

SAFAGRAM

President's Message

By Doug Spurgeon



Once again, welcome back to another year. There are a few new faces around the campus—welcome aboard to all new Faculty!

Some of the issues that are carrying over this year are as follows:

- 1. Collective Agreement Bargaining/Arbitration.** The arbitration dates are set for March 15 and 16, 2012. The current Collective Agreement although expired is still in force until a new one is put in place. If you have any questions in regard to the Agreement, please call either me or Al Brown, our Labour Relations Officer.
- 2. SAFA is Going Back to Court Again.** No it's not the charter challenge, and we are still waiting for dates for this new court case. This case deals with Position Abolishment and the payment of the Education Allowance upon Abolishment. SAFA had taken this to arbitration where the grievance was upheld and the Arbitrator ruled. The Arbitrator also made a fine distinction between salary and monthly pay. The Abolishment Section states that a member is to receive his/her monthly pay which both the Education Allowance and Long Service Allowance are part of. SAIT has argued that these are allowances and not part of the salary. Therefore, neither would be included when someone's position is abolished as either the monthly pay for abolishment or the payout for unused vacation hours. The Arbitrator ruled that they are to be included. SAIT then filed for Judicial Review and that hearing and decision was announced at the end of June. The Judge in the Judicial Review confirmed the Arbitrator's decision and also awarded costs and reasonable disbursements to SAFA. SAIT has now filed Notice to Appeal the Judge's decision. This means that individuals whose positions that have been abolished two or more years ago are still, in the Arbitrator's view, owed monies from that time period. Once more, these individuals must wait for the appeal date and then the decision. The Association feels the decision will be one of confirmation of both the arbitration and the Judicial Review but must wait for the proper legal proceedings and procedures to take place. Some background on this particular case happened during the 2004–2007 contract arbitration when we went to a single line for Instructor salaries, and the education allowance was put in place to add a stipend for those with higher education credentials. Since the old grid was removed (A–F based on education credentials), the new education allowance was established. During negotiations for the 2007–2010 Collective Agreement, a Long Service Allowance was added as a monthly payment to reward those

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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 Jason Kuffler

⇒ Chat Reference is now available at the SAIT Library!

Faculty and students can now chat live with a research assistant and get one-on-one assistance finding information at the SAIT Library!

SAIT Library is now providing an instant messaging chat service, which will allow our faculty, staff, and students to chat with Library staff in real time. Our new Chat Online Reference Service allows them to obtain help from a reference assistant through Live Chat.

This service lets our patrons talk online with reference assistants who will answer questions and assist with their research by recommending valuable Library resources. We can help with the following:

- Answer basic research questions
- Find print and online resources on their research
- Evaluate information sources and select and access the Library resources that will work best

The Library's live, chat-based information and research service delivers immediate, interactive, and knowledgeable research assistance when help is needed with academic research and projects.

Chat Hours:

Monday – Thursday	10 a.m. to 10 p.m.
Friday	10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday	11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

*President's Message
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Instructors who had more than seven years employment and were at the top pay step for the previous three years. Given that both amounts were a monthly allotment, it then formed part of the monthly pay for Instructors. We have all heard the statement that we must be "good stewards of the public purse." My question now turns to "by repeatedly challenging a final and binding decision of an arbitrator is the best use of public funds." That question is yours to consider and debate.

3. The SIR II. Once more I have meet with the VP Academic over this issue. During our discussion, I believe that some inroads have been made in this area. One of these inroads was the ability for the Academic Chair to look at more than Question 40. If the score for Question 40 was below the new mandated 3.8, a closer look at the whole SIR II report was needed. This does not automatically mean a SIR II action plan must be completed. Upon review, if a decision came about that the Chair also believed an action plan was not warranted at this time, then that would be forwarded to the Dean. The Dean then had to submit this to the VP Academic with the reasons why, and if they were reasonable, an action plan would not be called for. Gord did tell me that he had received several (actual number not disclosed in our discussions) requests from the Deans and had approved the rationale, and no action plan was required to be in place for the instructor(s). While the debate of how the SIR II is used continues on, the latest iteration being used for more than one part of the SAIT Abolishment

⇒ Library Instruction and Student Orientation

With so many activities going on at SAIT's Campuses during the first few weeks of the fall intake, the staff at the SAIT Library wants to remind our faculty about the value of Library instruction and student orientation.

The Instruction team in the Library has been very busy over the summer months preparing tutorials and workshops for your classes. Specialized research skills sessions have been developed to meet your students' needs. Tours and orientation sessions are also available.

Library instruction can teach your students to do the following:

- Find and evaluate online and print resources
- Refine research topics and receive knowledgeable research assistance
- Avoid plagiarism and cite sources of information

We are now taking Library classroom bookings for the fall semester. Our new online booking form is easy to fill out and includes a section where you can attach a class assignment we can teach to. To access the new online booking form, go to <http://library.sait.ca/libraryinstruction.asp#> or contact the Coordinator of Instruction and Communication via e-mail at library.instruction@sait.ca

Once again, the Library staff had the opportunity to participate in orientation tours for students from every academic program in early September. These orientation sessions are very valuable because they are a great way for our Library staff to connect with students, staff, and faculty and introduce them to the Library, its resources, and the academic assistance we provide.

Welcome back and have a fantastic academic year! ✦

Rating Template and the restriction of teaching Con-Ed if you are below 3.8, it is clear that the SIR II is not going away but should be used for more than Question 40. In reference to the Con-Ed dilemma, I floated a question in one of my meetings with Gord. Given that Con-Ed typically involves older adult students (no SIR II done on Con-Ed classes), could it not be possible for an instructor to use Con-Ed to try various techniques that may help the day-time teaching? Gord's response was that he would prefer to have the instructor concentrate on his/her day job and not also be burdened with extra work. This then leads to my question: After 6 p.m. the instructor is on his/her own time, and unless there was an expectation of an instructor on a SIR II action plan doing "overtime" to achieve a better SIR II score, there should be no conflict with the Con-Ed and regular day-time programming. I believe at that point we both agreed to disagree but allow the individual instructor(s) to have a discussion with their Academic Chair to ensure the involvement of a Con-Ed endeavour does not impact negatively on their academic duties.

Rumours always abound at the start of the year. Rumours include the following:

- Irene will be leaving as President and CEO of SAIT.
- Gord Nixon will then become the acting President and CEO until a new President and CEO is hired, and then he too shall leave.

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LRO Report

By Al Brown



Welcome Back Everyone!

The dates set for our interest arbitration regarding our Collective Agreement are March 15 and 16, 2012. SAFA has contacted SAIT to enquire if they would be interested in continuing negotiations up to that date in an effort to reach a settlement that could be taken forward to the membership to ratify. SAIT declined, saying that if SAFA wanted the same wage settlement as NAIT Academic Staff Association (NASA), then we would meet in arbitration. In any event, we always ask for retroactivity with regard to any pay increases we receive through arbitration. Any pay increases would be applied retroactively to July 1, 2010.

It may be beneficial to review how our collective agreement arbitration works. The legislation that we (SAFA) exist under is the Post Secondary Learning Act (PSLA). That legislation and our own Collective Agreement require binding arbitration if the two parties—SAIT and SAFA—cannot come to a ratified collective agreement at the bargaining table. The composition of the arbitration panel is one nominee from the employer

(SAIT) and one nominee from the Association (SAFA). These two nominees come to a mutual agreement on a third person to act as Chairman of the arbitration panel. The Chairman, or Arbitrator, of our upcoming interest arbitration is David Jones, Q.C. He has written more than 400 awards over the past 20 years in matters arising from collective agreements throughout western Canada in both the public and private sectors. No member of the arbitration panel can be someone who has been involved in the negotiation process leading up to the arbitration.

During the arbitration, each side presents their positions to the panel. Each side has a team but the actual presentation is done by one person from each side. SAIT's presenter is their lawyer, Barb Johnston. Our presenter is Terry Sway, Labour Relations Officer for ACIFA. Terry was involved with our bargaining team during the negotiations phase of this round of bargaining.

Once presentations have been made to the panel, the panel reviews the testimony and supporting evidence and decides on what the contract language should be by issuing an arbitration award. This award is written by the Chairman of the panel and is binding.

Usually, during the negotiations phase, the two sides have come to agreement on many things; and as a result, not all sections of the collective agreement will be in dispute. Typically and specifically in our case, the main bone of contention will be wages. The employer will argue that they don't have the ability to pay more (for one reason or another), and the Association will argue that it isn't a question of ability but, instead, one of willingness to pay.

At this point in time, it appears that the rest of ACIFA have settled and that the pattern of settlements has been set—at least as it pertains to wages. This is important as it is the settlement pattern within our industry and, as important, what our closest comparable organization (NASA) settled for that will influence the arbitrator's award. NASA's wage increase over three years was 0 percent with a \$1000 signing bonus for year one, 2 percent for year two, and 3 percent for year three.

I found this video that gives a humorous look at a management pre-bargaining planning meeting. www.youtube.com/watch?v=iObqguaNDdA Hope you enjoy!

Please stop by the SAFA office for a chat or just to say "hello" whenever you like. ➡

SAIT Trojan News

By Billie Rae Busby, Marketing and Communications Coordinator, SAIT Trojans

SAIT Trojan Varsity Sports

Five varsity sports: basketball, cross-country running, hockey, soccer, volleyball

What is a SAIT Trojan?: "A SAIT Athlete with courageous determination and fighting spirit."

160+ athletes compete in Trojan athletics annually September to March in the ACAC (Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference).

SAIT Trojan Athletics are officially on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

Winning Success

SAIT Trojan teams have won 106 ACAC Provincial Championships and 16 CCAA National Championships.

In 2010-2011, the SAIT Trojans won two medals in ACAC hockey— Women's GOLD and Men's SILVER.

Spirit and Pride

Home games are all on campus! The arena, gymnasium, and soccer field are located in or beside the SAIT Campus Centre.

Red Alert Fridays: Wear red on game day Fridays to show your spirit and have a chance to WIN prizes from the Trojan Red Alert street team.

Thousands of dollars of prizes are given out at SAIT Trojan home games every year; fun for everyone!

Kids 12 and under are always free at SAIT Trojan home games.

Annual special events: Skate with the Trojans

Intramurals and Camps

Intramurals (fun, recreational sports for SAIT/ACAD students and staff) such as basketball, floor hockey, ice hockey, bowling, dodgeball, volleyball, indoor soccer

"Train Like A Trojan" Sport Camps for youth every summer; discounts for SAIT staff/alumni

www.sait.ca/trojans ➡

News from Articulation – September 2011



Karen McDaniel talks to a parent about Transfer Options at the Parent and Family Orientation Night, August 31.



Kim Frayn and Karen McDaniel share information about Transfer Options at Fall Orientation.



Kim Frayn talks with students at SAITSA Expo about transfer options and gives out prizes!

“Getting the word out about Transfer Options” has been the theme for the beginning of the 2011–2012 school year! To date Karen and Kim have participated in three SAIT events to meet students and parents, but there is an even bigger event that can involve faculty as well. The annual Transfer Options Fair is on November 17 in the Heart Atrium from 9–3.

Have a diploma? Now choose a degree...

SAIT TRANSFER OPTIONS FAIR

**Thursday, November 17, 2011
Heart Atrium, 9 AM to 3 PM**

Meet with recruiters to learn about your transfer options!



Over 25 universities, colleges, and organizations from the U.S., Canada, and Australia 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. There are also opportunities for interested faculty to complete degrees and take part in the Credential Enhancement program.

There are over 650 transfer options on the TO website, but would you believe that many instructors do not know about the site? We also have a dynamic Facebook page. 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 transfer.options@sait.ca if you would like more information.

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Recognition Vision—Focus on the Façade

Anonymous

I have been working at SAIT for a number of years and one thing that has bothered me from the outset was the SAIT “Vision Statement.” While some people may gasp in horror and demand that I be summarily sacked for such blasphemy, I feel I have good reasons for this sacrilege and should, therefore, explain.

When I started at SAIT, the Vision Statement: “Our vision is sharply focused—by the year 2010 SAIT will be recognized as Canada’s premiere institute . . . was printed on everything, was on the website, and was expected to be all pervading. I assume some facilitator or leader insisted that it be time bound. Having spent a great deal of time in the development of mission and vision statements in my previous life, I immediately recognized this as more of a “goal” statement and not a vision statement at all, but be that as it may, it was the SAIT vision. Well 2010 has come and gone and in foresight of that looming deadline, the administration revamped the “Vision” in 2004 to drop the date and simply desired to “be recognized.”

So what’s the problem, other than the dated “vision” statement, which has since been updated? Quite simply, it’s the one word “recognized.” Yes, our vision—our goal is to be recognized as Canada’s premiere institute, yada, yada, yada. Sure there is supporting talk of innovation and technology and setting some type of standards and plenty of verbs and nouns about passion, challenges, and spirit; but the focus is to be recognized.

When I graduated from SAIT in the 1970s (yes, some of you may remember the ‘70s), I actually thought it was the best institute. That’s why I came here. The graduates were proud of where they were educated. The instructors were happy and proud of where they worked. Calgarians, Albertans, and all Canadians thought highly of SAIT.

The grads were hired readily by industry—both locally and across the country—who appreciated the high standards and quality of our product—the graduates. So what happened over the 25 years since I graduated? When I returned to the city to take a job at SAIT, I found that things had changed. When I told local business, industry, and education people where I was working, I would get a sympathetic look like I had just told them that I had a terminal illness and would get comments such as “I hear SAIT chews people up and spits them out.” When I talked to instructors who had recently left, they would invariably say something about loving the teaching but hating the campus politics. I thought “what on earth did I get myself into”! Had SAIT really slipped that badly? Our company had been hiring SAIT grads over the years, and I had not noticed a decline—but I was in another city.

Why now the emphasis on recognition and what does that mean. Does it mean that we would top some list in *Maclean’s* or *Chatelaine* magazine? Does it mean that some national body or a company like Mediacorp ranks us at the top? Does it mean that we get the top score out of all the technical institutes that subscribe to the Hay survey? Perhaps it’s something else. Is this just a minor difference in semantics, in the word-

ing of a mission statement, or does it reflect something bigger—a way of conducting affairs to create an image—a façade that boasts we are number one rather than a focus on actually being the best we can be? Nobody likes a braggart. If we continuously thump our collective chests and try to boast or say we aspire to be ranked number one or even boldly state that we now are, we will never actually get there.

One only has to look at our obsession with surveys and studies and how we respond to them to see what our focus really is. The Hay survey has been done at great cost at SAIT for a number of years, and we have consistently faired rather poorly. Such studies don’t give us any opportunity to really say what’s on our minds—good or bad—but they quantify things into numbers that can be compared to other numbers. When the surveys are done and the management of the institute gets the results, this big focus is on how to get the numbers up—not to actually make things better. ‘If we could change the questions a little, change the timing of the survey, make sure the rounds of job cuts don’t occur around the time of the survey, if we coach the staff to give better numbers—if only we do these things, we will get the numbers up.’ If our “vision” is to be recognized by the numbers, perhaps that is the best strategy after all!

I’m not saying we should totally ignore what people think of us. We should be aware, but if we do the right things for the right reasons, positive recognition will come without SAIT asking for it. We can have nice buildings and bright signs, but ultimately it’s the people who count. Students like nice new classrooms, residences, new computers, and recreation facilities. However, if the instructors are disgruntled and feeling unappreciated by the administration or have no “buy-in” because they are on a temporary contract, then students will have a

bad experience and they will tell their employers, friends, and families, and post it on Facebook and Twitter. We will then be recognized but not in the way SAIT wants.

I challenge the administration to just let go of the obsession with recognition. Sure, we should celebrate our successes, but let’s not try so hard to put on a phony show of success but instead I challenge them to get behind the wonderful

instructors who make SAIT great. Administration needs to stop looking at staff as an annoying burden that has to be paid and start looking at them as the whole reason they exist. They need to stop adding senior administration positions while they cut back on teaching and support staff. If staff are supported and empowered to do what they do best, they will be more positive, and as a result, the students will be better taught and everyone will say good things about us—about SAIT. Is it not better to have students, staff, graduates, and the general public to have genuine heartfelt good things to say about their SAIT experience than to have a magazine, a number-crunching survey company, or some other distant body “recognize” us? ♦

“When I talked to instructors who had recently left, they would invariably say something about loving the teaching but hating the campus politics. I thought “what on earth did I get myself into”! ”

The 2010/2012 SAFA Executive Committee

President	Doug Spurgeon, ICT (4315)
Secretary-Treasurer	Cameron Gall, Business (8240)
Directors:	
Division I	Andrew Bleackley, Construction (8708) Derek Ollen, Construction (7241)
Division II	Dawn Kuechle, Energy (4721) Tom Vernham, Energy (7156)
Division III	Tracy Fawcett, CALS (4749) VACANT
Division IV	Fred Malley, H&T (8948)
Past Representative	James McWilliams, H&T (8943)
Labour Relations Officer	Al Brown (4067)

Academic Council

Division I	Russ Davis, Construction – September 1, 2010 – June 30, 2012 Jack Ranucci, Construction - September 1, 2011 – June 30, 2013
Division II	Jean Paterson, ICT, September 1, 2010 – June 30, 2012 Candace VanApeldoorn, ICT - September 1, 2010 – June 30, 2012
Division III	Marcel Carpenter, CALS – September 1, 2010 – June 30, 2012 Marion Hill, Business – September 1, 2011 – June 30, 2013
Division IV	Moira MacLoughlin, CITD - September 1, 2010 – June 30 2012 Dawn Kuechle, Energy – December 1, 2010 – June 30, 2012

Board of Governors Representatives

- Raynie Wood, CITD, September 20, 2011 – June 30, 2012
- Wes Jamieson, Information & Communications Technologies, July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2013

Vacant Positions

SAFA Executive - 1 member from Division III (meets every Wednesday starting at 2:00)

- Division III - Health & Public Safety, Business, Hospitality & Tourism, CALS

Faculty Council Representatives (meet the first Tuesday of every month 4:00–5:30)

- Hospitality & Tourism - 1 position vacant
- CALS - 1 position vacant
- Energy - 1 position vacant
- H & PS - 1 position vacant
- Transportation - 1 position vacant

*President's Message
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- Tom Bornhorst, current Dean of Hospitality and Tourism, will become the new VP Academic, VP Finance, or the Director of Employee Services.

During a recent meeting between the SAFA Executive and SAIT's Senior Executive, these rumours were discussed. The conclusion of the response from the Senior Executive is that these are just rumours. Irene confirmed that she has no plans to step down and will remain as the President and CEO of SAIT. I would also like to dispel another rumour that has floated past me. With the current vacant position of Director, Employee Services, no matter how enticing the offer, I do not have plans to apply or take that position. At this time, I do not have any desire to cross the floor as it were.

This will be an election year for SAFA. All SAFA Executive positions will be up for nomination and vote. I encourage all Faculty to give serious thought to this. As Faculty work throughout this year, I would encourage anyone who is interested or wants more information about positions on the SAFA Executive to drop by and have a discussion with current SAFA Executive members. It is through the involvement of Faculty that the Association thrives, and it has been a pleasure to serve Faculty over the past years. ❖❖



They're special glasses to help you view
SAIT from a different perspective ...

