

SAFAGRAM

President's Message

By James McWilliams



“Well done young man,” “nice job,” “good for you,” “way to go,” “excellent job,” “pay more attention to the details,” “need to concentrate more.” The array of comments just described are most familiar to many Faculty members who have the privilege of teaching students. As educators, we share in our students’ proud achievements and feel their disdain for their failures and disappointments. The human and compassionate side of a teacher’s mantra is to reach out and pat a slumped shoulder or stroke a declining arm, smile encouragingly, and offer the appropriate warm words of encouragement. The underlying message to all students conveys that “I” am an ally; “I” am not a threat. This is

an action that regrettably is less rarely exhibited by the instructional pool at SAIT than it previously was.

The combination of a “Touch Phobic Society” and the increase in culturally diverse communities has parents, teachers, care providers, and even health practitioners (doctors/nurses) having to constantly adjust their moral compass. Historically, cultural differences have been accepted or unaccepted for centuries. For example, in the Japanese culture the accepted greeting when two individuals meet is to bow to one another. Many European and Latin American cultures prefer a more physical contact greeting with a kiss on the cheeks. In the Arab nations, men will kiss on both cheeks and shake with the right hand only. In Northern European culture, on the other hand, many people would find it offensive if someone brushed up against them obtrusively, resulting in the abused seeking an apology.

Moreover, it is well documented that touching in the workplace is considered taboo, although regrettably intimidation tactics are still practiced by provocative bosses or colleagues. “An arm thrown over your shoulder by a boss is perceived differently from an arm thrown around your shoulder by a friend.” (Doug Lemov)

The act of touching, especially of students by instructors is viewed by many as highly inappropriate behaviour and is extremely controversial. As instructors, we adhere to the strict rule of conduct, both for verbal and physical disruption, by the students or Faculty members. Furthermore, as an instructional cohort we are cognizant of the boundaries of touching when a student’s safety is compromised; the protec-

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SAFAGRAM editorial policy, as approved by the SAFA Executive on June 14, 1995, is as follows:

1. The Editorial Board has the final say as to what is included or deleted from the newsletter.
2. Editorial Board decisions about newsletter material must be agreed to by consensus.
3. The newsletter will include a disclaimer stating that the views expressed in its content do not necessarily represent the views of the Editorial Board or SAFA.
4. All material included in the newsletter must
 - be signed by the author when submitted to the editors, but anonymity may be requested and granted for printing.
 - be based on “reasoned argument” if personal criticism is used.
 - not involve name-calling.
 - not include sexist, racist, or homophobic comments.
 - be related to SAIT, although this will be interpreted broadly.

The views expressed in SAFAGRAM do not necessarily represent the views of the Editorial Board or SAFA.

<http://www.safacalgary.com/>

Labour Relations Officer (LRO) Report

By Al Brown, LRO



Over the past couple of months, I've had questions regarding several topics. I'd like to share some information with all of you.

Q: "I want to use the new Wellness account to pay for my new glasses. Is it taxable and how do I use it?"

Yes, it is taxable.

Online Submission

1. Submit your claim online by visiting www.manulife.ca/groupbenefits.
2. Log in using the Plan Contract Number 83629 and Plan Member Certificate found on your benefits card, along with your password.
3. Select Claims from the menu and choose Online Claims.
4. Select Taxable Spending Account from the "Select a Spending Account" menu.
5. Complete the remainder of the screens as appropriate, and submit.

Paper Submission (3 easy steps)

1. Complete the TSA claim form which can be obtained by visiting www.manulife.ca/groupbenefits or SAITNOW >Tools & Resources > Forms > Employee Services. If the claim is for a dependent, remember that when you sign the form, you're legally stating that the dependent is eligible to use your TSA (see "Who is covered?").
2. Attach a receipt for the expense.
3. Mail the completed form to the address on the claim form.

The reimbursement you receive is based on the funds available in your TSA and will be explained on the accompanying claims statement from Manulife.

The link to the taxable spending account is below.

<http://www.saitnow.ca/taxable-spending-account.html#faqnoanchor>

Q: "I was off sick for a week and now my AC is asking about "making up" missed classes. Do I have to "make up" these classes?"

The classes that were assigned while you were sick should have been assigned to substitution and taught at the time they were scheduled, not postponed until your return. If you teach these classes now, in addition to your regular workload, they should count as overload (assuming you're fully loaded).

Q: "I've been assigned 23 CCH per week and my annual load is 608 CCH. Is this allowed in the Collective Agreement?"

Yes, but only if you agree to it. The reference for this is Sec. 36.11 in the SAFA Collective Agreement (CA). Specifically:

36.11 (b) Class contact hours shall not exceed the following unless agreed to by the instructor:

- (i) The greater of twenty (20) hours or three percent (3%) of the applicable class contact hours, in any given week averaged over a sixteen (16) week period,

The calculation works like this: 3% of 608 = 18.24. But wait! Remember, it's averaged over a 16-week period even though you may teach a 15-week semester, so, 18.24 X 16 = 294.81. Now divide that to get how many hours you could be assigned in a 15-week semester; i.e., 294.81/5 = 19.456. Since 20 is greater than 19.456, you can be assigned 20 CCH per week without SAIT asking your permission. Any load in excess of that requires your permission and could end up being paid as overload.

Q: "Our AC has been pushing for our 40-hour week to be fulfilled between SAIT's "core hours" of 8 to 4:30."

I don't know of any mention of "core hours" in SAIT policies or procedures and there certainly isn't any language regarding that in the Collective Agreement, and there is no mention of office hours; for example, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

We have no set hours in our Collective Agreement. In the Continuing Education and/or Corporate Training Letter (Page 78 in the CA) is where we find any hint of a block of hours, "... during any hours between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m." This gives SAIT a 50-hour window during the work week to assign class contact hours, meetings, and assignable duties. Our Collective Agreement also does not stipulate that you must be present at the place of employment. However, there is an expectation that you're available for classes, meetings with your AC, colleagues, and students, as well as mentoring, etc.

Furthermore, the expectation is one of professionalism—that the work gets done. This may mean you work in excess of 40 hours from time to time. The Collective Agreement states that our time is not to exceed 40 hours. Specifically:

35.01 The normal hours of work for academic staff members in the Instructor category shall not exceed 40 hours per week or the equivalent on a monthly or annual basis . . .

That infers that some weeks can be less and some more. That doesn't mean you get to take Reading Week off as "time in lieu of." If you want to take that time off, you need to take vacation days, but there is an understanding that some weeks you'll be on campus less than 40 hours, hence the averaging.

It's true that SAIT does not have a work at home policy, but that doesn't mean it doesn't happen. It is very common for instructors to take marking home as well as other work to finish it off. I believe SAIT would fall apart if instructors adhered to a rigid 40 hours per week policy—that's probably why there isn't one.

Q: "I'm currently off work due to an illness. This means that I've had to miss instruction time with some of my courses. The instruction has been re-assigned to some of my co-workers until I return in a week or so. My co-workers have been e-mailing and phoning me to ask questions regarding course content etc. I don't mind passing along information but this has started to hinder my recovery. What should I do?"

You should concentrate on getting well; inquiries from your colleagues regarding your courses should be directed to your AC. Remember to contact the SAIT Return to Work Coordinator, Pat Olsen, if you will be off work for more than three days.

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Transfer Options (TO)

By Dr. Karen McDaniel, Articulation Coordinator
Academic Development

We know that SAIT credentials are very valuable and that instructors are the key to letting students know about their degree options after they graduate. The Graduate Employment Survey tells us that students are leveraging their SAIT credentials for transfer credit toward degrees in their subject areas at home and abroad.

To that end, we are pleased to announce the seventh annual **Transfer Options Fair** on **November 19** in the Stan Grad Centre Atrium from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Universities, colleges, and organizations from the USA, Canada, Australia, the UK, and Denmark will be sending representatives to talk to students about degree completion opportunities. There will be booths, break-out sessions, and one-to-one advising times available. All students and faculty will be receiving an e-mail invitation and opportunities to sign up for sessions.

Presently, we are sending out real-time announcements of

Have a diploma? Now choose a degree...

SAIT TRANSFER OPTIONS FAIR

9 am - 3 pm, Thurs., Nov. 19, 2015

Stan Grad Centre Atrium

Meet with recruiters to learn about your transfer options!



events and new agreements on Facebook and the Transfer Options (TO) website. We are encouraging faculty and students to “like” us. Visit www.sait.ca/transferoptions to see the link or search for us at Transfer Options at SAIT.

Thank you for your continued support and many fine suggestions for future transfer options. We are also being approached by receiving institutions for transfer agreements because our graduates have applied there. Please contact me or encourage your students to do so through transferoptions@sait.ca if you would like more information.

I am always pleased to come to classes to talk to students. As well, please know that there are degree opportunities available for instructors. Presently, we have instructors completing degrees at Royal Roads University and Thompson Rivers University.

Have a great year and remember that together we can make great things happen! 🍁



President's Message
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tion of the student is paramount. Yet the question remains, “What are the limitations or acceptable procedures that we should adhere to when touching is necessary for instructional direction or corrective adjusting?” Moreover, as classes gain momentum through the academic year, frustration, exasperation, and anxiety become much more evident with students and instructors and can adversely result in behaviours that border on being punitive, verbal, or coercive in their delivery. What is more concerning is that there appears to be a grey area within SAIT’s Institutional Policy References and the SAFA Collective Agreement where language on this sensitive issue is quite ambiguous, especially when it comes to the Do’s and the Don’ts.

However, SAIT is working diligently to provide information and training staff regarding conduct issues. There are policies and links available to students and Faculty that do explain the procedures for dealing with sensitive behaviours: AC 3.4.1 Student Conduct, HR 3.4.1 Ethical Conduct, HR 4.6.1 Harassment and Discrimination Hot line (403-210-4406). To date a credible touching policy at SAIT Polytechnic appears to remain as a work in progress. Furthermore, SAIT has partnered with the Calgary Community Against Sexual Abuse (CCASA). As an institution, SAIT is taking a stronger stance against abusive and violent sexual conduct against members of the SAIT community.

The rule of “to touch or don’t touch” leaves the majority of the instructional body uncertain, uncomfortable, and extremely cautious. Negative occurrences with a student could have an

adverse effect on a Faculty member, specifically in the form of discipline. The ramifications of a discipline accusation could be far reaching, especially if it’s reflected in a person’s Professional Performance Report (PPR). Moreover, a Needs Improvement outcome on an individual’s PPR restricts movement on the annual grid step, resulting in a loss of salary.

I am confident that SAIT Instructors will continue to use best practices and sound judgment when they deliver their lessons to their respective groups with the degree of professionalism that SAIT Instructors are renowned for. Yet, more importantly, having clearer guidelines and an approved process will alleviate any misunderstanding or misconceptions. 🍁

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Her telephone number is 403-284-8761; her e-mail is returntoworkcoord@sait.ca.

Q: “I’m turning 65. Does this affect my benefits?”

When an employee reaches age 65 the benefits department sends out notification to employees that Long Term Disability (LTD) and extended health care ceases, but General Sick Leave (GSL) continues for 80 consecutive days.

If you have any questions, please stop by the SAFA Office, N201 in the Burns Building, or contact me directly at Ext. 4067, or e-mail al.brown@sait.ca. 🍁

Library Report

By Alison Hart

Introducing Ebony Magnus, our new Assessment and User Experience Librarian!



Ebony Magnus joined the Reg Erhardt Library team in September as our new User Experience and Assessment Librarian. Ebony holds an MLIS from UBC and an MA from Carleton, and until recently she was working as the User Experience and Assessment Librarian at Michigan State University. She was responsible for designing and implementing assessment tools including surveys, focus groups, interviews and usability tests, and for coordinating the collection of data. One of her recent projects was a Library Space Study which involved collecting information about how and why patrons use the library and making recommendations for ways to improve the space for users.

Ebony is involved with the American Library Association as Chair of the EJ Josey Spectrum Mentorship Committee and has also presented on data visualization, assessment, and user experience at multiple conferences, most recently in Brisbane, Australia.

Ebony is involved with the American Library Association as Chair of the EJ Josey Spectrum Mentorship Committee and has also presented on data visualization, assessment, and user experience at multiple conferences, most recently in Brisbane, Australia.

Ebony was asked a few questions about her future plans and personal insights:

How long have you worked in libraries? What interests you about libraries?

I've worked in libraries for almost 15 years, and I've always been interested in libraries as a public space where anyone is welcome and where connections (with people, information, culture) are made. And with all the changes in technology and information, I'm excited to think about the ways in which libraries can respond and contribute to innovation.

What will be your main focus for the Reg Erhardt Library?

As the Assessment and User Experience Librarian, I will focus on demonstrating the value of the Library and its services—

how we contribute to the success of students and faculty at SAIT. I'll be spending my time learning about what the SAIT community needs from its Library and ensuring the Library delivers on it.

Where do you see the Library in five years?

SAIT is primed for a lot of growth in the next five years, and the Library is going to move along in step. As programs continue to evolve, so too will the Library's services and resources to meet the changing needs of the SAIT community.

What are your hobbies?

I really love being outdoors, whether I'm exploring the city, hanging out in my backyard, or hiking in the hills. If I'm indoors, I like to bake, read, and occasionally indulge in some serious Netflixing.

If you were stranded on a deserted island, name three things you would bring.

My dog, Shira (I have a cat too, but she'd probably prefer to be left at home alone), my Kindle, with an endless supply of books, and a pillow.

Please welcome Ebony to SAIT and to Calgary!

Contact information:

Ebony Magnus, MLIS
Assessment and User Experience Librarian
Reg Erhardt Library | CALS
Phone: 403.284.8515
E-mail: ebony.magnus@sait.ca 



REMINDERS:

SAFA is now accepting applications for the SAFA Dependent Scholarship.

SAFA is also accepting nominations for the SAFA FIRST Award.

November 2, 2015, 12:00 (noon) is the deadline. Check the e-mail from Kathie Dann, dated October 22, 2015, for more information.

The Reg Erhardt Library now offers

The Teaching Professor Journal online



Visit <http://goo.gl/tfOYfN> for more information.

FIRST LEGO LEAGUE ROBOTICS COMPETITION Needs YOU!

By Craig Maynard, Mechanical Engineering Technology Instructor
School of Manufacturing & Automation

On January 2, 2016, Calgary is playing host to an international championship tournament at the TELUS SPARK known as the FIRST LEGO LEAGUE (FLL).

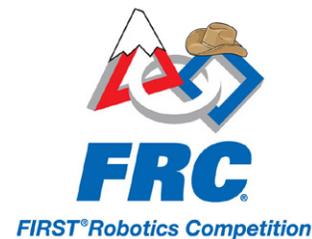
We are looking for volunteers to help leading up to the event and on the day itself. It's a very rewarding, high energy experience that you're sure to enjoy!



Have a look at this video to see what this competition is all about!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydLJKFi0vHA>

If you can spare some time to help change some lives, please visit <http://www.firstlegoleague.org/event/volunteerroles>, and if any of these positions interest you, please e-mail me, the FLL Tournament Director, at craig.maynard@sait.ca.

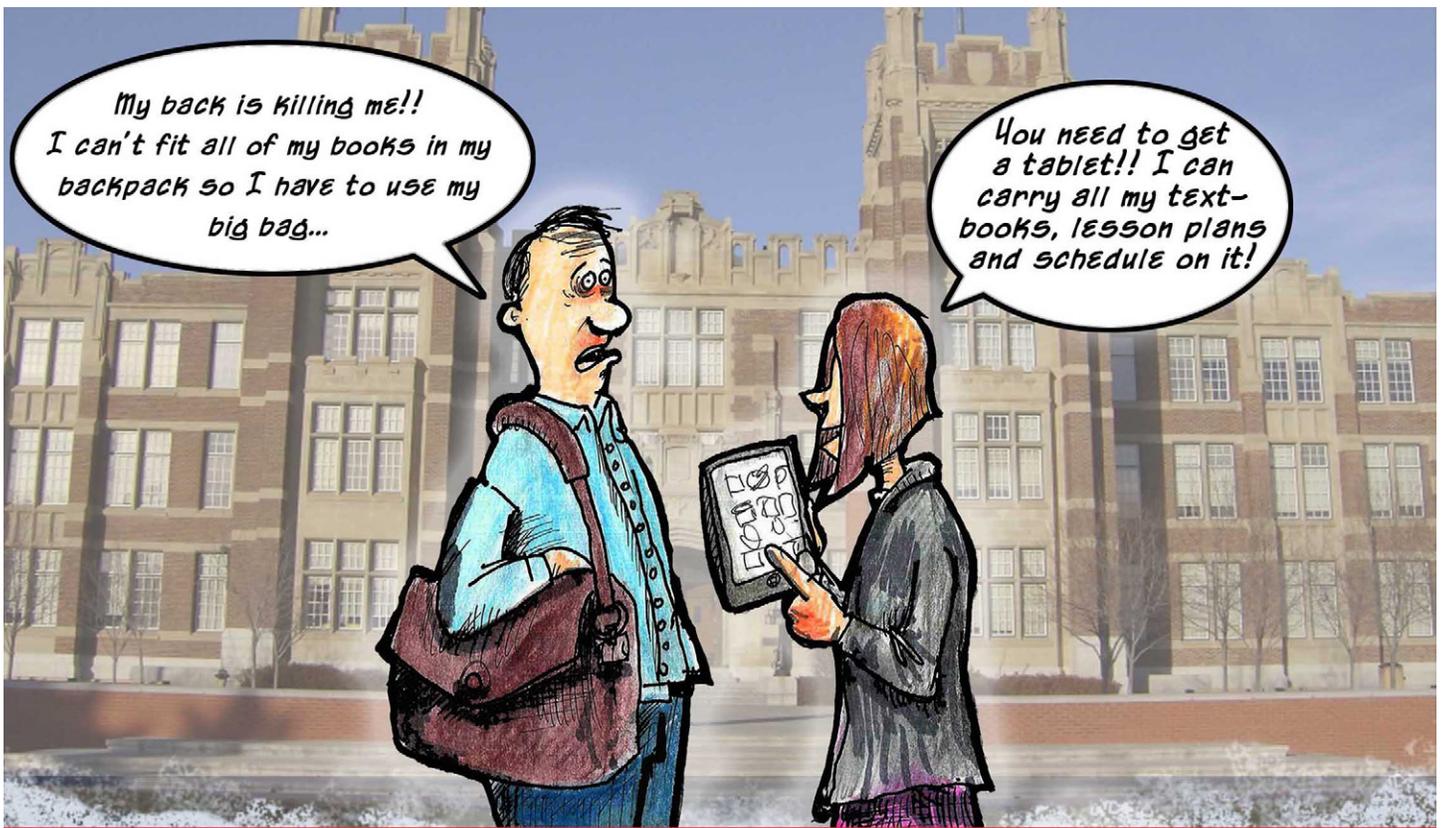


To inspire young people to pursue advanced studies and careers in the field of Science, Technology and Engineering.

Priceless . . . The Beach Was Too Sandy???

THESE ARE ACTUAL COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY "THOMAS COOK VACATIONS" FROM DISSATISFIED CUSTOMERS:

1. "I think it should be explained in the brochure that the local convenience store does not sell proper biscuits like custard creams or ginger nuts."
2. "It's lazy of the local shopkeepers in Puerto Vallarta to close in the afternoons. I often needed to buy things during 'siesta' time—this should be banned."
3. "On my holiday to Goa in India, I was disgusted to find that almost every restaurant served curry. I don't like spicy food."
4. "We booked an excursion to a water park but no-one told us we had to bring our own swimsuits and towels. We assumed it would be included in the price."
5. "The beach was too sandy. We had to clean everything when we returned to our room."
6. "We found the sand was not like the sand in the brochure. Your brochure shows the sand as white but it was more yellow."
7. "They should not allow topless sunbathing on the beach. It was very distracting for my husband who just wanted to relax."
8. "No-one told us there would be fish in the water. The children were scared."
9. "Although the brochure said that there was a fully equipped kitchen, there was no egg-slicer in the drawers."
10. "We went on holiday to Spain and had a problem with the taxi drivers as they were all Spanish."
11. "The roads were uneven and bumpy, so we could not read the local guide book during the bus ride to the resort. Because of this, we were unaware of many things that would have made our holiday more fun."
12. "It took us nine hours to fly home from Jamaica to England. It took the Americans only three hours to get home. This seems unfair."
13. "I compared the size of our one-bedroom suite to our friends' three-bedroom and ours was significantly smaller."
14. "The brochure stated: 'No hairdressers at the resort.' We're trainee hairdressers and we think they knew and made us wait longer for service."
15. "When we were in Spain, there were too many Spanish people there. The receptionist spoke Spanish, the food was Spanish. No one told us that there would be so many foreigners."
16. "We had to line up outside to catch the boat and there was no air-conditioning."
17. "It is your duty as a tour operator to advise us of noisy or unruly guests before we travel."



TWO WEEKS LATER...

