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ACADEMICS

Date added: 8/19/2004

Q: Dr. Simone -

What do you think of an RIT-sponsored online professor evaluation system? There were a few run by students previously, but they've since gone belly up. I think it would be a valuable tool to students who are trying to choose the right professor for a class, and it would be far easier than going to department offices and asking to see the handwritten evaluations.

A: I am in favor of this, as long as the results are representative (rather than a self-selected few) and conform to basic rules of decency.

You should encourage Student Government to work with the Academic Senate to develop such a system.

Date added: 8/19/2004

Q: There have been a number of times lately that I've tried to make some changes on SIS late at night, only to be reminded that SIS is "closed" from midnight to 9 AM. Why in the world does the website have operating hours?

One of the most amazing things about the Internet is that it's always on. As far as I can tell, there's no good reason for SIS to be down so regularly. I understand that occasional maintenance must be performed, but wouldn't planned outages be better than daily downtime?

Most college students don't run on the typical 9-5 corporate daytime. I think you will be hard pressed to find anyone at RIT that doesn't want to register for Wines of the World (or some other interesting elective) at 3 in the morning at some point in their academic career. So why are we denied this option?

A: I checked with the Registrar's Office on this question. Your comments, observations, and questions are very good ones and are certainly not going unrecognized by the Institute. Without delving into too much 'technical detail', most of the issues and frustration you have with the Student Information System (SIS) and RIT's registration systems are a consequence of the technologies available at the time these systems were developed and of the processing schedules necessary to support the ongoing operations of the Institute as a whole.

Unfortunately, there are not a lot of options to significantly improve upon this situation given the current technological environment.

With that said, over the past year we have gathered feedback from literally thousands of students on a wide variety of topics that have included class registration and the Student Information System with many of their comments being similar to yours. In response to this feedback, a concerted effort by Information & Technology Services (ITS), all the colleges, administrative divisions, and the Institute as a whole was initiated this past spring to begin the process of revamping our student systems. While not everything can be accomplished as quickly as we would like, our plans include among a wide array of other initiatives:

1. Completely revamping the look, feel, and functionality of SIS to make it a comprehensive 'one-stop self-serve' site where students go to accomplish the majority of tasks and transactions they need to while at RIT with 24-hour availability.
2. A complete replacement of the current class registration systems with a feature-rich Academic Planning and Registration system inclusive of academic planning and

schedule modeling tools to significantly improve your academic planning process while greatly reducing the time, frustration and anxiety associated with quarterly registration.

While this is just a brief answer addressing your comments in particular, RIT is committed to supporting the needs of our students as evidenced by the myriad of initiatives underway to improve student success and satisfaction across the Institute.

Thank you for your time and your comments; they are very much appreciated and necessary for us to realize our goals. If you wish to discuss any of these items in greater detail, please feel free to contact Joe Loffredo in the Registrar's Office at 475-2829.

Date added: 9/29/2004

Q: Dr. Simone,

RIT recently implemented a PhD in Microsystems Engineering, which put the university in a different category for rankings. Are there any plans to implement a PhD program in any of the other engineering fields in order for RIT to contend with these other universities? If not, what effort is being made to help RIT move back up on the list?

Thanks

A: In the recent U.S. News & World Report ranking, RIT jumped from 77th to 56th in the category "Best undergraduate engineering programs." As you point out, we are now ranked in the highest category due to the Microsystems Ph.D. program.

Before adding the doctoral program, we were consistently ranked in the top 5 for engineering undergraduate programs that did not have a doctoral program.

We feel this jump in one year is significant. On this prestigious list, RIT may be the most career-oriented and the most focused in terms of undergraduate education.

We do not have current plans to add another Ph.D. program in engineering. However, we are now developing a Ph.D. degree in Computing and Information Sciences. We expect this program will be a complementary and synergistic partner with our two existing Ph.D. programs in imaging science and Microsystems.

Date added: 10/07/2004

Q: Dear President Simone,

As a faculty member I enjoy interacting with students. Unfortunately, I have a hard time remembering names, especially in a class of almost sixty students. This afternoon one of my students got very upset at me because I still have not learned his name after the fourth week. Can you please use your influence to implement a computerized system which shows the students' ID photos next to their names? When I taught at the University of Oklahoma three years ago such a system was in place, and it helped me learn all the names very quickly.

I am as frustrated as the angry student, and thus appeal to you for help. Thank you very much for your attention.

A: This is a super question and we appreciate this feedback. In our new Strategic Plan, we lay out goals and objectives to improve student success.

For this question, I relied on the knowledge of the Registrar's Office.

Here is their response:

Your comments and suggestions are very appropriate and we can certainly empathize with the frustration that both our faculty and students feel. These types of situations are exactly the reason that the Institute is currently engaged in numerous Information Technology related initiatives to improve the service levels we provide to our students and enhance the relationships between students, faculty, and staff.

Examples of these initiatives that are already in progress or scheduled to start in the near future include a new Academic Planning & Registration System to replace our current quarterly registration system, an Institute-wide Degree Audit System for use by faculty, staff, and students, a new state-of-the-art Housing Selection and Assignment System, a new Student Affairs Information Management System; all in addition to 'behind the scenes' efforts being put forth on items such as identify protection.

Relative to identify protection will likely be the installation and deployment of a new ID Card System that will be used across the campus. Part of this particular initiative will be the replacement of the system(s) that currently house student photos and associated information. As such, requests such as yours for student photos being provided on class lists have been approved but implementation slated to occur after implementation of the new ID Card and Student Photo systems.

Comments and suggestions such as yours are vitally important to realizing the goals of our new strategic plan and, as such, are always welcomed and appreciated. While we can't change everything at once, we certainly are trying to get as much done as

possible - as quickly as we can.

Please feel free to contact the Registrar's Office with any additional comments or questions you may have regarding this matter.

Date added: 10/26/2004

Q: Dear President Simone,

I just came back from the Robert Redford talk at the Field House. I had a great time, and it made me remember last year's talk with Ben Stein. I remember that talk to be inspiring and refreshing. Does RIT video tape these events? Is it possible to see it again? If RIT doesn't tape them, then I think it might be interesting to start doing it...that way we can keep a good collection of such important events.

Another interesting thing that would definitely be worth taping are some classes taught here. I've seen that some lecture videos at MIT are available online, for free! This is a great study tool (it helped me quite a bit), and I believe it would be a great help for us students trying to review a topic at a time when we can't find our professor. I understand that one downside might be that students might no longer go to class... but I believe this would not happen since these videos would take a long time before they were available. It would be really great if we had a collection of lecture videos for classes taught by some of our best professors.

And my thanks to everybody for a great Brick City Festival!

A: First, thank you for your compliment on Brick City Festival. It was an outstanding event, and we had more than 8,000 visitors to campus this past weekend.

Due to contractual reasons, we were not able to videotape the Redford event. We try to videotape and Web Stream as many events as possible, such as Commencement, but sometimes we do run into contractual issues.

In terms of videotaping classes, it can be very expensive to produce these in terms of taping, captioning and distribution. And some professors prefer not to be taped, due to various reasons, some related to intellectual property.

However, the Educational Technology Center will do this for a fee when a request is made. I hope this helps.

Date added: 10/27/2004

Q: This question is all about you.

Have you ever taken a class at RIT? If so, when, what was the subject, why did you take it, and if you are not too modest, what grade did you get? If not, would you like to, and what class would you take?

A: I have never taken a class at RIT. The class I would like to take would be a Shakespeare class taught by Dr. Stanley McKenzie, RIT's provost.

Thanks for asking.

Date added: 11/02/2004

Q: Dr. Simone,

There has recently been speculation in the media that a military draft is likely some time after the election in November. If that happens and I am drafted, will my work to obtain a degree from RIT be wasted?

A: An interesting question for Election Day.

It is true that both Bush and Kerry have sparred over the military draft during the presidential campaign. But ultimately both candidates have said on the record that they would NOT institute a military draft to shore up the troops. So I am confident that the victor will stand by this pledge.

With that said, it is my belief that your RIT education will be extremely valuable over your lifetime, no matter what circumstances life takes you.

I have complete faith in RIT's vision statement in our new strategic plan:

"RIT will lead higher education in preparing students for successful careers in a global society."

Date added: 11/22/2004

Q: I have read the Strategic Plan and am very encouraged by it, especially the student centered approach that is advocated. That said, I believe that incremental steps (actions) are needed to achieve the lofty goals to which the strategic plan aspires. One area I am concerned with is class scheduling times, especially for Freshmen. I believe

that RIT has an excessive amount of late afternoon (4PM) and evening classes for undergrads and especially Freshmen. I have seen cases where newer students are unaccustomed to afternoon and evening classes and struggle with them. My undergraduate school rarely had afternoon and never had evening classes for Freshmen and Sophomores and had a retention rate in the mid 90%. Why does RIT have so many late afternoon and evening classes? Is there any plan to try and lower these numbers, especially for Freshmen? I believe this would have an immediate impact on retention.

A: There simply are not enough hours in the day to give every one of our students an ideal schedule. The complexities of scheduling are really imponderable to most of us.

Where we most often hear complaints from first-year students is with reference to 8:00 am and even 9:00 am classes. To the degree possible, we try to protect first-year students from these early classes, but we can't do that without putting classes at the end of their day. The only time we register for our students is during their first quarter. After that, the times they choose are up to them, though of course they do have to choose within some constraints.

Nevertheless, I will pass this along to the provost, the associate provost for retention, and the Registrar's Office.

Thanks for comments/suggestions.

Date added: 12/14/2004

Q: Dr. Simone:

As I was reading in the recent edition of the Reporter about the new changes in the General Education Requirements, I wanted to say I think RIT is making the right effort towards the right direction for this university. I however believe RIT needs to make a better leap into offering dual degrees. I would love to see within a year an option for a full blown major in a second language. It as well opens this school to new opportunities...for example we could be the first school that offers a strong and well respected international engineering program. The best example I have seen of this is similar to the University of Rhode Islands international engineering program which has a dual degree program of an engineering discipline and a second language choice. I also believe the federal government has even made funding available for schools that are starting or offering these programs as well. I am currently pursuing a minor in German at this time along with my computer engineering degree and would love to have the accreditation of knowing it fluently by that of a second major. A second major with this identifies a comprehensive grammatical and literal understanding of the language. I was also hoping that RIT would become more of an international

university and develop ties with other universities in the world. By doing this, RIT could become a larger and an internationally renowned leader in career oriented education.

A: First, let me say that RIT has established a Global Strategy Task Force as part of our latest Strategic Plan. The task force will provide strategic oversight of international initiatives.

We need to distinguish between a double-degree and a double-major. Double degree is carefully defined by New York State Educational Department as two separate and independent degrees.

Although most general education courses can count toward both degrees, nothing that is required for the major of one degree can count as general education for the second degree. Also, at least 60 quarter credits of additional course work must be taken for the second degree. With a double degree, the student ends up with two diplomas.

What RIT is working towards is having a double-major. The general education parameters set forth by the provost are intended to make it easier for students to have double (or second) majors along the lines of what I believe you are suggesting. The colleges most likely to develop second majors are Liberal Arts and Science, where considerable amounts of the general education course credits could count toward the second major. College of Business is also likely to develop possible second majors. In most instances, the second major would be an extension (more courses) of an existing minor.

The examples you offer are exactly on target for what we expect to be developing: a second major in a language, or in international studies that might involve study abroad at another university. I am anticipating that within the next two years, several possible double majors will be developed.

Date added: 12/21/2004

Q: I have heard that Daniel Pipes was invited to speak as part of the Gannet Lecture Series, is this true? Daniel Pipes is an individual who makes broad stereotypical generalizations about people of the Muslim faith, such as "15% of Muslims are terrorists," as well as supporting the concept that the only road to middle east peace is "Total Israeli victory," with an Israeli state from the Nile to the Euphrates. This is a very far right extremist view, even further to the right then the Bush Administration or Sharon's government. On top of his views, which I feel to be racist, he is to be the only speaker this year on the current schedule that will not have a counterpoising view on stage with him to provide balance and perspective. How can the Gannet Lecture Series purport to be promoting the academic principles of debate and

discussion when it allows his ideas to go without criticism by his peers? If Daniel Pipes does not want to appear with another speaker, then as I see it he doesn't have to come and get paid. Also if the Lecture Series is going to select someone with as far right extreme views as his to have a forum, then I think the far left should be given equal opportunity.

A: For this question, I turned to Professor Paul Grebinger, Gannett Lecturer and Coordinator of Senior Seminar.

Here is Professor Grebinger's response:

"Let me try to explain the context of our invitation to Pipes. First, he is the second speaker in the spring term series. The first is Ali A. Mazrui, Albert Schweitzer Professor in the Humanities and Director, Institute of Global Cultural Studies at SUNY Binghamton. We had hoped to have a debate between Mazrui and Pipes, who are on opposite ends of a spectrum on the question "has a clash of civilizations begun?: Islam and the West," the title under which Mazrui is lecturing.

Mazrui agreed to a debate, while Pipes would not. Further, Mazrui agreed to have discussants following his talk while Pipes would not. Pipes is willing to answer questions from the audience, which I believe will generate fruitful discussion.

Two thirds of the lectures/discussions/panels in the Gannett Series this year were suggested by faculty teaching Senior Seminar.

It is often valuable to hear from individuals whose ideas we may oppose and whom we may not even like. I expect that Pipes will draw representatives from the Islamic community here on campus and from Rochester. They will no doubt be asking very pointed questions. So, I don't expect any lack of debate.

Finally, I feel that I should mention that the regular use of discussants and panels in the Gannett Series is an innovation of the last two years. Previously, we typically brought a prominent individual, they lectured and the audience asked questions."

Paul Grebinger
Gannett Lecturer and
Coordinator of Senior Seminar

Date added: 12/22/2004

Q: Why is it that note taking services for Academic Accommodations and NTID are handled separately? Why are they not handled under one department instead of two?

A: Here's why there are two separate note taking services available at RIT.

The Academic Accommodations Office, which is a part of the Academic Support Center under Student Affairs, serves RIT students who have been awarded note taking services by the Disabilities Services Coordinator as a result of a specific disability.

The National Technical Institute for the Deaf provides the other note taking service, through its Academic Affairs organization. This note taking service supports deaf students enrolled in the other RIT colleges.

These two services serve two different populations of students with differing needs. NTID's note taking services must function closely together with interpreting services, assistive listening devices, and/or speech-to-text services to provide the necessary access services required for deaf students. Hence, it is imperative that these access services be housed together. In some cases, NTID students in technical study programs have been awarded note taking services for a secondary disability by the RIT Disability Services office. Because these students are in classes where sign language is used, deaf note takers are hired to provide these notes. This process is administered by the Student and Academic Services area. The note taking services provided by the Academic Accommodations Office may stand alone, or may be combined with other services to meet a variety of different student needs.

However, to make sure that that these groups do not operate in isolation from each other, I can assure you the two groups regularly collaborate, sharing techniques, processes, and hardware/software tools that provide very high quality note taking services across all of RIT. Thus, RIT benefits from both of the organizations.

ALUMNI ---

Date added: 11/11/2004

Q: I am a Senior this year, and I was curious what kind of benefits I would be able to get as an alumni. Specifically I want to know if we get to keep our e-mail accounts? If not for free, can we keep it for a fee?

A: RIT has more than 90,000 alumni all over the world. We have alumni chapters located in metro areas across the United States.

There are a host of benefits and services for alumni. These include: an online community, insurance, moving company discounts, technology solutions, The University Magazine, athletic facilities and much, much more.

To learn more, visit www.rit.edu/alumni.

To answer your question specifically: Unfortunately, ITS does cut the student's services off within a month or so of graduation. Our license doesn't allow us to carry alumni, so we can't even offer it to them for a fee. We don't have the server space to accommodate everyone anyway. ITS is exploring additional opportunities for the future.

However, we do currently offer alumni group rate discounts for email accounts and we offer permanent email forwarding services through the online community. That way, even if you change carriers your public address won't change. If you are graduating within the next 4 quarters, your information should already be loaded in the online community for access.

I hope this helps, and if you have more specific questions, please contact the Alumni Relations office at 475-2586.

ATHLETICS

Date added: 10/04/2004

Q: President Simone-

I just read this article on USCHO.com, titled "RIT Explores Jump to D-I, Atlantic Hockey" (http://www.uscho.com/news/2004/09/21_008653.php). I just want to tell you that I think this is awesome to hear. I'm only sad that it hadn't happened sooner (I'm a 5th year). But I will be sure to follow my alma mater in the future.

However, I am curious. In the past you have been pretty adamant about RIT not pursuing D-I status. What has changed? Did the voice of the students finally come through?

A: Thanks for your comments and questions on this recent news involving our hockey team.

In my 12 years at RIT, I've expressed my views about intercollegiate athletics on many occasions. Let me start out by saying that I love sports. I played in my youth, and in college I lettered in wrestling at Tufts University. I helped recruit Division I players while a department head at Boston College, a dean at the University of Cincinnati, and president at the University of Hawaii. While at the University of Hawaii, I served on the Division I President's Commission, the top policy-making body within the NCAA.

Today, I find disturbing trends in college sports. To read my recent white paper on this, visit my Website, www.rit.edu/president and look under "papers" and

“speeches”.

That being said, the recent article on the hockey team is accurate. RIT has sent a letter of interest to the Atlantic Hockey Association. We are simply exploring an interest at this point.

First and foremost, we need to maintain the academic integrity of RIT. That is one reason we are looking at the Atlantic Conference. The schools in this conference may be a better match in terms of our academic profile. Second, we need to improve RIT's ability to readily develop a schedule for RIT's hockey teams. These schools include: American International, Army, Bentley, Canisius, Connecticut, Holy Cross, Mercyhurst and Sacred Heart.

We have no plans to elevate any other athletic programs to Division I. This means we will not offer athletic scholarships for a D-I hockey team. We believe this approach will maintain the principles I have articulated in the past, while providing competition at the Division I level for RIT's most competitive intercollegiate athletics team.

Date added: 10/11/2004

Q: President Simone-

I want to suggest a possible source of funding. New York Giants Head Coach Tom Coughlin got this head coaching start at RIT and he might be interested in giving back to RIT. I know funding has been the major reason preventing a football team at RIT. Just a thought.

"Coughlin began his coaching career in 1969 as a graduate assistant at Syracuse, his alma mater. He was the head coach at the Rochester Institute of Technology from 1970-73, compiling a record of 16-15-2. Coughlin returned to Syracuse in 1974, first serving as quarterbacks and offensive backfield coach for three seasons before being promoted to offensive coordinator for four years. He directed an offense that led the Orangemen to victory in the 1979 Independence Bowl, their first postseason triumph in 13 years."

A: Yes, we are well aware of the Tom Coughlin-RIT connection. In fact, our RIT Sports Zone program plans to interview Coach Coughlin some time this fall for a future program.

Football at RIT is still being explored by the RIT administration and Student Government. But at this point, moving RIT hockey to Division I is the larger priority right now.

Date added: 10/26/2004

Q: I wanted to know if a football team would be in the near future? I played in high school and had no expectation to play in college, but now I kind of miss playing and would like to see a football program formed.

A: Football is still being explored by the RIT administration and Student Government. Please share your sentiments/ideas on football with Student Government, as well.

But at this point, moving RIT hockey to Division I is the larger priority right now.

Date added: 12/21/2004

Q: Could we get a punching bag and speed bag in the gym.

A: We currently have a boxing room, which includes a punching bag, speed bag, and double-ended speed bag. It is located at the end of the SLC main gym. The key for this room can be signed out at the Equipment Cage. There is a 45 minute time limit on the use of this room.

CAMPUS CONSTRUCTION

Date added: 7/14/2004

Q: Is College Town Single family houses for purchase by the general community or are they going to be for family housing for students with a family? Also how soon will we start to see some excavation on the site?

A: It is too early in this process to know whether or not the development will include single family homes.

College Town has mostly been in the conceptual phase. We are just now starting to review proposals from developers. This is a major step moving forward.

However, we do not have any groundbreaking dates. It is still very early in the process for College Town.

Date added: 7/28/2004

Q: I was curious why RIT has the tendency to finish constructions projects only to tear them down a few weeks later. This seems like a waste of resources. For example, in the A-level under Peterson two years ago RIT covered the cement floors with nicer looking tiles. A few weeks later the tile was torn up and replaced. Another example is the new Field House. Why is it that the front stairs were torn out two months after they were completed?

A: To everyone's dismay, occasionally problems occur on construction projects. These can take the form of poor workmanship, product defects etc...

As stewards of RIT's resources, we will not accept either. In the two cases referenced, the contractors involved were required to remedy the problems at NO cost to RIT.

Date added: 8/04/2004

Q: President Simone,

What renovations are being done to the cafeteria in the Student Alumni Union? Is the artwork being permanently removed?

A: I had to do some checking with our Facilities Management team on this.

The "Blue and White" mural by Langlet, and the "Wooden Slats" by Keyser, are being dismounted as part of the SAU Cafeteria remodeling this summer. The project will include carpet replacement, painting, new lighting, and decorative painting of the structural columns and beams (similar to the RITZ).

RIT is exploring the possibility of re-installing these artworks at other locations in current or future RIT buildings. This has been done before with the Bertoia planters located in the Golisano College atrium (formerly in the SAU atrium) and the Denning Enamel Mural (formerly in the Gleason Bldg.) now located in the new Gordon Field House and Activities Center fitness area. Twelve panels of the Langlet mural will be installed as a screen in the overlook windows from the Quarter Mile to the Woodward pool, now being drained with the opening of the new Field House pools. The "View It" sculpture is remaining in the Cafeteria: it will be enhanced with additional lighting.

RIT hopes to install some artwork from RIT's stored collection in the cafeteria as part

of the renovations, although this installation may occur after the beginning of Fall Quarter.

Date added: 8/19/2004

Q: Dr. Simone,

Several renovations have been made recently in order to improve RIT's appearance. What renovations are being planned in the near future in order to continue these improvements?

A: RIT has spent about \$265 million in physical improvements during the past decade.

As you know, the new Gordon Field House and Activities Center is now open. In the future, we plan to renovate the Student Alumni Union area where the old pool exists. This will be an area for student clubs and organizations.

Other areas of expansion/renovation include the Center for Biotechnology Education and Training (CBET).

RIT is receiving \$8 million from New York state in support of CBET. The state funding will allow RIT to begin the design process for a 46,000-square-foot facility to house CBET.

We are currently designing the building. If all goes well in these early planning phases, we should begin construction in 2005. The facility will be built just west of the Chester F. Carlson Center for Imaging Science.

We are always looking at ways to improve the residential side of campus, as well.

It should be noted that we will take careful measures with our finances before we move ahead on these projects.

Finally, check out "Campus Construction" under the Frequently Asked Questions area of this Web site for more detail on other projects.

Date added: 9/21/2004

Q: President Simone,

I am impressed by the improvements in the area surrounding the new field house. I particularly like the brickwork on the quarter mile from the bridge to the doors of the field house. It adds a nice touch to the area - something more than just solid brick or blacktop. I think that similar brickwork would dramatically improve the look of the remainder of the quarter mile (the portion between the doors to the field house and the residence halls). Are there any plans for such work?

A: We appreciate you noticing this.

The plan is to continue the same pattern for the balance of the quarter mile over the next 1 to 2 years. However, it is dependent upon funding decisions in each of those years.

But I can say with confidence that we will continue to beautify the campus in coming years.

CAMPUS SAFETY

Date added: 7/26/2004

Q: Can we get a blue light between the dorms and Perkins? It is not well lit and I always feel uncomfortable when I have to walk home in the winter after a 9pm class.

A: I checked with Campus Safety on this timely question.

RIT is investigating all issues pertaining to a new blue light call box along Perkins Road this summer. Overall lighting was improved this summer in this area.

RIT also provides a timed mobile escort service (<http://finweb.rit.edu/CampusSafety/transportation/summer2004/maincampusweekday.pdf>) during the academic year which runs from 10:00 PM to 2:20 AM. The campus shuttle service also operates until 10:30 PM each night from academic areas to Perkins Green and all other RIT apartment complexes.

Any student should always call Campus Safety at 475-3333(v/tty) if they are feeling uncomfortable anywhere on campus and we will escort them home as well.

Date added: 10/01/2004

Q: Dear Mr. Simone, does RIT have any right to ban a student with an event that happened off campus and even after if all three parties have resolved their conflict and wanted to take the former student's name off the banned list should be denied by the campus safety?

A: I can't and won't speak to a particular case in this forum.

But in general, Campus Safety bans many non-members each year for behavior related issues. Campus Safety reviews each request to lift a ban and decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. If a person has plans to enroll at RIT in the future, we typically lift the ban once the Registrar has verified acceptance.

We look at the totality of the circumstances and assess the potential situation should this conflict in fact reoccur on campus. While they appear to have "kissed and made up," we are not ready to assume this won't happen again on our campus. Clearly, if the person has a demonstrated propensity towards conflict, s/he is not welcome. We make judgments in the best interest of our community.

If you want to discuss this particular case in detail, please contact Chris Denninger, associate director of Campus Safety, at 475-6620.

Date added: 10/07/2004

Q: Dr. Simone,

I am curious about the Institute's reaction to the recent shooting on campus. I was greatly disappointed in the school's choice to sweep the issue under the rug. I would think that after a situation such as this with the parties responsible still at large, the Institute should have at least tried to keep the student body informed on the issue, and more importantly cancel classes until at least some level of investigation was conducted. I am not trying just to get out of classes, but by allowing the school to conduct business as usual without knowing who was involved in the shooting, it seems that the Institute thinks very little of endangering the welfare of both the students and the staff on campus. For all I know, I could have been sitting next to the perpetrators in class. What is your opinion on the issue?

A: RIT acted swiftly, responsibly, professionally and courageously in this crisis.

First and foremost, the safety of our students, faculty and staff was top priority.

The shooting took place at approximately 6 am. The suspects fled the campus. Our Campus Safety Department and the Monroe County Sheriff's Office quickly secured the building and began their investigation.

Meanwhile, RIT staff spent the morning at the hospital with the 2 injured employees.

By 8 a.m., the media had swarmed the campus. At this point in the morning, it was evident police had complete control of the situation, isolated to a small portion of campus. There appeared to be no further threat on campus. Again, safety of our employees and students are our top priority.

Communication (e-mails, voice mails, Website, etc.) was updated throughout the day to keep students, faculty, staff and parents informed.

This was a rare occurrence for RIT. RIT is a very safe campus. We've had only 3 other robberies involving weapons in the past 10 years; none as violent as Monday's incident.

Fortunately, the injuries to our employees were minor. They were released from the hospital later on Monday and are expected to make a full recovery.

I urge the RIT community to remain attentive and alert. As a precautionary measure, patrols are being increased on campus.

This incident has been covered extensively by local media. Some of the coverage can be found on the University News site at www.rit.edu/news.

Date added: 12/07/2004

Q: Could you put some reflectors at the entrances to Colony, the turn is really hard to see at night even with the street lights.

A: We think this is a good idea and have started working on it.

Thanks for the suggestion.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Date added: 7/28/2004

Q: President Simone,

I was wondering why the 20 or so American flags on the front of the fishbowl (above the Rochester Institute of Technology sign) have been taken down for a while now. It

seems they only come out for special events or holidays, and to me it seems that they should be raised 24/7. Thanks.

A: I admire your patriotism.

Here is the background:

The 25 - 3'x5' American flags that appear yearly at the Lomb Drive entrance along the rear of the RIT wall are rented from the company that provides services for our Commencement.

Until the tragic events of 9/11, that was the only time of the year they were put up - they went up the morning of Commencement and were taken down at the end of the day.

After the events of 9/11, we left them up for a month.

As for installing them permanently, there are two issues:

1) Flag protocol requires American flags flown at night to be illuminated. We would have to install additional lights at the entrance to do that because the existing lights would not do an acceptable job.

2) By this time next year, that flag location will be no more. The new Lomb Memorial Drive single entrance cuts right through the middle of the RIT wall. This entire area will be redesigned and improvements will be made by the state on Jefferson Road.

So, we will have to revisit what we do with the flags in the future.

Date added: 8/04/2004

Q: President Simone,

I am wondering why the school does not notify students when members of the faculty pass away. If the faculty/staff are sent e-mails about recent passings it makes sense that the students should be as well. Students still care about their past professors and would like to hear if they have passed away so that they can pay their respects. I am especially concerned because I recently learned that Dr. Paine, who was my distance learning chemistry professor had passed away last may before spring quarter ended. I am saddened that no one thought to notify his current or former students who enjoyed his lectures and classes. Is there a reason why students are not notified of this? It seems like a reasonable request.

A: This is a very reasonable request. I will pass this along to the appropriate people to make sure such notifications occur in the future.

Thanks for bringing this to my attention.

Date added: 9/13/2004

Q: The first Presidential debate is scheduled for Coral Gables in southern Florida on September 30th. With Ivan heading toward this area has RIT been contacted regarding the use of the campus as the backup site?

Steve

A: RIT remains the alternate site and we are watching this closely. But we have not been recently contacted by the Presidential Debate Commission.

This is a development we will certainly monitor. Thanks for asking.

Date added: 9/15/2004

Q: Sir:

I moved here from a city with decent public transportation some 4 years ago to teach at RIT. I *used* to ride the 24 bus to and from RIT. It seems to me that removing all direct runs (except for one at 7 AM and one at 7 PM) tells the community that RGRTA and RIT have basically very little commitment to encouraging the use of public transportation instead of individual automobiles by RIT faculty and students.

This seems to me to be a bad policy. It is "worth it" to the Institute to spend money encouraging ridership on public transportation. If nothing else, each person who rides a bus rather than driving in a car saves the Institute money which would otherwise be spent on parking services and support and infrastructure and enforcement, not to mention helping to save our shrinking wetlands.

And no sir, standing in the snow a second time each way (at the initial bus-stop and then again at the Mall) this Winter while waiting for either a shuttle to RIT or a bus back into town is unlikely to encourage bus ridership.

Why was bus service curtailed so severely, sir? And why did notice of these changes

not go out until after 5PM on the Friday immediately before the Monday when classes started?

Jeffs

A: RIT cannot respond for RTS regarding their operational decisions regarding bus services. However, we did marshal our resources to respond to, and minimize the impact to users.

RIT was waiting for RTS to advise us of the specific service reductions. This did not occur until late Thursday, September 2nd. On Friday, we committed our entire resources to meeting university needs. We did not have this finalized until late Friday. RTS advised RIT that they waited until the late because they did not want to confuse people by having two schedules posted for the same service. This was their decision, not RIT's.

Last, Jeff Meredith, RIT's Interim Manager of Parking and Transportation, will be pleased to answer any further questions you might have in this matter. He may be reached at 475-6006 or jcm1170@rit.edu

Date added: 10/04/2004

Q: Where are all the school colors? All I see are banners of blue and gray. I just read an excellent article, written by Gregory Smith, in the Reporter magazine about the issue of missing school colors. RIT's homepage on the web is mostly blue. RIT's athletics homepage has plenty of orange, but school colors aren't all about sports - they are about identity. Have you read this article? What is your opinion on this issue? And what can or will be done to bring out our school's colors?

A: I read the article in Reporter and the writer is right on target.

If we are to brand and build loyalty, tradition, and spirit ... colors are an integral part.

As part of our new strategic plan, we will be looking at better ways to brand RIT. We are always looking for ways to improve and enhance our image.

The issue of colors will certainly be part of this discussion.

Date added: 10/07/2004

Q: Dr. Simone,

What exactly is your motivation behind stopping the printing of Gracie's Dinnertime Theater? As a recent alumni of GCCIS I find this sort of censorship to be both deplorable and unwarranted, no they did not always express the party line but they were fair and they were honest and printed whatever was sent in to them. I had hoped to maintain a continuing relationship with the Institute as I go forward in professional career but can no longer do so in good conscience. I will certainly not be donating any funds towards RIT while injustices like this continue to occur and I will urge my fellow class of 04 alumni to sever all ties with the Institute as well. So much for an open and free learning environment...

A: There has been a continuing dialog between the editors of GDT and me for a period of years. In my judgment, RIT needs to maintain a level of community standards with regard to its dialog on matters relating to race, gender, and sex.

These standards are reflected in the language utilized to discuss these issues. Because certain language and biases may be permitted under the first amendment does not mean that insensitivity and disrespectfulness to others is, therefore, an acceptable mode of communication.

I choose not to spend university resources to support conversation which I believe can be hurtful and disrespectful to others. RIT's purpose is to prepare students for successful careers and productive lives. The conversations that have been occurring in GDT over the years have no place in the workplace or in the home, and the sooner those RIT students for whom this is an issue learn this lesson the better prepared they will be.

Date added: 10/07/2004

Q: I've recently heard that Gracie's Dinnertime Theater has been denied use of campus equipment in production of their paper. I have read your response to questions about your reasons behind this, yet I am concerned that this solution is not in the spirit of free speech.

While I seldom agree with the opinions expressed in GDT (I am the founder of www.CollegeConservative.com), I am a strong supporter of their right to their opinion.

I firmly believe that a better solution would be to ask GDT publishers to CLEARLY NOTIFY readers that the paper is not sanctioned by the college.

To simply deny them the use of public (at least "public" to students) equipment is a frightening step toward censorship.

Please know that I both respect you, and sympathize with your opinion regarding GDT. I simply feel that this solution is an unfavorable one for everyone involved - including the student body.

A: There has been a continuing dialog between the editors of GDT and me for a period of years. In my judgment, RIT needs to maintain a level of community standards with regard to its dialog on matters relating to race, gender, and sex.

These standards are reflected in the language utilized to discuss these issues. Because certain language and biases may be permitted under the first amendment does not mean that insensitivity and disrespectfulness to others is, therefore, an acceptable mode of communication. I choose not to spend university resources to support conversation which I believe can be hurtful and disrespectful to others.

RIT's purpose is to prepare students for successful careers and productive lives. The conversations that have been occurring in GDT over the years have no place in the workplace or in the home, and the sooner those RIT students for whom this is an issue learn this lesson the better prepared they will be.

Date added: 10/08/2004

Q: Dr. Simone,

I was wondering how I should address you if I were to ever meet you in person. Most people use Dr. Simone, but you are also the President of our Institution. Is Dr. President appropriate?

A: Dr. Simone or President Simone is fine.

Date added: 10/15/2004

Q: Dear President Simone,

On Bob Dylan's website (<http://bobdylan.com/live/>) it says he is playing a show at RIT in the field house, on November 13. This is the first I've heard about this concert, is this for real? I can't find any coverage on RIT's website.

Thanks!

A: Good news... Bob Dylan and his band are coming to RIT and the new Gordon Field House.

Here are the details:

Saturday, November 13th
Show starts at 8:00pm

Tickets go on sale this Saturday, October 16th at 10:00am at all Ticketmaster locations and www.cc.com; or at 1:00pm at the SAU Candy Counter.

Ticket Prices:

RIT Students - General Admission on Floor - \$20.00 ONLY at the SAU Candy Counter
General Public, Staff & Faculty -General Admission on Floor and Reserved Seating -
\$38.00 at all Ticketmaster locations and www.cc.com; or the SAU Candy Counter.

Date added: 10/19/2004

Q: I was just curious what exactly happened to the Bob Dylan tickets? (If you didn't hear, about 200 students showed up at 1pm on Saturday only to find out that there were no tickets.) And when can we get them?

A: Unfortunately, there was a mix-up with delivering the tickets to RIT on Saturday.

They are now available at the SAU Candy Counter.

Other details:

Concert date: Saturday, November 13th
Show starts at 8:00pm, Gordon Field House.

Tickets:

Available at the SAU Candy Counter, Ticketmaster locations and www.cc.com.

Ticket Prices:

RIT Students - General Admission on Floor - \$20.00 ONLY at the SAU Candy Counter
General Public, Staff & Faculty -General Admission on Floor and Reserved Seating -
\$38.00 at all Ticketmaster locations and www.cc.com; or the SAU Candy Counter

Date added: 11/01/2004

Q: Dr. Simone,

RIT was a contender to host one of the recent presidential debates. What other sort of major public relations moves (if any) are planned for the near future? Thanks!

A: RIT is always looking to bring good programming and events to campus. It adds to the experience of college life.

This was evident during our recent Brick City Festival. We had more than 8,000 people in the Gordon Field House for the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Kanye West, Robert Redford and David Spade. These were terrific events that we were able to book, in part, because we have the new field house.

As you may know, we also have Bob Dylan coming Nov. 13.

In 2005, RIT will host an event called Rochester FIRST, a large robotics competition. The event is a partnership between RIT, Bausch & Lomb Inc. and Xerox Corp. The Rochester FIRST Regional Robotics Competition at RIT is expected to draw at least 30 teams and thousands of visitors from all over the Northeast and Canada.

Now that the Gordon Field House is open, it opens up the door for many more possibilities.

Stay tuned.

FINANCES

Date added: 7/26/2004

Q: Why is it that I can buy pornography/magazines/etc on meal debit, yet am not able to do my laundry on debit? What message does that send to students?

A: Thanks for your question. The issue here is how RIT handles its billing. We try to make it convenient for students to purchase magazines while they are in an eating facility. The meal debit card is used to purchase non-taxable food items. But we allow a student to use the same card at the checkout for magazines and other non-food items, although they will be taxed on that purchase. This way, a student doesn't have two transactions during checkout.

If a student is buying a magazine in Campus Connections, they can't use the meal debit card.

Flex funds can be used for laundry, but this is a taxable service. An outside company also administers this.

Date added: 11/01/2004

Q: Dr. Simone,

The prices in the vending machines are really bothering me. There's times where I'll be taking an afternoon of classes and it would really help me to drink a soda, juice or some other flavorful drink, but I'm always given pause when I see the prices.

If you were in Wegmans and suddenly craved a Pepsi, would you pay \$1.35? \$2.10 for a SoBE? What about \$0.85 for a roll of mints?

It's a small issue, but higher prices make for unhappy students--just last year, the prices in vending machines went up about 10%.

So my question is this: where does the \$1.35 (for example) figure come from? Clearly, there are some things that must be paid for:

- 1) The soda itself (bought at wholesale discount)
- 2) The vending machine (no new machines seem to have been added this year)
- 3) The electricity
- 4) The person to restock the machine

I've noticed that some of the machines seem to be stocked by "Fine Host" corporation (recently acquired by Aramark). Who exactly is profiting from our sugar cravings? Why can large discount chains sell \$0.75 soda, and yet the cheapest thing in any RIT vending machine is \$0.85?

Seeing the higher costs of food and drink being used to further the university's budget is one thing (e.g. the "profit" from RIT Foodservice being put into the "General Operating Fund"), but seeing our money go into the hands of an off-campus company that seems to be gouging the students is quite another (though I'm not really happy with either).

I'm also displeased that the RIT Foodservice department appears to have "matched" prices with the vending machines, which just amounts to more money pouring out of our pockets.

Everything adds up. Being a student advocate on "the little things" really does make a

difference to us.

Thank you for your time.

A: RIT has a multi-year contract with the vending company that was awarded based on a competitive bidding process. The contract provides for the vendor to make annual vending price increases subject to review by RIT's Food Service.

The increases allowed are most often reduced from those initially proposed and are based on a variety of factors.

The comparison between prices offered in vending machines at Wegmans to those at RIT is not a cogent one. Wegmans owns their vending machines and buys their product at prices far below those that our vending company can due to the volumes of product that they purchase at wholesale.

In addition, our vending contractor has invested a significant amount of money in adding card readers to each machine so that they can accept Tiger Bucks (not so at Wegmans). They also invest funds in providing microwaves, condiments, machine enclosures, etc. (again, not something Wegmans has to do). All of these costs result in having to set a higher selling price than Wegmans.

A comparison of our vending selling price to those at other private universities, hospitals, airports and hotels in the area would be more relevant and would most likely reveal that our vending company's prices are in line.

FOOD

Date added: 9/30/2004

Q: Hi President Simone,

During the past couple weeks I have noticed my Flex account balance decreasing, only to forget where I spent that money. I would really like to see a way for us to view perhaps the last week of transactions on our Tiger Bucks and perhaps Debit as well just so we know how we used it. I don't think this would be too hard to implement and I believe many students would appreciate the enhanced feature. Thank you for your time,

A: Your suggestion is a good one and Food Service will explore with the system vendor what programming may be done to provide this information on-line. In the meantime, you can call the main office of Food Service, 475-2267, and request a report of where you used your Tiger Bucks and the amount of each transaction for a specific period of time.

Date added: 10/25/2004

Q: Mr. President-

Could we make a change so that Java Wally's accepts debit instead of just flex or cash? I thought the idea of debit was that debit was to be spent on food items and Java Wally's sells food. Would it be possible to change the billing system to include debit in the future? Thank you.

A: This is a good question that came up last spring.

Unfortunately, Java Wally's is not able to accept money from student debit accounts because they are an external vendor not operated by the university.

Under guidelines from New York State, RIT is able to offer the food debit program to our students in which purchases made are exempt from sales tax, thereby saving 8.25 percent per purchase. As a requirement of the program however, New York State Department of Taxation mandates that the purchase must be made from an establishment operated by the exempt organization (RIT).

All of the other Food Service operations on campus, including Ben & Jerry's, are operated by the university and are therefore qualified to participate in the program.

Students, faculty and staff do have the ability to pay for their purchases at Java Wally's with flex money that can be added to their ID card in several methods. These funds are used in an identical fashion as the debit funds except that they do not qualify for the sales tax exemption. In addition to being able to use flex funds at Java Wally's they may also be used at Campus Connections, on-campus supply areas, vending machines and now at selected off campus vendors.

Date added: 11/11/2004

Q: Hello Mr. President-

You recently answered a question from another student on the issue of pricing the institute's vending machines. I noticed that that student also asked about the prices used by the Campus's Food Service Department. Could you elaborate how the prices are derived for those items? Thank you for your time.

A: RIT Food Service Department does have good food buying power and has made contract commitments to purchase very effectively. Our purchased food expense for

the complete department is approximately 32 percent of our income.

This compares very well to other colleges and universities that are similar in size to that of RIT.

RIT Food Service is an auxiliary operation on the RIT campus. This means that it has to cover all of its expenses as well as produce a surplus to help offset other Institute expenses. 68 percent of what Food Service's charges goes to cover the cost of labor, benefits, water, lights, fuel, and 54 other expense components that make up their operating budget.

The Food Service Department tries to keep the food prices of their cash operations and stores competitive with similar operations in the Rochester community. When they find major differences, they are encouraged to lower the price. The store prices should be compared to convenience store prices. Often, the food Services store prices are compared to Wegmans' prices. This is an unfair price comparison due to the large purchasing power of the Wegmans chain of stores.

I hope this has answered your question. If you have any other questions, please feel free to contact Jim Bingham, Director of Food Service at jcbfsa@rit.edu

HOUSING

Date added: 7/16/2004

Q: Dr. Simone,

I'd like to know why, during the summer quarter, does RIT give priority housing to outsiders for conferences and the like rather than its own students? Nothing is more frustrating than being told you can't live in your apartment for the summer (which you'll be living in the following fall) because it's reserved for conferences. Why should others get the benefits of a UC apartment during the summer rather than a student? I realize we're not as profitable to rent to as conference attendees but I think we should be given priority.

A: This issue no longer exists because we listened to our students' concerns.

Here is some background: Students are on a 9 month contract in apartments (Sept - May) and must apply for summer housing. In past years, we did designate 6 buildings of University Commons for conference housing; therefore we would not approve someone to live there in summer if they applied (Although I am told we made accommodations for students last summer for students who wanted to stay in University Commons).

Beginning with summer 2004 we no longer held those buildings specifically.

Our summer housing brochure outlines the following:

SUMMER HOUSING:

Housing will be available in Nathaniel Rochester Hall, apartments and UC suites for those who are eligible. Double rooms and doubles as singles will be offered in Rochester Hall. Apartments and UC suites will be assigned based on two criteria:

1. An apartment/UC suite will only be assigned for the summer to the student who is assigned to that apartment/suite for the 2004 academic year;
2. Each apartment/suite that meets criteria one will be inspected by maintenance staff to determine if maintenance or renovation work needs to be done to the apartment/suite during the summer.

If both criteria are met, then the apartment will be assigned for the summer. If you meet criteria one but your apartment does not meet criteria two, Housing Operations will work with you on an individual basis if special arrangements need to be made. If you meet both criteria, you may add a roommate for the summer that is not on the 2004 academic year contract for your apartment/suite.

Summer is the time Housing Operations completes renovation/maintenance projects that may have an impact on where people can live. In the event you meet the criteria above and plan to live in an apartment/suite we need to renovate, we will work with you individually to make appropriate arrangements.

If you have any further questions on this matter, please contact Mary Fran Niedermaier, Associate Director
RIT Housing Operations, at 475-5432 (V/TTY)

Date added: 9/21/2004

Q: I am aware of the new smoking policy at RIT, and I feel the policy is unbelievably unfair! How are students living or simply visiting the residential side supposed to smoke safely in inclement weather? I have been threatened with a judicial for smoking in the "Quad" between buildings 28 and 30, which, by the way, isn't a quad. The surveys taken at RIT show that 90-something percent of students are not willing to admit that they smoke on a survey. Also, no poll was ever taken of what percentage of students mind smokers. Couldn't you at least erect smokers' gazebos to protect smokers from rain, snow, and ice?

A: To answer your question directly:

Gazebos or smoking huts are not being considered at this time. Where would we place them, how many would we need, who would pay for the construction of them...these are some of the questions that have left the gazebo/smoking hut question to be put on hold.

RIT is not saying people can not smoke. We are limiting the public areas that allow smoking to benefit the health of our community.

How is the policy unfair? It is a choice made by the smoker to smoke and it is reasonable for those that do not have the right to smoke free air. People walking by those buildings have the right to expect that the walkway will not have a cloud of smoke that they will have to walk through.

New York law prohibits smoking in all University indoor areas. RIT includes all living environments due to health and safety concerns.

I know you don't want to hear this, but, an individual's right to smoke can not outweigh the public health of our students, faculty, and staff.

Date added: 9/27/2004

Q: Dr. Simone:

I wanted to say thanks for allocating money this year to place soap in all of the residence hall bathrooms. This was much needed as it will help to keep the spread of bacteria and viruses down within the residence halls during the winter months.

Thanks

A: You are welcome. And thanks for noticing.

Date added: 9/29/2004

Q: Dr. Simone:

Why hasn't RIT been spraying weekly for increasing mosquito problem that we are having? It is completely awful. I wake up in the morning and end up with 10 new

mosquito bites. It is unbearable and why hasn't anything been done about it. It is the responsibility of the Institute to ensure that the mosquito population is under control. They are everywhere and nothing has been done to prevent the increasing spread. Safety measures have not been put in place to keep these creatures from coming into the residence halls and elsewhere on campus. I look forward to hearing your response about this matter.

A: Please keep in mind that this past summer was among the wettest in recorded history in Upstate New York.

With that said, I had some of our campus experts look into this.

Here is what they found: Doing a treatment on our campus would bring up some environmental issues. Because we have protected wetlands, we would be conducting an activity that is specifically outlined by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to be avoided. We would have to acquire a permit if we were interested, which may or may not be approved and would certainly take time. Additionally, we would have to look at the possible outcomes of exposing students to pesticides.

The Department of Health provides the following as their recommendations for avoiding mosquito bites:

- Use insect repellents that contain DEET
- Wear clothing that leaves a smaller amount of exposed skin (long sleeve shirts and pants are recommended)
- Limit the time you are outside during the peak times for mosquito bites (dusk to dawn.)

If you have a damaged screen window, please contact Housing Operations.

Date added: 10/25/2004

Q: Mr. President,

I have heard that there are no more lounges in dorms because they have all been converted into 3 person rooms. And that overflow housing is forcing students to live 2 to a room in the old Radisson. My question is why does RIT increase enrollment every year if there is no place for people to live. And, besides the college town that seems to be stuck in planning, is there any plan for new housing? And what do you have to say to those who gave RIT their money and are forced to share a single desk in an old hotel hoping some one drops out in the dorms so they have a real place to live?

A: I turned to Howard Ward, director of Housing Operations, to help answer your questions.

On your first point:

Not all of the lounges in the residence halls have been converted to permanent housing. The lounges which are in use this year will be returned to the floors in the residence halls as students leave. Yes, it is true that Housing Operations had to use a higher number of these rooms due to the high housing retention rate and number of students who have requested to live in on campus housing.

On your second point:

This is not true. We did have about 14 students in the old Radisson (Park Plaza) for only one week. This was used as a stop off point mainly for International students who needed a place to stay until they found housing elsewhere. We did house a few freshman there because most were late admits to the University.

On your third point:

It may not appear that way to you and others but Housing Operations has been able to house every student who went through the housing process. Please keep in mind that there is a planned approach to where students live. We would rather have an extra students than empty beds, and/or having no where for students to go. As a matter of fact most students would rather be in temporary housing as opposed to being forced to look off campus.

On your Collegetown question:

Collegetown is in the early planning stages and will come on line in a couple of years. We are busy meeting with a potential developer at this moment. Housing in Collegetown will not be University housing but private housing which will be made available to students and the surrounding community.

On your final question:

I would say that RIT is a very competitive school and sometimes students are unconvinced but we try to resolve their situation in a timely manner. Also the fact is that many of our competitors who have quality academic programs are experiencing the same issue. I would like to think that we are honest and upfront with our housing situation so that parents and students don't arrive to campus surprised. I believe that we may be the only University among our competitors who both write and call students to inform them of their housing situation.

Date added: 10/25/2004

Q: Hi Dr. Simone,

A couple of questions regarding housing:

Are there any plans to build new residence halls? Considering the number of students living in the RIT Inn and the converted lounges, wouldn't it be a good idea, especially if there will be an increase in admissions in the upcoming years?

The new Greek freestanding houses are really nice! Are there any plans to expand Greek housing, or at least convert apartment buildings into Greek living areas? I know that the latter possibility was being considered at the last Greek Retreat.

A: I did refer this question to Howard Ward, director of Housing Operations. Here are his responses:

On your first question:

No there are no current or future plans to build any additional residence halls. The University's goal is to have about 67 percent of our full time students to live on campus. We are at that desirable number.

On your second question:

Please understand that as a result of students leaving the University throughout the year for various reasons, we plan each year for students in lounges and other temporary housing so that housing can be at a desirable level all year long. We are tight with housing in the fall but have empty beds during spring quarter. Empty beds can drive up costs for all students.

On the Greek Housing question:

Thank you, the new Greek Houses are very nice. However, there are no plans to build any additional Greek or Special Interest Houses. Apartment houses will remain open to all students, therefore, we will not take highly sought after apartment beds for any one special group of students.

Thank you for your concerns and feedback.

Date added: 11/22/2004

Q: When are they going to replace Riverknoll or at least get Ethernet in it.

A: There are no plans to place Ethernet at Riverknoll due to the expenses involved.

We provide a Road Runner discount to one student, who then hooks up for the entire room.

Rent at Riverknoll is a bit cheaper because of that, and it being our oldest facility.

There are no current plans to replace Riverknoll.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Date added: 9/03/2004

Q: Universities such as U of R and Cornell are in pilot programs offering all their students, both on and off campus, free music downloads from Napster. If these programs prove successful, which I think they will, would RIT be looking to employ such a program?

A: This is a very timely question. RIT has signed an agreement with Cdix, a company offering digital entertainment to colleges and universities. In doing so, RIT becomes one of the first schools in the nation to take part in the company's digital music service, designed as an alternative to illegal file sharing.

Through Cdix, students have the option of purchasing a subscription at \$2.99 per month, allowing them to listen to music online. Individual songs can be downloaded for 89 cents.

The first 3,000 students that sign up for a 9-month academic year subscription will receive a rebate for the full amount, payable early in the Spring quarter.

Purchases can be made by credit card, but plans are being finalized to incorporate RIT flex card transactions.

ITS will host a server that makes the service run more quickly and efficiently. ITS is working with Student Government to publicize the Cdix digital music service.

Subscriptions may be made online at media.cdix.com.

Finally, it should be noted that those universities that are offering "free" services are funding such programs through other means...i.e. Tuition, student fees, etc.

Date added: 10/04/2004

Q: President Simone,

Could you have ITS change IPEdit so that users can modify/delete their own IP registrations?

A: I have just been informed by ITS. This request has been completed.

Users can now modify and delete their own network registrations through the "Manage your computer registrations" on start.rit.edu.

Thanks for bringing this to our attention.

Date added: 11/22/2004

Q: Regarding RIT's stance on the peer-to-peer file sharing, am I at risk if I download music but don't share the music with others? Is RIT doing anything to help students transition to a legal alternative?

A: Have you tuned into Ctrax this semester?

Ctrax is the leading legal music downloading service for the college marketplace today. Ctrax has over 1 million tracks from all four (4) major record labels and over a hundred independent labels - this equates to music from nearly 100,000 artists!

Because Ctrax only serves the college marketplace, monthly subscriptions include unlimited tethered downloads to students for FREE for the first 3000 students, and \$2.99/month thereafter. This is a deeply discounted price from the "retail" type music services. Single tracks can be downloaded for \$.89 for transfer to portable device and burning to CD.

You will enjoy blazing fast downloads because of our caching platform on campus that serves your school exclusively.

If you haven't already, check Ctrax out today at:

<http://media.cdix.com>

Date added: 12/21/2004

Q: Dr. Simone:

I have several questions for you concerning the state of RIT's online connectivity.

MyCourses is a very valuable resource for the students of RIT. I personally use the Grades feature to keep a record of what assignment and exam grades I received. It's very useful in keeping both my records and the professor's records correct, in case of any error.

My question is why aren't all professors required to implement this truly useful feature of MyCourses? I understand that for some courses, certain areas of MyCourses may not apply, but to not use the Grades feature is almost ignoring the student's best interests.

This is RIT, one of the top 25 most connected campuses in the nation. It'd be nice to see these online resources actually be used consistently for all courses.

Also, on an unrelated topic, what progress has been made concerning the implementation of viewing our individual purchase history for our Debit/TigerBucks? This was asked a few months ago, and from what I remember reading; it seemed that it would be an easy feature to implement. It would be a pity if such a useful feature was pushed to the sidelines indefinitely.

Finally, my last question relates to the SIS and related online databases. It appears to me that RIT is taking great strides to overwhelm us with updating our contact information should it ever change. With a recent address change, I had to update SIS and the Library database. I might have missed a few databases that I forgot about completely.

My point is that there are too many separate official databases here at RIT. It would be certainly nice they all were centrally connected to the SIS database, so the average student wouldn't need to worry about where they need to change their information for RIT. I realize that university resources are being used efficiently in other areas (for example, moving away from using Social Security numbers as the Student ID), but it would be nice to see an efficient and well thought out system that could be used as a model for other schools to attempt to emulate.

A: Let me try to answer your questions one at a time:

1) Faculty make their own choices about how to deliver their courses, or whether or not to use myCourses. In general, the administration supports the notion that faculty should at least use the grade book and messaging features, but this is not a requirement.

The best I can offer is to encourage students to tell faculty they want them to use myCourses.

Our new myCourses system will be out this summer-- and we will be doing a lot of training and advertising between January and June-- I hope this will help faculty who haven't used the system to come in for training. Right now we have about 39 percent of faculty who have used myCourses on some level and I hope the new system will be enticing to faculty who haven't tried it yet...we will be promoting specific features and holding special training sessions on those features, as well as offering online access to other training so faculty can view them at any time.

2. Online viewing of purchase history for the Tiger Bucks card is not supported in the current version of the food service system. Food Service is currently looking at an upgrade of the system and they hope to add this capability with the new system. In the meantime, you may request a report of purchase history from the food service department.

3. You are correct that RIT has increased efforts to have students update critical information, such as addresses, in a timely manner. There are many important reasons that this information needs to be current. You currently need to only change your address in the SIS system. The library database is automatically updated with this information on a daily basis. Based on your question, we will be updating the SIS screen to indicate that the change will be effective in the library systems as well. The Registrar and ITS are actively working to update SIS with new web based applications that will greatly improve functionality and usability, but will also eliminate redundant information stores where ever possible. The first new application will be a newly designed Registration and Academic Planning system. Student focus groups are being held to solicit feedback and ideas as we design the new SIS applications.

NTID ISSUES

None.

PARKING / TRANSPORTATION

Date added: 9/30/2004

Q: I'm sure you've heard many complaints about the shuttle that services the RIT inn. I'm aggravated at the fact that the bus only comes once and hour and if you take a look at the schedule then you will see. No, there aren't exactly 60 whole minutes in between each time interval but there is usually only one bus before the top of the hour. RIT's schedule of classes start at the top of the hour and end 10 before the hour, correct? So why can't there be more than one bus before the hour. If I have an 8:00AM class and I miss that first 7:27 bus, I'm basically guaranteed late for class since the next bus

doesn't roll back to the RIT inn until 8:11. This same type of thing holds true throughout the day. One reason for this is because of the fact that the shuttle has to go to the malls which makes no sense. Why can't there be an off campus housing shuttle made just for students living at the inn and racquet club? If people want to get to the mall then they can make the necessary transfers wherever they need to. It seems as though the RIT inn and Racquet club aren't getting the due they deserve as housing complexes under RIT. They're simply thrown in the mix with every other place under the sun that somebody might want to go off campus for. Instead of making them "just another stop" on the "off campus" shuttle how about making a housing shuttle for the both the inn and racquet club that is specifically tailored to compliment the class schedules of RIT students? (i.e. coming more than one time before the top of the hour). It really isn't that intense of a problem and shouldn't take that much to solve. After those changes are made you can have a separate mall/movie/any other leisure time place shuttle leaving from Gleason circle or something. It makes a whole lot more sense AND it makes it more convenient for RIT students that live in these complexes. I've read some of your responses to questions like these and they usually don't get the straight answers they were looking for. Hopefully you will able to take the time and solve this one. Thanks.

A: Thank you for this information. This is the kind of feedback that we designed this site for.

I've consulted with Campus Safety, as they manage parking and transportation issues.

Let's review what we do offer:

The Off-Campus shuttle service bus departs the RIT Inn at 7:27 a.m. and stops at Gleason Circle behind Wallace Library at 7:44 a.m. on the first run each day. This service connects the RIT Inn and the campus 23 times per day. The schedule is designed to transport students directly from the RIT Inn and Racquet Club directly to Gleason Circle. Upon the return home, this service stops at Marketplace Mall. This allows students to work or shop at the Mall before going home. It is also the RIT hub this allows student to connect with the Regional Transit Service and travel through out the community.

Regarding your suggestions, Jeff Meredith, who manages transportation issues, would like to discuss this further with you.

Jeff can be reached a 475-6006 or e-mail jcm1170@rit.edu.

Date added: 10/01/2004

Q: Living in UC, I generally walk by S lot on a daily basis. Monday through Thursday, it seems the lot is completely full between the hours of 10AM and 4PM. There are consistently cars circling the lot in shark-like fashion, especially 15 minutes prior to each hour.

My question is this: what is the recently flattened area between S lot and Andrews Memorial Drive going to be used for? Last year, it looked as though it was being prepared for paving, but this year, it's just a grassy area. Are there any plans to expand S lot into this area to alleviate some of the parking concerns?

Thank you for your time.

A: RIT always looks for opportunities to improve and expand parking. This last year, expansions and improvements to the D, N & T lots resulted in an increase of approximately 270 parking spaces on campus. Two years ago, the parking aisles in the S-Lot were reconfigured to increase parking and traffic efficiency.

Long-term campus planning does include an expansion to the J Lot. However, RIT does not have any plans to increase parking south of S-Lot at this time. S-Lot currently has about 770 spots.

Date added: 10/08/2004

Q: In general, I am feeling that those who handle giving ticketing violations are extreme. Since my car arrived in the summer, I have received approximately 5+ tickets. All of them have been waived so far...

But, I feel student officers and full-time employees are not using common sense. I am not purposely going out trying to violate the rules. I know it is a privilege to have my vehicle here, but it's getting crazy. I feel tickets are given to liberally. I would conclude from my 4 year experience at RIT that a lot of my peers and the faculty & staff would agree.

Is this complaint heard commonly? What is being done about this?

A: I checked with Campus Safety on this and they tell me they rarely hear this complaint.

The bottom line is the rules exist to ensure parking is available for all on our campus. Housing restrictions are in place to ensure adequate commuter and employee parking. As a result, bus service is available for those with housing restrictions so that an equitable service is available to all.

In addition, anyone can buy reserved parking. To manage our parking lots, we

absolutely must enforce the violations - a practice at all universities. Our parking policies are online; in handouts from the Campus Safety office, etc.

Meanwhile, students and employees regularly request our assistance in enforcement measures due to the proliferation of violations.

Date added: 11/29/2004

Q: Regarding parking areas on campus:

I currently live in the Perkins Green apartment complex on campus and usually walk or take RTS to the academic side of campus, to the SLC, etc. That's all well and good, the bus is convenient enough during bad weather or when I'm running too late to walk. But I ask you to imagine a few scenarios which you, as a privileged faculty member, may be unaware:

You have class 12 to 3:50 and work off-campus at 4:00. You have a car which, at 11:45, can usually be guaranteed a spot in the very back of the only available academic-side lot (G/H) (The other lots on the academic side are half-empty, but can't be used until 5pm, if at all, by you and other on-campus residents). Your car's a 5-minute walk to and from class. Your job is 10 minutes away.

You want to drop by campus quickly to buy a book, drop off some homework, and stop by your Advisor's office. There are, roughly, 3 sections of 20-minute parking available, all are full. The 20-minute spots behind the SAU were changed to short-term parking and are all empty. The 20-minute spots at the South Loop (next to the new turf field) are now all handicapped parking and empty, save for a few obviously able-bodied students getting the most from their forged doctor's notes (I have seen ONE validly handicapped person emerging from a car in that lot since it was changed).

These are just the major parking problems I have encountered since living in the apartment complex. And before you even say it, I can't afford a \$220 reserved parking sticker. That's why I have a job after classes.

So, my question is: What are you and Campus Safety going to do about the parking situation on campus? How many more days do I have to be late to work because as an on-campus resident I can't use the on-campus facilities?

A: RIT has 10,005 parking spots on campus. There is free parking all over campus, with the exception of R lot. We believe we have enough parking spaces on campus, and we are one of the few schools in the Northeast that doesn't charge an extra fee for parking.

That said, RIT is always looking for opportunities to improve and expand parking. This past year, expansions and improvements to the D, N & T lots resulted in an increase of approximately 270 parking spaces on campus. Two years ago, the parking aisles in the S-Lot were reconfigured to increase parking and traffic efficiency.

Long-term campus planning does include an expansion to the J Lot.

Meanwhile, students can purchase reserve parking spots for \$45 per quarter.

Campus Safety monitors parking daily and says that there has not been a day this academic year where we've reached full capacity.

For more information on parking and transportation services, visit the Campus Safety Web site at:

<http://finweb.rit.edu/campussafety>

RIT FACILITIES

Date added: 7/07/2004

Q: President Simone -

Are there any plans to build a sidewalk around the "back loop," connecting the dorms to U-Lot and University Commons? Or do we have to wait for someone else to get hit by a car, like we did for the speed bumps? It seems futile to put the blue lights back there if somebody looking for one gets hit before they can find it.

A: I will pass your concerns along to Campus Safety and Facilities Management Services. We are constantly evaluating safety issues throughout campus.

I can say we are evaluating what would be required to complete the sidewalk and we will consider and prioritize this work as it matches projects and resources.

Date added: 9/21/2004

Q: As a staff member I find the parking situation here at RIT terrible. Every year the number of reserved spaces at RIT grows, while little to no new spaces are added. The lot closest to my building is U lot which is full by 9 am, now that reserved takes 50% of the lot. I think it is insulting to students and employees both that these reserve spaces are being used to generate revenue, with no regard for students/staff/faculty that cannot afford to purchase one. One of the large complaints about RIT's retention rate is often weather, while we cannot control the weather, we are definitely not helping the situation by making parking an extremely difficult task. I see lots of opportunity for new parking spaces on campus.

A: The number of reserved parking spots varies from lot to lot. Campus Safety is noticing an increase in sales and do in fact move the "reserved markers" when indicated as we respond to consumer requests.

We also try to encourage students to use our bus service to free up some of the parking spots.

Overall, we feel we have enough parking to accommodate our community. And let's not forget, parking is free.

Date added: 10/01/2004

Q: I noticed that recently the concrete section of the quarter mile around building 1 up to the library was coated with some sort of substance that causes it to look wet. I would assume that this is some sort of seal coating. But I am not sure if anybody else has realized that it gets rather slippery when wet. I was wondering if that was just my imagination, or if anything is going to be done about this especially due to the fact that it will be covered in snow and slush all winter, which would probably make for some treacherous travel.

A: Last week, the 1/4 mile concrete pavement was treated with an anti-spall agent to prevent chipping & pitting of the surface. Seal coat / anti-spall products have a shiny finish that will scuff to dull as the product ages in the environment. As for slipping hazard, that portion of the 1/4 mile is slightly steeper than other main walkways on campus. The broom finish texture of the new concrete provides more traction under foot than the old non-textured asphalt surface it replaced.

Date added: 10/15/2004

Q: Doc Simone,

I recently noticed that the paper towel dispensers in the College of Science have been replaced with electric hand dryers with some message on them about the hand dryers replacing paper towels as part of RIT's efforts to keep the environment clean or something. Well anyways I hate the hand dryers, I think they are less effective and have limited uses. Paper towels are versatile whereas hand dryers do one thing, dry hands. Try and blow your nose on a hand dryer. But my disdain for the hand dryer is not why I am writing this. I recently read about Harvard University replacing their vending machines with "smart" vending machines that go into some power saving mode when no one has passed in front of them for 15 minutes or something. So when I saw the new hand dryers, I got to thinking that RIT might be interested in this. What do you think? I direct you to the following article for more information;
http://www.ibuydifferent.org/powerup/smart_vending_machines.asp

A: I directed this question to Facilities Management Services (FMS). Here is their response:

In 2002, FMS extensively researched installing "power down" devices on our vending machines. Our analysis indicated that energy savings could indeed be realized, however, there would be some operational difficulties with the card readers on the machines which may present some customer inconvenience.

In conversations with the manufacturers of the vending machines, card readers and debit card software/hardware system, it was determined that once a vending machine went into its energy-saving or "power down" mode, the power to the card reader would also be affected. When the machine came back up upon activation of its motion detector, the card reader would send a "power interruption" signal to the system controller and the controller would then confirm the existence of the reader and reestablish the reader's "connection" with the system. Until this "reset" occurs, a customer could not use the reader. The delay could take from 15 to 45 seconds depending upon various combinations of vending machine and card reader models then existing on campus. Thus, in practice, after a customer approaches a machine which is in the "power down" mode, there could be up to a 45 second delay before the card reader would accept a debit card transaction.

Other operational issues include the generation of a large number of trouble reports which would be generated on the system by over 100 vending machines and the inability to use the devices on vending machines containing easily spoiled food items like milk, ice cream or poultry.

Given the upward spiraling cost of energy and the challenge to control Institute expenses, revisiting this energy-saving alternative is certainly appropriate. FMS will undertake that study.

Thank you for your interest and suggestion.

Date added: 10/19/2004

Q: Dear Dr. Simone,

In light of all the money RIT has spent on aesthetic improvements for the campus (which look quite nice, by the way), at what point did the Sigma Alpha Mu pole become a permanent addition to the Greek Lawn? In addition to being a major eyesore, it's only used for about 3 days the entire year. Not to mention the question of fairness, as I don't believe any other organization or club has a permanent structure on campus.

Can we please go back to the way it used to be, where the pole was erected when it was being used and taken down afterward? It looks much nicer the other 362 days of the year.

A: This is something we are looking into. We are now working with Rochester Gas & Electric to negotiate moving the pole. RG&E, I am told, originally supplied the pole and put it up.

Date added: 10/25/2004

Q: President Simone,

I am pleased with the changes that are being made to improve the campus. However, there is something that I feel would go a long way toward that goal...

The laundry facilities on campus are terrible at best. Some dryers don't work well and others do not work at all. Not to mention which the cost to use the facilities is \$1.25 (instead of \$1) making it inconvenient when it comes to making change. I realize RIT is bound by a contract and that this issue has brought up before. But surely there must be something you can do in the interim. Thanks in advance.

A: Statewide Laundry has the contract to provide service in various locations throughout the residence halls and apartments. When service issues are reported to Housing Operations, they contact Statewide and they send a service technician to diagnose and repair the problem.

There is also signage on the machines and in the laundry areas to tell students if they experience difficulties with the machine to contact Statewide.

Please contact Mary Niedermaier in Housing Operations at 475-5432 if you have a specific complaint.

Thanks for bringing this to my attention.

Date added: 10/25/2004

Q: Dr. Simone,

I recently attended the RPO concert in the Gordon Field House, and I must say that I am very impressed with the new facility (and the RPO was great as well); however, I do have a minor concern with the way the seating was set up.

All of the white chairs in the center were zip-tied together. Does this really make sense?

- 1) The only way to remove a zip tie is to cut it, thus rendering it useless for future events. I think that RIT's commitment to the environment doesn't include throwing away a garbage bag full of zip ties after every event.
- 2) When zip-tied together, the chairs are quite close--almost too close for comfort for some larger adults, I noticed.
- 3) The chairs are on a "rubberized" floor; they clearly aren't going to adopt a migratory pattern.

Thanks for looking into this minor issue.

A: Here is what I found out:

This is a Town requirement for fire safety purposes. The theory is that absent the zip ties in the event of an emergency evacuation, chairs would get knocked over etc. impeding egress.

They also recycle the zip ties. Hope this helps.

RIT HISTORY

Date added: 9/06/2004

Q: Hello Mr. Simone. What is the deal with the infinity sign in the infinity quad? How does it turn, how heavy is it, who designed it, what regulates its operation, etc...
Thanks.

A: The sculpture was created for RIT when the campus moved from downtown Rochester to the town of Henrietta in 1968.

For some time in the 1990s, the sculpture did note rotate. In 1998, members of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers rebuilt the motor that makes artist Jose De Rivera's sculpture revolve.

De Rivera (1904 -1985) often incorporated the Mobius strip (a form with only one side, created by giving a narrow strip a half twist before closing the loop) in his work. De Rivera became well known for his sculptures exploring "motion, light, material and space."

The rotation of the loop creates forms continuously altered by time and space. The RIT piece resembles De Rivera's "Infinity," located outside the Museum of History and Technology, part of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

The sculpture revolves 12 times an hour. In fact, people rushing back and forth across the quad might not even notice the subtle motion.

Date added: 11/17/2004

Q: Dear Dr. Simone,

Were it not for the founding of NTID, would Rochester still have emerged as a city with one of the largest deaf and hard-of-hearing populations in the US? Or did Rochester attract deaf and hard-of-hearing populations before NTID?

A: Rochester is the home to the Rochester School for the Deaf, which opened in 1876 with 20 students, and today educates more than 100 students from 22 counties.

In the 1960's, however, the mainstreaming trend began, where students with disabilities were placed in schools and classrooms with students without disabilities. As a result, over the last three decades, schools for the deaf throughout the U.S have faced decreasing enrollment. But it was Hettie Shumway, an RSD Board member and RIT Board member who encouraged us to work together to create NTID.

When NTID began operations in 1968, Rochester's population of deaf and hard-of-hearing residents started to increase. Not only did hundreds of deaf students come to Rochester to study, but deaf faculty and staff came here to teach and work, in addition to RSD's deaf professionals.

Throughout the past 37 years, more than 5,000 deaf and hard-of-hearing students have graduated from RIT, many staying in Rochester to lead rewarding careers and raise their families. As a result, this growing and dynamic community has attracted other deaf and hard-of-hearing people from around the country to the area, including

doctors, a veterinarian, dentists, and lawyers because it offers access to many activities, such as regularly open captioned movies, interpreted performances, art exhibits, sensitivity training for police, residents and much more. In addition, a large number of interpreters work in the area, including 100 full time interpreters at RIT alone. Outside of Rochester, this is a rarity.

To answer your question-- yes, Rochester attracted deaf and hard-of-hearing people before NTID came along. But NTID at RIT has certainly allowed the deaf community to grow, which produced a snowball effect allowing residents and business to enjoy tremendous success. NTID at RIT has not only become an international model, but has contributed to Rochester's reputation as being one of the friendliest cities in the world for people with hearing loss.

RIT MYTHS

None.

STUDENT LIFE

Date added: 9/06/2004

Q: There have been a lot of improvements to RIT. It all seems more geared towards entering freshmen and classes to follow them. As an upperclassman, I look on- I feel disconnected. I feel compelled to ask how are you going to help me feel like I am a part of this change? How are you going to improve on my peers since of connectivity to the campus and community? How will you help us to feel that we are included and not excluded in all these later improvements to campus that were not here when we entered into our 1st academic year?

A: You raise an interesting point that our Student Affairs team, led by Vice President Mary-Beth Cooper, is aware of and monitoring.

I must say it's not too late to get involved and take advantage of the latest improvements on campus.

The new Gordon Field House is a prime example. Take advantage of the fitness center, the pools and the upcoming events we have planned this year.

We have more than 140 clubs on campus to join. This fall, we also plan to introduce more "late night" programming.

You make a good point and we can certainly look for more "upper class" opportunities.

I will pass this on to Campus Life. A challenge, but nothing we can't address with some programming.

Date added: 9/13/2004

Q: President Simone:

My question has to do with the ID Cards...As a freshman, this last week of orientation has shown me a lot of school spirit and pride, it can even be seen in the theme of the week "Catch The SpiRiT" Back to the ID Cards, I am wondering why the cards are so plain? They don't have RITchie's logo or even school colors. I would think that the teal strip at the top would at least be orange or black with orange text. If they didn't say "RIT...Rochester Institute of Technology" at the top, I wouldn't know what college it was from, or even that it was from a college. I know this question isn't a very important one, it just seems that the ID Cards could show a little more spirit or school pride!

A: This is a good suggestion and one that we are very interested in pursuing. In conjunction with the project to remove Social Security Numbers as the student ID, we will need to re-issue student ID cards. This may also include the need for a new ID system. One of the requirements of a new system will be to provide us options to have much more creative ID card backgrounds.

We are even considering a student competition to design the new background.

Date added: 9/30/2004

Q: Mr. President-

I'm a freshman here at RIT and I was surprised and a little distraught to find that RIT doesn't have a yearbook. At a university with so much talent regarding photography, design, and printing, it seems almost a given that there would be a yearbook, a place for the students to showcase nationally their proficiency and talent. Even my high school of only 500 people had a professionally printed yearbook. I'd just like to know if there's a reason that there isn't a yearbook here at RIT and if RIT would ever reconsider bringing back a yearbook on campus. Thank you.

A: This question does come up from time to time and we have recently examined bringing back a year back.

It is a question of resources: It would cost approximately \$100,000 to start this up. There are many operational issues involved. Right now, it is on the backburner. But I suggest that you bring this up with Student Government and/or Student Affairs.

Date added: 10/25/2004

Q: PRESIDENT SIMONE ON WITR TUESDAY

A: WITR-FM (89.7) will host a live radio call-in show with President Simone at 5 p.m., Tuesday.

The show will feature current campus events and student questions and concerns about RIT.

Date added: 11/17/2004

Q: Can we have more activity periods in a week? Our club already has to compete with several groups a week since the only activity period is Friday at 1-2.

A: Hi. I checked with Student Affairs on this question. Here is what I found out:

The current activities hour was evaluated and was re-instated in January of 2000. It was scheduled for a one-hour time slot due to the increasing number of classes and labs that occur in two hour (or longer) time slots throughout the work week.

The current hour was scheduled on Friday, which was considered the optimum day of the week due to faculty schedules and academic work loads. The time (1-2) was chosen in order to keep the activity hour earlier in the day, as it was considered a more favorable time to accommodate those students who might travel home on the weekends.

If a student is interested in changing the activities hour, they might wish to address that with the Student Government President, Sheila Sarratore, who can be reached at the Student Government office located on the ground floor of the RITreat, 475-2204.

Date added: 12/21/2004

Q: Hello,

I am a grad student here at RIT, going through my 5th year on campus. Being one of the many people on campus who absolutely hates smoking and having to deal with second-hand smoke, I was pleased to see the new regulation that keeps all smoking at least 25 feet from buildings. This was supposed to start in fall of 2004, but I have yet to see a single building without numerous individuals RIGHT in front of the main doorways smoking away. I hold my breath and run through. As an RIT athlete, breathing in other people's mistakes isn't my favorite past time.

I saw this link on RIT's housing page:
<http://finweb.rit.edu/housing/images/smokefree.jpg>

If this regulation is not going to be enforced, perhaps it should be removed and not used to falsely attract potential students into a "smoke-free" environment.

Thanks again!

A: We have implemented a smoke free zone 25 feet with the residential facilities, but this is not the case for all other facilities on campus. If you are writing specifically about the residence facilities, we have taken action with students/others who are smoking within the 25 feet. But we don't have smoking police at all doors 24/7.

We honestly haven't heard anything from students about this topic; including visits to Student Government and other leadership groups. But we will follow up with them.

TOP QUESTIONS

Date added: 7/02/2004

Q: Dr. Simone,

I've been hearing that the Deaf community expressed a lot of frustrations and grievances with the hearing side of campus. There were no actions taken by the executives to make any efforts to improve this. Why?

I, as a Deaf student who attend all of my classes at RIT instead of NTID, do not feel welcomed most of the time in the interactions of hearing and Deaf folks. I feel that the design of RIT Campus does not fit well if we do not want any walls between NTID's side and RIT's Side. Look at Gallaudet University, the only Deaf-based

university in the world and they have a strong interactions among each other like a family. RIT students need to feel like a family including Deaf students.

Instead of spending all of RIT money on the constructions and improvements on campus, why doesn't the institute try to spare cash for the improvements of Deaf Community? You should speak with President Jordan of Gallaudet University to improve the relationship between RIT and Gallaudet because there's none whatsoever.

THANKS!

A: Thank you for writing about your concerns. RIT is very proud to be the home of NTID. In fact, 43 percent of the 1,100 deaf and hard-of-hearing students are taking classes in other colleges of RIT, like you, and are well integrated throughout RIT's entire campus. We have taken many steps over the last 35 years to foster a strong deaf/hard-of-hearing/hearing community on campus.

For example:

- The Provost Deaf Access Committee was initiated in 1992, and continues today. To focus on deaf/hearing relationships and access in and out of the classroom, Provost Stan McKenzie meets with students, faculty and staff once or twice a quarter to discuss and resolve any issues.
- The Dean's Student Leadership Advisory Group [DSLAG] meets twice each quarter to listen and dialogue about any concerns they have. VP and Dean Hurwitz also meets with NTID Student Congress leaders in addition to DSLAG meetings to discuss any issues, as well.
- RIT SIGN has been a very popular initiative where deaf students teach hearing students ASL. In addition, ASL classes are available to all faculty and staff and are available on opposite sides of campus for convenience to all.
- Working Together is a workshop that many hearing faculty and staff have taken to better understand deaf culture, and learn ways to communicate with and include deaf and hard-of-hearing people in and out of the classroom and on the job.
- Via the RIT Dance Company, deaf and hearing students work and perform together all year long. Other productions campus-wide are the result of deaf and hearing students, faculty and staff working together on and off stage.
- Both hearing and deaf staff members work together to successfully support our deaf and hearing athletes through a strong and popular intramural program, as well as the RIT teams.
- RIT Student Government has strong deaf representation in the senate and cabinet.

-- The residence halls, as well as the RIT Women's Center work diligently to foster and promote successful deaf/hearing interaction and relationships.

-- We have an unprecedeted staff of 100+ interpreters to make sure all our deaf and hard-of-hearing students, faculty and staff are included in activities in and out of the classroom.

We also enjoy a wonderful professional relationship with Gallaudet University. Each year NTID and Gallaudet students visit each other's campus for a fun-filled weekend of competitions, networking and socialization. We also share research, and work together to improve education for deaf and hard-of-hearing students. In fact, Dr. Hurwitz was present at Gallaudet's graduation ceremonies this year, and considers I. King Jordan a friend and colleague.

These are just a few of the many ways RIT tries to make our deaf and hard-of-hearing students, faculty and staff feel like an important part of the RIT family.

Because your letter didn't address specific examples of why you feel the way you do, I strongly encourage you and invite you to participate in RIT SIGN, DSLAG, or to talk directly with Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz, who has always exercised an open door policy and is very happy to listen to students' concerns and suggestions, as is Dr. Ellie Rosenfield, associate dean for Student and Academic Services.

Date added: 8/09/2004

Q: Dr. Simone,

I'm not sure if I've ever heard an exact response from you so I decided to ask. What, in your own opinion, is the reason for RIT's low retention rate, low school spirit and high apathy levels? I'm not interested so much in what you want to do about them as opposed to what you think is causing them.

Thanks

A: Many students have great pride in, loyalty for, and satisfaction with RIT. But not everyone.

RIT is an intense university:

o Many of our academic programs at RIT are unusually long because of the combination of many required courses, credit hours in excess of state regulations, and heavy co-op requirements. Currently (this will change) there is not sufficient

curriculum flexibility.

I have asked the Provost and the Deans to initiate a review of all program curricula, with an eye to making them more streamlined, flexible, and accessible to students. We will design curricula that allow students to pursue minors, co-ops, and double majors and still graduate within four years (five years with co-op).

- o Some RIT students encounter unnecessary frustrations in managing their college careers outside of the curriculum. We have made considerable progress ameliorating these weaknesses; I believe more and more students are receiving constructive, friendly service and support.
- o We know students succeed at RIT if they connect to the community, including enjoying positive relationships with faculty outside of the classroom. We have made some progress with faculty advising - a key way to initiate such relationships - and will continue emphasizing its role as a supplemental teaching activity.

We must continue to work on connecting with students and smoothing their road as we apply ourselves to ensuring that their route is direct and expeditious.

Meanwhile, it is important to look at the improvements. In January, I appointed Kit Mayberry to the post of Acting Vice President for Student Retention. She is making great strides in the areas addressed above. I am also happy to report that, under the charismatic leadership of Vice President Mary-Beth Cooper, student life is improving at RIT. We still have to make larger strides, but we are heading in the right direction. I truly believe RIT today has the facilities (e.g. new Gordon Field House), activities (more than 150 clubs) and pride to make this a great university.

Finally, we have addressed many of these issues in RIT's new Strategic Plan. The plan is a compass that will guide RIT for the next decade. I urge you to review the Strategic Plan, particularly the areas that refer to Student Success, Scholarship, and Community. The Strategic Plan, as well as some of my white papers, can be found at www.rit.edu/president.

Date added: 8/25/2004

Q: My first question is where do we get our water supply from? I've been hearing that the Ontario Lake is just horrible with chemicals and all. My second question is when will you allow students to get into double majors? For example, rather than having a major, Electrical Engineering with Computer Engineering Option, it's a double major, and thus you get two degrees.

A: In response to your first question:

The majority of RIT's water comes from Hemlock Lake, a Finger Lake south of Rochester. We also receive water from Shoremont Water Treatment Plant, based on Lake Ontario. The water, of course, is treated and perfectly fine to drink.

In terms of your second question:

RIT deans agree upon the strong desirability of double majors. Our plan is to have the opportunity in place sometime during the 2004-05 academic year. We still need to work out all the details.

It should be noted that there is a difference between "double majors" and "two degrees" (or "dual degrees"). A student who wants two degrees--i.e. two separate diploma's (a B.S. in business and another B.S. in chemistry) would have to take far more additional credits than the student who wants a double major in business and chemistry (one B.S. degree, two majors).

Date added: 9/30/2004

Q: Why was the HUB told not to continue printing Gracie's Dinnertime Theater? They already took a beating when you cut their funding in an attempt to limit campus to a single, Institute-sponsored news source. Why in the world would you throttle the right of students to independently publish a weekly newsletter?

A: I continue to be disappointed in the material found in Gracie's Dinnertime Theatre. Specifically, the choice of obscene and vulgar language routinely found in the publication is in contradiction with RIT community standards.

In a letter addressed to the then editors of GDT dated Nov. 11, 2002, I wrote: "So that there will be no misunderstanding should there be another issue which, in my judgment, contains excessive sexual expressions, profanity and discussions and statements which can be unduly offensive and embarrassing to various groups on campus, all administrative financing and support will be withdrawn immediately."

Having reviewed this year's issues to date, I have decided that Institute property and resources will no longer be available for the production of Gracie's Dinnertime Theatre. These resources include:

- 1) Computers and servers owned or supported by RIT.
- 2) The use of the HUB will no longer be available for the copying of the publication.

3) Funds from Institute accounts cannot be used to purchase advertisements in the publication.

This is a private university and I can not justify any RIT resources going toward this publication.

Date added: 9/30/2004

Q: Dear President Simone,

I heard recently that Gracie's Dinnertime Theatre, the satirical/commentary publication on campus, was told they can no longer print from the hub. Why is this? They have done nothing wrong but express their first amendment right to free speech.

A: I continue to be disappointed in the material found in Gracie's Dinnertime Theatre. Specifically, the choice of obscene and vulgar language routinely found in the publication is in contradiction with RIT community standards.

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Date added: 11/05/2004

Q: Dear President Simone, I was recently out of class for a few days because I had my wisdom teeth removed. I was seen in the hospital only as an outpatient but I was too groggy from the pain medication to come to class immediately following the surgery. I gave my teacher the discharge form I received in the hospital. Then he said he wanted another note, the discharge form was not good enough. So I went to Strong and got a form that was filled out stating that I was seen in their office and the date of that. Now he is saying that even this is not enough and that I need to give him a handwritten form stating specifically why I was there and signed by the doctor, or he will fail me from the class. I believe that it is a violation of the HIPAA laws, the hospital will not state why I was there only that I was there. I also feel insulted and that my privacy was violated. I have been reading Student Rights and Responsibilities to try to understand what my rights are in this case. Can you clarify?

Thank you.

A: Thank you for your question, and I hope you are feeling better.

This seems like the perfect case for the Student Problem Resolution Office. Here you will find the RIT Student Ombudsperson.

The office has two primary responsibilities:

- 1) To help students in the process of resolving problems within RIT.
- 2) To identify areas where problems seem to recur, and communicate that information to appropriate personnel who can remedy the problem.

This office and the Ombudsperson feature these hallmarks:

- * Confidential
- * Neutral
- * Independent
- * Informal process.

You may e-mail the Ombudsperson at ombask@rit.edu, or call 475-7200.

I hope we can resolve this to your satisfaction.