC)

PHI THETA KAPPA
- Membership Deadline -
October 11, 2004

Please encourage your students to apply to join PTK!

A flier with more details on PTK and the deadline is attached to this week’s Crossings.
Supalla’s Scribblings

Tenth day preliminary enrollment data is in and credits sold are up 2.78 percent over last fall; headcount remains unchanged. Although not unexpected with the newly implemented application deadline and no recent major layoffs, the numbers mean we are not likely to meet our annual projected four percent enrollment increase. If the trend continues, we will need to reassess how to deal with the tuition revenue shortfall. One bit of positive news is that in a show of hands at Tuesday’s MnSCU Leadership Council meeting, enrollment at approximately one-third of the colleges and universities increased, one-third remained stable and one-third declined. Projections indicate that its likely enrollment for the MnSCU System will be up slightly, so RCTC’s increase might be one of the best in the system. Enrollments this past summer were up significantly over 2003, so when comparing summer and fall credits sold this year versus last, it appears we are up 3.8 percent. Systemwide details will be shared when they are released to the press later this month.

The Governor’s Citizens League Higher Education Task Force has just completed draft three of a report to be released in a few weeks. Everybody, it seems, has an idea about how to change higher education in Minnesota. In a Star Tribune article on September 7, Chancellor McCormick offered the following suggestion…

A Citizens League study group is tackling the subject (how should higher education be changed) and the Star Tribune recently offered several ideas of its own and others on its editorial pages. Before we get too far down the road, we should be sure we are really asking the right questions. First, we must be careful not to erode the educational foundation that has made Minnesota a leader among states. While Minnesota is just 21st in the nation in population, we are eighth-highest in the percentage of people over age 25 who have a bachelor’s degree or higher, and seventh-highest in per capita income. In 1996, the Minnesota Legislature listed five objectives for the state’s investment in higher education. They can be paraphrased in five questions to test any proposal for change:

1) Will it lead to a level of educational quality and excellence that is competitive nationally and internationally?
2) Will it enable students to choose institutions and programs best suited for their talents and abilities?
3) Will it promote democratic values and enhance the state’s quality of life?
4) Will it provide an opportunity for all Minnesotans, regardless of personal circumstances, to participate?
5) Will it enhance the economy and prepare a workforce that meets the state’s needs and opportunities?

Frankly, some of the changes that are now under discussion do not meet these tests. For example, a proposal to once again restructure higher education would do little to further those objectives. Changes to the way higher education is financed also need to be measured against the state’s goals, particularly the goal of enabling students to choose institutions and programs best suited to their abilities. In my view, our challenge is to provide the number of college-educated people the state will need to strengthen its economic vitality in the future. And as baby boomers begin to retire and the number of people in the 18- to 25-year-old age group drops slightly, this challenge will loom even larger. Since fall 2000, full-year-equivalent enrollment at MnSCU colleges and universities has grown by 18,000 students, more than 15 percent, while state funding has dropped nearly 6 percent in actual dollars. The per-student state appropriation for the 2004-05 academic year is $3,990, lower than it was in 1994-95. Our dedicated faculty and staff are working hard to maintain quality, but these budget cuts, coupled with increasing demand, are challenging our ability to serve business and community needs and stressing our facilities. To partially replace the lost appropriations, tuition has risen 60 percent since fall 2000, placing an increasing financial burden on students, many of whom can’t afford it. Our abilities to educate a successful workforce, bring new immigrants into the mainstream, move people from welfare to work, and support community and economic development are being threatened. Without positive change, the taxpayers who fund our colleges and universities will have less access to them and few benefits from them. Check out the complete article in last Monday’s edition of the Minneapolis Star Tribune.

Did you know that SAT verbal and math scores of Minnesota college-bound seniors reached their highest levels in several years, according to information for 2003-04 released recently by the College Board. The SAT verbal mean score for Minnesota was 587, up five points from the previous year and the highest score since 1998-99. The mean math score was
593, up two points and the highest score since 1998-99. In Minnesota, about 10 percent of college-bound seniors take the SAT. Let’s hope the increased scores are the start of a long-term trend.

Thought for the week…

“There are souls in the world which have the gift of finding joy everywhere and of leaving it behind them when they go.”

-- Frederick Faber

My wish is that you find some joy in your life this week…and leave a bit of it behind for others.

Condolences

Condolences are extended to Karen Williamson whose father, Jack Ritchey passed away on September 9. Our thoughts are with Karen and her family!!

Robert Erickson pedals for financial aid change

Former Minnesota State Colleges and Universities trustee to embark on third scholarship fundraiser. Armed with donation pledge cards, one change of clothes and a strong message about the need to change Minnesota’s financial aid program, Robert O. Erickson will begin a bicycle tour to all 53 of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities on Monday, August 23, at Anoka-Ramsey Community College. Departing at 8:15 a.m., Erickson expects to pedal more than 2,200 miles over 30 days to raise money and build public support for making more financial aid available to Minnesota’s part-time college students, many of whom balance college with family and full-time work. “The challenges for students are growing,” Erickson said, “Tuition continues to go up. Many, many people are being denied a chance to better themselves.” Erickson raised nearly $200,000 in donations for student scholarships in 2003 and 2004. Colleges and universities will participate in Erickson’s effort in a variety of ways. Anoka-Ramsey Community College will create a scholarship fund for its part-time students by raffling off two donated bicycles. As a former board member and chair of the finance and facilities committee of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System’s Board of Trustees, Erickson recognizes the financial hardships faced by many part-time students. He served as senior vice president for finance and operations for the University of Minnesota from 1991 to 1995 and worked as a senior executive for SuperValu for 16 years. Erickson, 58, currently serves on the board of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Foundation. He is funding the trip at his own expense. Pedaling from campus to campus in his neon yellow gear emblazoned with “Minnesota State Colleges and Universities,” a gift from Chancellor James H. McCormick at the send-off of his first ride in 2002, Erickson is soliciting donations for his scholarship challenge. Contributions may be designated to individual colleges and universities or to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Foundation, where they will be applied entirely to student scholarships. “Many students in the two-year community and technical colleges are non-traditional students with families and full-time jobs,” said Justin Pahl, president of the Minnesota State College Student Association. “We appreciate Bob Erickson’s efforts to bring about change and create opportunities for those students to get the education they want to better their lives.” The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System comprises seven state universities and 25 community and technical colleges serving the higher education needs of Minnesota. The system serves about 240,000 students per year in credit-based courses and 45 percent of all students are enrolled part-time. The average age of part-time students is 30. Erickson hopes his rides will force change. “You have to constantly keep the message in front of people. You have to keep going to make a difference. The only way to make it happen is to just keep banging away,” Erickson said. Erickson will be on the RCTC campus September 21st, at 11:00 a.m. If you are interested in donating to the scholarship challenge, please send your checks to RCTC Foundation, specifying the Bob Erickson Scholarship Fund.