

# SAFAGRAM

## President's Message

By Doug Spurgeon



**Hay Survey.** The employee “Hay” survey is out. There have been several communications to the SAFA office regarding how the survey is tallied at the end. Contrary to what I have seen communicated from at least three schools, the “neutral” count is just that, neutral. The SAFA executive has broached this subject with the Senior Executive. As reported by Michael Dyer, the neutral count does not get lumped in with the negative responses. To acquire the positive and negative responses, the “neutral response” is removed. It was further qualified that when looking at the survey for analysis it is helpful to look at the neutral number. For example, if the neutral number has grown while the negative responses have decreased, this would indicate a movement to the positive side and be seen as a movement in the right direction. Of course, going the opposite direction would have the same effect toward the negative. That is all well and good for an analysis of the responses, but I must reiterate that the neutral response does not automatically mean a negative result.

Some announcements indicate that rather than filling in the neutral response, one should choose to leave it blank so that it will not be included in the results. I would recommend that you fill out the survey to truly indicate how you feel. If you are neutral on a question, there is nothing wrong with stating that. Being asked to pick either a positive or a negative answer can skew the results, and as indicated above, if the neutral is growing and the negative is decreasing, that would indicate to me that a movement toward where SAIT would like to be is actually happening. To be asked to pick one side or the other is somewhat like faculty asking students, “If you can’t give me a 4 on the SIR II questions, then just leave them blank.” I don’t think the administration would look kindly on that, so why does it seem fine for the same administration to make that same request from staff.

If you have not filled out the survey yet, I ask that you please do so. Provide written feedback as well if you are comfortable doing so. Constructive feedback we receive from students helps us to grow and to tweak courses. The same can be said for providing constructive feedback on the employee survey. It just may help SAIT grow and tweak its processes in a way that helps all those who work here. Remember the survey closes on May 29.

**Grievances.** I am pleased to announce that the number of grievances filed has dropped significantly this year. This can be attributed to the hard work and coop-

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### Editorial Board

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SAFAGRAM is published by the SAIT Academic Faculty Association (SAFA) five times a year usually closer to the end of the months of October, December, February, April, and June. Deadline for submissions is the 10th of the month preceding publication. Send submissions to SAFAGRAM, care of the SAFA office, N201 or e-mail submissions to [kathie.dann@sait.ca](mailto:kathie.dann@sait.ca). Please keep submissions under 300 words, double-spaced. Submissions may be edited for grammar, length, or content.

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/>

eration of all the members involved in disputes—the SAFA reps and management reps—in trying to resolve issues. It may be that a new era of cooperation has come to pass in which both sides of the table are openly discussing the issues rather than feeling the need to align defenses for each other's positions. Again, congratulations on a job well done on both sides. The only new grievance now relates to the abolishment payout for a member recently laid off. This falls on the heels of another abolishment payout award, which is currently still in dispute through the legal system.

**Negotiations.** I have had plenty of feedback from faculty about the negotiations and the alleged “offer” given to the SAFA negotiating team. Faculty members were told that if they wanted details they needed to speak to the SAFA President to get them. I want to point out that the only financial offer given was at the Interest Arbitration Hearing. The negotiating team had reported back to the SAFA Executive that when it came to the financial discussions of negotiations they were given three “options” and were asked to pick the one they liked and then propose it back to SAIT as their own. This type of approach is not truly an offer. The Arbitration panel is now charged with coming up with a new agreement which hopefully will be in place before we come back in the fall. Both sides have asked for a three-year deal which means by February 2013 we will be heading back to the table, hopefully to get a new agreement to be presented to faculty for ratification.

I want to congratulate Paul Norris from the School of Construction for being named the winner of this year's ACIFA Award for Innovation in Teaching.

My thanks to faculty for the progresses made this year, and I hope that this summer gives you a chance to rejuvenate and recharge to allow you all to do what you do best—train the workers of tomorrow. ♦♦

## LRO Report

By Al Brown, LRO



### SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE WORKPLACE

Hi Everyone! Summer break is approaching, but before we leave for holidays, I thought it may be beneficial to discuss the emerging topic of social media in the workplace, in particular, how it has complicated employment law.

Social media—such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc., and even e-mail—are from a labour relations viewpoint relatively new. Remember, Facebook has been around only since 2004! However, they have implications for employers and employees with regard to employment relationships. As a result, there is a growing library of arbitral decisions and case law that is beginning to define the boundaries beyond which employees may encounter complications with their employer.

The typical “grumblings” or “water cooler talk” about your employer, supervisor, or co-workers takes on a different connotation when posted online. I'm sure you are aware of the privacy settings on your Facebook account, and if not, you should be. Did you know that contrary to popular belief the law generally doesn't recognize a “reasonable expectation to privacy” when posting something to social media sites? What employees have said in blogs, chat rooms, e-mail, and discussion forums are all the subject of various discipline or dismissal arbitrations.

For example, in a recent 2010 grievance Arbitration (the Wyndels Grievance), a pilot, Captain John Wyndels, was terminated after posting comments on his Facebook page about the employer. The employer claimed it created potential harm to the employer's reputation and the business. The arbitrator held that the termination was excessive but that the grievor's misconduct in posting the comments had “poisoned the work environment” and, therefore, re-instatement was not appropriate since the employment relationship was rendered untenable.

In the Clarke Grievance, the employee, a personal caregiver at a home for the aged, had created a blog that was accessible to anyone on the internet. She published information and pictures without residents' consent and had made inappropriate comments about residents entrusted to her care. Her termination was upheld by the Arbitrator.

The issue of freedom of expression and social media has been discussed by the Supreme Court of Canada in which the majority wrote: “. . . the protection attaching to freedom of expression is not limited to the “traditional media” but is enjoyed by everyone who chooses to exercise his or her freedom of expression on matters of public interest whether by blogging, tweeting, standing on a street corner and shouting the “news” at passing pedestrians or publishing in a national newspaper.”

But, the Charter cautions that “all forms of protected expression, including that which is communicated via social media, is subject to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.”

The University of Calgary's General Faculties Council Review Committee placed two students on probation for non-academic misconduct when they posted negative comments on facebook about one of their Professors. The brothers went to court where the Judge quashed the Committee's decision. The Judge said that the effect of the committee's decision was to sanction the brothers and prohibit them from publicly expressing their critical views of their Professor while studying at the U of C. The Judge went on to say that the order had a direct effect on their freedom of expression and violated the brothers' Charter Rights. The U of C appealed the Judge's decision, and in May 2012, the Court of Appeal unanimously upheld the original Judge's decision. However, only one of the three Judges on the Appeal Panel would agree that the Charter had been violated; the other two declined to comment on that part of the original decision.

Social media in Canada isn't going away, and it will continue to have an impact on the employment relationship. A “social media policy” is one way to minimize the negative effects for employers and employees. While SAIT does not currently have

## SAIT's Faculty Showcase – Transitions and Trailblazers

by Eugene Blanchard, ICT Instructor

This year, I had the opportunity to attend a few of SAIT's Faculty Showcase "Transitions and Trailblazers":

**1. "From ICT to RFID"** by Glenn Kathler. During the first half of the showcase, Glenn shared his personal experiences starting from 25 years ago, when he was trailblazing mountain-top telecommunication systems using a new technology called solar cells to provide power, and then the subsequent trek that brought him here to SAIT.

Was he trying to blaze a new trail in technology 25 years ago? No, Glenn was just trying to get the job done using whatever means that were available. That's how true trailblazers work. They're not trying to be on the bleeding edge of technology; they are the ones who are adapting new technology to provide a solution to a problem and to ultimately get the job done.

Glenn spoke humorously of his SAIT interview experience with us. When Glenn first applied to SAIT, the Academic Coordinator, Harold Sylvan, asked him if he had any teaching experience. Glenn replied that he had taught only Sunday school. That was good enough for Harold, and Glenn hasn't looked back. Everyone has a story, and I'm glad that Glenn took the opportunity to share his.

The last part of Glenn's seminar brought out the competitiveness in the audience as each person was given the task of creating the best RFID tag/antenna. The instructions were simple, and the results were quite creative. The rules were simple: the RFID tag that gained the most number of hits from the RFID reader during a 60-second span would be the winner. Wayne Watson of the ICT Broadcast Systems Technology program won. Unfortunately, even though my design was superiorly engineered in my opinion, its poor results didn't even make the top 3 out of 21 designs.

**2. 3D Mechanical YouTube Animation** by Doug Reid and Fred Bretzke (who unfortunately couldn't attend) of the Construction Department. Doug discussed the teaching environment

that is presented for the plumbing students. I was amazed at the integration of technology into the classroom and the curriculum, and this was for a plumbing program!

Doug showed us an interactive 3D animation of a commercial kitchen displaying all of the plumbing and associated equipment. The students could move to any one of the "stations" such as a sink, and a question would be asked such as "What is missing from this sink installation." They could proceed to the grease trap and be asked to calculate the size of the grease trap required for a certain water flow. Other questions ranged from installation to plumbing code questions.

Another innovation was the arrangement of the room. There were three PC projectors each projecting on one of the four walls. The students sat at group tables arranged in a big X. Each group's table ended in a corner where there was a SMART Board. The students would work in teams to answer questions presented on the SMART Board. Each of the four teams could be working on a separate assignment. The instructor could monitor everything that was happening at the instructor's station which was also mobile!

An interesting statistic that Doug passed on was that 90 percent of his students have smart phones and 70 percent of those were iPhones. They are not a laptop enabled program, so Doug and Fred adapted the curriculum to work on smartphones and iPhones. There are laptops available for students who don't have smart phones. Doug and Fred are currently developing a new iPhone app to integrate even more closely with their curriculum.

The creativity of SAIT's instructors and how they adapt technology to create great curriculum always pleasantly surprises and amazes me. Kudos to Glenn Kathler, Doug Reid, and Fred Bretzke for blazing new trails and especially for sharing their experience with us. ♦

## TTC Events

### The Deep End of the (Talent) Pool

Dive right in and showcase your abilities at the public opening celebration of the Trades and Technology Complex. If you sing, dance, play the banjo, eat fire, do magic, or have any other talent that is both entertaining and suitable for a family audience, this could be your time to shine! The deadline for submissions is May 31. Check SAITNow for more information.

### Mark Your Calendar

Be among the first to walk the halls of the Trades and Technology Complex at the Crystal Ball—an exclusive, VIP celebration for SAIT employees.

Mark your calendar for the evening of Thursday, August 23, and watch for your invitation coming soon.

LRO report  
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a social media policy in place, it is my understanding that the policy committee is currently in the process of developing one. Whatever policy emerges will need to be well drafted in order to strike a balance between protecting the employer and restricting the employee's freedom of expression.

If in doubt, the following are a few "rules" to remember for Facebook (in an employment context):

1. Don't facebook without protection (check your privacy settings!).
2. Don't facebook with co-workers.
3. Don't facebook with your boss.
4. Don't facebook with students.
5. Don't facebook with strangers.
6. Don't facebook at work.
7. Don't use facebook for revenge.
8. Don't facebook late at night when you're overtired.
9. Don't facebook when you've been drinking or are under the influence.
10. Remember, when you facebook with someone, you're potentially facebooking with everyone they've facebooked with.

Have a great summer everyone! I look forward to seeing you all in the fall. ☘

# BBQ

## SAFA/AUPE BARBEQUE

THURSDAY, MAY 24  
FROM 3:30 - 7:00 P.M.  
IN THE 4 NINES



### TRAIN LIKE A TROJAN

SAIT Trojans Summer Camps for youth:  
Hockey, volleyball and basketball

**SAIT Discount** – \$20 discount for children of a SAIT student, staff or alumni.

Visit [www.sait.ca/trojans](http://www.sait.ca/trojans) for more details.



From the  
SAFAGRAM Editorial Board

Closing Time --  
Unplug them people  
And send them home,  
It's Closing Time.

The night's  
All that's left behind.  
You take your part  
And I'll take mine,  
And go on home  
It's Closing Time.

Lyle Lovett  
"Closing Time"



CLIK  
CLIK

Have a great summer!