

SAFAGRAM

President's Message

By Doug Spurgeon



The academic year is almost at a close. As we all wrap up the remaining pieces of last year's work, our eyes turn to the work that lies beyond the summer's rejuvenation period.

Assistance to help prepare and organize for next year can be found on the new SAITNOW website. On the website, you will see a "room reference file." The location of this resource is a little tricky to find. Below are the directions to the room reference

Excel file:

- on SAITNOW, select the dropdown menu for departments
- from the drop down list, select "student services"
- at the new window, on the left pane select "resources"
- at the next new window and from the centre pane scroll down until you see "data collection unit" (DCU)
- select DCU and a new window appears again
- in the new window, scroll down until you see "room reference file"—this will open an Excel spreadsheet

Now you might be asking yourself how this file will help me prepare for next year. If you are scheduled to teach in a room you have not been in before, it will assist you in making sure that the room has the necessary teaching materials you need such as a white board or a podium. Upon inspection of this file, you can find not only what is in the room but also the maximum number of smiling faces you can expect to see in September. Yes, that is correct! The student capacity of the room can be found in this file and that should help you determine how many materials you have to carry on that first day.

Since the topic of next year's load will be some of the major upcoming meetings that faculty will have, I recommend that you receive in writing any agreements that you have made. The Collective Agreement allows instructors to go beyond the maximum number of hours in a day (or CCH) in a week provided that the instructor agrees. This agreement should be in writing as past practice has shown that when instructors make a verbal agreement they are expected to adhere to it; however, when it comes to the expectation of the same from management, unless it's in writing it never existed. Also, the Collective Agreement stipulates that individual workload of

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Editorial Board

Pat Squibb
 Wendy Strashok
 Dawn Kuechle
 BJ Hamilton—Cartoonist

Layout

Luda Paul

Printed by

Students of the Digital Graphics Communications (DGC) Program

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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.

Library Report



By Luke Malone

Faculty Showcase of Excellence 2011

The SAIT Library appreciates our faculty's valuable contribution to SAIT and wanted to celebrate their success. The Faculty Showcase of Excellence 2011 ran from May 9 to May 12, and the Library felt that this was the perfect occasion to recognize SAIT faculty who have been published. The Library asked faculty to share their published work with us. The response we received from instructors was tremendous. Many of these publications

were purchased by the Library, showcased in our display cases, and celebrated on our slat board wall display. Ultimately, we intend to obtain most of these publications and make all of them a part of the Library's permanent collection.

Dave Weber, Jason Kuffler, and Luke Malone also presented at the Faculty Showcase 2011. They showed faculty how to enhance D2L course content by using Library online resources. This hands-on workshop showed instructors how to embed links from the Library's online resources into their D2L courses. Delivering a wealth of information to students is convenient, accessible, and completely legal. The session was entitled "Your Class, the Library and D2L." If you were unable to attend this session but are interested in finding out more, please contact Luke Malone by e-mail (luke.malone@sait.ca) or by phone at 403.284.7387.

The Library was very proud to participate in this outstanding event and pleased to have had the opportunity to celebrate our faculty's success. ♦

Update from Al Brown, LRO



It's hard to believe that the end of the academic year is upon us already! Since my last article, in addition to the usual inquiries regarding benefits and collective agreement, I've been busy with a couple of investigations, two grievance presentations, a judicial review of a previous arbitration award (still awaiting the decision), and reaching a positive settlement of a grievance arbitration through informal resolution meetings. That's a total of three including the two that were reported last issue.

I'm still awaiting a date for our Interest Arbitration regarding the Collective Agreement. It looks as though the earliest dates we can expect are in December, 2011. The main reason for this is that there are a very limited number of arbitrators who do interest arbitrations. This in turn results in these arbitrators being in high demand. The other two members of the arbitration panel (one nominee from SAIT and one from SAFA), as well as SAIT's presenter, are lawyers. This makes for a lot of calendar conflicts. Our presenter is Terry Sway, ACIFA Labour Relations. I'll be working over the summer to research and assemble the framework of our presentation. The negotiations committee will meet early in the fall to refine the details.

I look forward to seeing everyone in the fall. Have a great summer! ♦

Employee and Family Assistance Program Orientation

By Jim Pender

Did you know that about 20 percent of us are currently facing challenges that very well may be beyond our ability to resolve effectively on our own?

Think about it. It really is pretty normal to have a problem. From time to time, any of us may find ourselves in a situa-

tion where it just makes sense to access professional, confidential support, and guidance.

The difficulty is we may not know where to turn. This is where SAIT's *Employee and Family Assistance Program* can help. It is accessible, professional, and

free to all SAIT employees and their dependents. An Employee and Family Assistance Program is an acknowledgment that life today is stressful for many of us for all kinds of reasons.

We may not be aware, but the statistics reveal a range of issues and concerns



ICT Rocks!

By Luda Paul

Recently Danny Miller received the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development Excellence Award (NISOD). NISOD recognizes the importance of teaching and leadership excellence in post-secondary, and the NISOD Excellence Award is their way of honouring instructors like Danny who demonstrated those qualities. Congratulations Danny!

Carman Dawley won the Michael Monty Distinguished Service Award at the Annual Broadcast Educators Association of Canada (BEAC) Awards presentation. This award is given to a long-standing BEAC member who has displayed an ongoing passion for teaching, been a strong supporter of student achievement, and worked hard to connect students and their school to meet industry needs. Congratulations Carman!

Students from the School of ICT won 3 medals last May in the Skills competition in Edmonton. Brandon Peek-Philpott won the Gold medal in the IT Network Support category. Riordan Tayles won Gold, Alyssa Winter won Silver in the Graphic Design Competition. Our students were supported by Doug Warden (IT-NS) and Luda Paul (DGC).

The students of the Digital Graphics Communications Program (DGC) won three International Gutenberg Awards in the Print area: 1st, 3rd, and Certificate of Merit in the Process Color category. ♦

The Bull on Bullying

Anonymous

When we think about bullying, we think of the poor little kids—small in stature, with thick glasses—getting picked on, beaten up, and ridiculed by the bigger stronger kids who are trying to assert their dominance and overcome their own insecurities by trying to make others feel like lesser people. The traditional stereotype is that of the big dumb boy picking on the little nerdy boy and making him do bad things and stealing his lunch money. The truth of the matter is, of course, much more complicated and deeper than this. We now know that bullying goes much further than big boys picking on small boys. Bullying encompasses both genders and goes beyond the weak being bullied by the strong to include rich bullying poor, intelligent

bullying less intelligent, race bullying race, attractive bullying ugly, and sometimes just insecure, mean-spirited, controlling types bullying whoever they think will take it. The bullies are often the victims of bullying or abuse themselves—from other kids, siblings, or parents at home. The consequences of bullying can be tragic. We hear of suicides and other violence that occurs

as the result of bullying. Victims often feel trapped with no support structure at home or anywhere else. Bullying can start at a very early age and go until—well, that's where this article comes in.

When I first attended post-secondary schooling—SAIT—I was amazed by the change that occurred as I made the transition from high school. The 40-year-old student would study with the 17-year-old, and the nerdy brainiac would help out the muscle-bound jock with most showing a level of maturity that is not normally seen in high school. While I was neither a bully nor a victim of bullying in high school (at least I didn't think so), I found the transition to SAIT to be a breath of fresh air. Since returning to SAIT as an instructor, I have seen very little of what could be described as bullying among students. There have been a

few exceptions, but for the most part, at least in areas I am involved in, the bullying seems to have remained behind with the immaturity of high school—but has it? Are there problems that are simply better hidden? Do the attitudes of the bullies manifest themselves in different ways, or do they lie dormant until those individuals enter the workforce?

If we look at the adult workplace, we see bullying occurring in many situations; and in the adult world, we are not talking about the bully stealing lunch money from the victim but actions that can still be described as bullying. The adult workplace bully is much more aware of criminal code limitations, so the victim less often faces physical violence

and more often is intimidated with threats of job loss or career compromise if the bully's demands are not met. The adult bully will often get himself or herself in a position of power and, due to his or her own insecurity, use that power to subject his or her subordinates to bullying in the form of unreasonable expectations, threats of job action, or an undermining of

the victim's efforts. The victim will feel helpless to act in his or her own or the organization's best interests if he or she doesn't conform to the demands of the bully. Very often, the victim is a skilled and valuable member of the organization whose talents and successes cause the bully to feel threatened. Workplace bullying creates a culture of fear and low morale within the organization. The problem with workplace bullying has cost organizations a great deal of money and time in lost productivity. The loss is not only due to the bullies' wasting their time intimidating victims but also due to the victims' using their time and the company's time trying to protect themselves and conform to the bullies' demands. Organizations like the Canada Safety Council and Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety have made recognizing and eliminating bul-

lying in the workplace a major priority. Articles in major newspapers and magazines have also focused on workplace bullying.

What can be done about this? By their nature and need for control, bullies seek leadership positions, and this can create a very negative situation in the workplace if the very leaders who can take action to prevent and correct workplace bullying are themselves the bullies. The highest levels of an organization need to become more aware and be prepared to take action. They need to be sure that bullies are not given positions of power. If those positions of power are already held by this type of person, there is little that can be done by those being bullied, short of changing jobs or taking legal action. An organization needs to be aware of the symptoms of workplace bullying and must develop policies and practices to prevent and remedy the situation, but if the organization's leadership takes the approach that they are exempt and their bullying is simply "strong leadership," all the rules and policies are a waste of time. Presently, there is legislation preventing outright harassment but very little to do with the more subtle forms of workplace bullying.

How does the SAIT workplace fare in this discussion? I recently had an outside expert on the subject comment that what he saw at SAIT looked like workplace bullying. That, in part, is the reason for this article but is it an accurate assessment? Do administrators bully support staff? Do academic chairs bully instructors? Do deans bully academic chairs? Do senior administrators bully Deans? Whatever position you are in, do you feel you can do your job without interference and with the full support of the staff and administration, or do you feel intimidated by those who should be supporting you? Do you feel free to question decisions made by the "higher-ups," or do you feel you don't dare for fear of being summarily walked off campus? If you are an instructor and are given a teaching assignment for which you are not qualified or if you are asked to work overload, do you feel you can respectfully decline or are you told you must do it "or else." Essentially, if you feel bullied, you probably are. Is there a solution? I'm afraid I cannot offer any words of wisdom, but perhaps awareness can be the catalyst to correction (if there is anything to correct). ♦♦

“Bullying encompasses both genders and goes beyond the weak being bullied by the strong to include rich bullying poor, intelligent bullying less intelligent, race bullying race, attractive bullying ugly, and sometimes just insecure, mean-spirited, controlling types bullying whoever they think will take it.”

ACIFA 2011 Was a Blast!

By Tracy Fawcett

This year, SAIT Polytechnic was the host institution. About two years ago, I asked for interested volunteers to assist with logo creation, themes, and strands for those themes. I had a lot of interest, and thanks to Roxanne Wheaton, she and I managed to come up with the theme “All Roads Lead to Learning.” From there a group of dedicated volunteers met periodically to plan for the conference. Along with Dave Weber, Michael Sherrard, and Candace VanApeldoorn, we were able to book three first class speakers. A wonderful band, **Living in Swing**, had many people swinging—luckily for the Chateau Lake Louise, not off the chandelier. Syd Marty, our BBQ evening speaker, even attended a scheduled after-party with music, dancing, and lots of fun.

We received an overwhelming number of submissions in February. We accepted all of those submissions, and they were wonderfully received by very large numbers of attendees. Some sessions were standing room only, and still could not accommodate everyone. This was, in fact, the largest ACIFA conference in its history. There were 245 registrants, and approximately 295 attendees at the banquet. Thanks to all the people who introduced the sessions. These included the following:

Tracy Fawcett	Carole Ross
Kathie Dann	Dawn Kuechle
Michelle Caron	Karen McLean
Garry Shepherd	Marjorie Contenti
Dave Samson	Tom Vernham
Peter Risdahl	Jack Buck
John Mayer	Hannah Hess
Luda Paul	Al Brown
Moira MacLoughlin	Doug Spurgeon



Employee and Family Assistance Program Orientation
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that could impact any one of us, a family member, or a co-worker:

- Separation and divorce occur in 38 percent of Canadian marriages.
- In most instances, divorce happens in families where there are children.
- One in 12 are having severe financial difficulties.
- Many relationships are experiencing high levels of distress; on the average, a couple will endure seven years of a bad relationship before seeking help.
- Between 12 and 15 percent of those who consume alcohol will abuse it; most people who would be diagnosed as alcoholic are actually employed.
- Twenty-two percent of Canadian workers use illicit drugs.
- Problem gambling will bring ruin to a family quicker than any other addiction.
- Almost one in four adults will experience a significant depressive episode in their lives.
- Conflict, either at work or at home, contributes to high levels of unhappiness.
- Psychological disability now accounts for the primary absence from work.

It is time for us not just to manage our stress but to take action decisively, effectively, and to deal with issues in a proactive manner.

Jim Pender, M.S.W., Ph.D.(Ed.), is on-site at SAIT and is available to present a short orientation on what the **Employee and Family Assistance Program** does and how to access its services. Contact Jim at **403.777.1274** to arrange for a presentation or to arrange an appointment. ♦

President's Report
Continued from page 1

instructors is done after consultation. Normally, one would expect that such consultation happens before you are simply given new courses. New assignments such as new courses is another area in the agreement that as an instructor you have the right to request more time out of class to handle the extra workload. This time should be within the confines of the 40-hour work week but can also include an increase in class size provided the “room reference file” has been adhered to and the resulting increase in marking that it generates. In all cases, it should be clearly identified what your expectations of the new year are so that you have every chance of success.

Negotiations is another topic on everyone's mind. As you are all aware, talks broke down when SAIT refused to accept the financial package of our closest comparable. We are now anticipating dates to begin Interest Arbitration, which will most likely take place at the beginning of 2012. In the meantime, our other comparables around ACIFA have been completing some settlements, and the going rate appears to be 0 percent on the salary scale for 2010/2011 with some form of off-grid remuneration about \$1000 to a high of approximately \$1700. For the academic year of 2011/2012, it appears that a 2 percent increase to the salary scale seems to be the common factor among our comrades at the other institutes.

Finally, a mention once again about the SIR II surveys. I have again met with Gord Nixon, VP Academic, on this issue, and

he has reconfirmed to me that common sense must prevail. Gord is aware that sometimes extenuating circumstances can and do have an impact on the results. With that in mind, if you had one low SIR and the rest are fine, then you should review with your chair; but this does not automatically mean an action plan. Similarly, if your Question 40 is low again, this is not an automatic determination that a plan is needed; but a review of results should be carried out to determine if this type of action is warranted. An area that Gord and I do not agree on is that the SIR action plans are responsible for an overall increase in Question 40 results here at SAIT. I believe the increase is due to faculty and chairs informing students that “3” is not an average here, but by informing the students of what the requirements are they can then make an informed and educated survey completion. Gord has informed me that this is skewing the results, but I have said it is merely stating a known fact and providing that information to those who complete the surveys. In my mind, this is no more skewing the results of the SIR II survey than are the messages from management about all the good things they have done just prior to and during the release of the HAY survey. I hope this is the last time we have to mention the SIR II survey, and once everyone is on the same page of how to use them, then they may actually become the useful tool they were meant to be.

In closing, I hope everyone has a peaceful vacation and some well-earned rest. ♦



Congratulations to all the participants in the Skills Canada National Competition, held recently in Quebec City. There were thirteen SAIT students on Team Alberta who had won their classes in the provincial competition held in May. After more practice and more coaching from their faculty coaches, three students came home with medals.

- Ian MacDougall - gold medal (cooking).
- Tyler Vanden Brink - bronze medal (cabinet making).
- Mary Head (AIM program) - bronze medal (IT Software Application). ♦♦

Have a wonderful Summer!

See you in September!

- the SAFAGRAM Editorial Board



Left to right: LRO-Al Brown, BJ Hamilton, Dawn Kuechle, Pat Squibb, Wendy Strashok, and Luda Paul

According to Banner, I took 30 minutes for lunch
and went home at 6:00 all semester –
Apparently, I've used up all my vacation time!

