Dear Students of UM Family:  

Welcome back after your summer holidays! And for those who are new to the University of Macau (UM), especially those from mainland China, my warmest welcome! This is Dr. Vat speaking – I am mostly addressed by my students as “Vat Sir”, and I am a faculty member affiliated with the Center for Teaching and Learning Enhancement (CTLE).

What you are reading is my first ECG Digest in the fall semester of 2013. It is a piece of sharing meant to get you involved in your living and learning at the University of Macau. Indeed, it is an invitation to you to come join our biweekly evening conversations group (ECG in English about an hour) near the Learning Commons at the Research and Development Building. We have reserved a meeting room (RG02) which is good for eight to ten students for this ECG gathering, with a simple dinner box.

And we are to share with one another whatever happens to us with a theme of loving interest. This fall, I have chosen an encompassing theme called “Relationships 101” to explore with you what you mean by connecting with others in your life, including your study at the University. Our first evening gathering starts on 2013SEP20 (06:30 pm – 08:00 pm) at the RG02 meeting room in our R&D Building. So, come join us and makes some new friends.

Very best wishes,  
Vat Sir  
http://www.fst.umac.mo/en/staff/fstkhv.html

**Relationships 101**

This is an engaging topic, indeed. I can hardly imagine why we do not want to succeed in any relationships of our living. Yet, what does it mean by “101”? Well, those of us who happened to have studied in the US, know that most freshman courses in a US college, end with the “101” tag, indicating that this is the beginning of our learning journey. So, I use the “Relationships 101” name as the beginning of your journeys into connecting successfully with others. But, you must define what success is meant for you in the context of relating; what direction you should go to pursue your successful relationships; what role failure in relating should play in your connecting endeavor; and most of all: How do you get started?

As a volunteer facilitator in your living and learning at the University, I would suggest the following core questions to explore our relationships story together (with courtesy to John C. Maxwell):

- Why are relationships important to success?
- What do I need to know about others?
- How can I connect with people?
- How can I build trust with others?
- What is my most important relationship?

Besides introducing the above topics, I would also like to get you involved into thinking about your road to college success. This is mostly a personal issue of academic transformation, which is very important to your personal development for life and work. Indeed, there are many exciting things to share with one another: for example, asking essential questions, thinking critically and creatively, communicating clearly and collaborating effectively; honing teamwork skills, with group decision making, and proper time and self management. Oh, yeah! What does a good life mean to you? Or what does it mean by a life good to live? Do you have any aspirations to share with us? Any dreams to actualize! Come share with us on 2013SEP20 by sending me an e-mail (fstkhv@umac.mo) to register your seat!