All heart: Valentine’s Day for everyone
Chocolate is one of the world’s most slave-related products, guest speaker Jason Boyce told COM362 students on October 29, 2012. Sixty per cent of the global cocoa supply comes from West Africa, where countries like Côte d’Ivoire rely on a labour supply that contains way too many press-ganged adults and kids.
Now, world-wide industry members are looking into their sources of cocoa and have begun to act on what they’re finding.

Supply chain, human rights, Corporate Social Responsibility
This CNN article and news clip describes how Nestlé supported an independent assessment of its chocolate supply chain, and found children working with machetes and hazardous chemicals – and no pay.

Marketing, finance, human rights, environment, indigenous and gender equity
This article looks at Fair Trade and a co-operative in the Panamanian cocoa industry. What began with 19 men and one woman is now an organization with 229 men and 298 women, many of them indigenous.
For producers in the Dominican Republic, check out this article about an organization with 10,000 farmers and 182 cooperatives. This link has a profile of the Ghanaian cocoa industry and Kuapa Kokoo, which represents 45,000 farmers.

Local-international cocoa connections
Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory Canadian stores are members of the World Cocoa Foundation that promotes sustainability in cocoa farmers and supports Fair Trade.
Purdy’s funds development work directly in cocoa-growing regions in Africa, rather than partnering with certification programs. The company supports the World Cocoa Foundation and the Winrock Foundation because, according to Kriston Dean, Director Chocolate Merchandising and Marketing, they feel more money goes directly to farmers rather than to certification programs, labels and marketing. Purdy’s website has a video and documents about the company’s involvement with the Winrock Foundation to improve farming practices, yields, and education in Côte d’Ivoire.

Fair Trade roses: who knew?
Ecuador is one of the biggest producers of roses on the planet. On just under 4000 hectares of land, 700 companies grow 404 varieties of roses which are sold in more than 90 countries. The Ecuadorian industry employs more than 70,000 people directly, with another 250,000 in industries that support or benefit from the flower industry. Hoja Verde is a family-owned Fair Trade rose producer.