

Improvements at SAIT

With the changes that have occurred at SAIT over the past few years, many improvements have added positively to the atmosphere on campus. However, in order to align with SAIT's vision to becoming a premier polytechnic, other areas need to be enhanced to "showcase" SAIT.

Improvements Accomplished	Improvements Required
• Classrooms and Atrium in the Heart Building	• Updating and repair of air handling system in the Thomas Riley Building
• Restoration of Heritage Hall	• Internal Communication: Proper and consistent channel for repairs and maintenance?
• Heritage Hall front walkway	• Working overhead projectors in every classroom
• Athletic field in front of Heritage Hall	• Cleaning Services: stairwells, etc.
• Meeting/Study areas with laptop access	• SAIT Online Directory: identify specific service areas (e.g. bookstore, swimming pool, PLARS, etc.), not just individual's names
• Number of campus maps displayed on the grounds	• Food freshness and healthy choices in all food outlets
• Signage identifying each building	• Continuous grounds upkeep—lack of flowers
• Campus Tower Clock	• Replacing all chalkboards on campus with whiteboards (at least) in classrooms
• Upgrading of Burns Building elevators	• Cleaning gravel and pigeon droppings from the Staff Parkade
• Pathways throughout the campus	• Proper lighting in Senator Burns Building computer classrooms, in stairwells in all buildings, in parkade stairwells, and parking levels
• Free access for staff to Campus Centre Fitness Facilities	• Displaying emergency information: emergency numbers, security, evacuation procedures
	• Parking passes available for students and part-time faculty: monthly? weekly?
	• Working clocks in all classrooms
	• Food Services (Senator Burns Building) and more reasonably priced parking services available for Continuing Education customers (i.e., cheaper parking after 5 p.m.)

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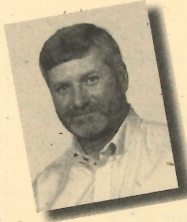


SAIT
Academic
Faculty
Association

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



by Ed Logue, SAFA President

The SAFA office continues to see activity on a daily basis dealing with a variety of faculty issues, and we are now well into the collective bargaining process.

The Arbitration Hearing for the group grievance filed by Paula Harris and Kevin Osborne in CALS will be held September 27, 28, and 29. Paula and Kevin are two permanent salaried instructors in CALS who had their teaching loads for the 2003/2004 academic year assigned to casual instructors and their positions abolished. Due to the financial situation at SAIT, this case should be of concern to all of us. Casual instructors are by nature less costly to the Employer than permanent salaried instructors, and if positions can be abolished even though there is still a teaching load, position abolishment simply becomes termination without cause. Arbitrator Andrew Sims will also hear the Human Rights complaint filed by Kevin. Human Rights legislation is an underlying theme in collective agreements; i.e., employers must comply with Human Rights legislation.

The Avionics Instructors in the Transportation Department have had their Unit Standard Class Contact Hours increased from 656 to 720 hours. This is the first time that the Employer has increased the Unit Standard Class Contact Hours of an Instructional Unit. As there are only three instructors in this Instructional Unit, the Association can only assume that this is a test case; and if the Employer is successful at Arbitration, more instructors will have their Unit Standard Class Contact Hours

increased. A group grievance has been filed and will proceed to arbitration. William Warren will be the Arbitrator and the dates for the hearing are November 23 and 24, 2004.

Employment of faculty members continues to be a concern at SAIT. An Arbitration Award was issued in November 2003 by Arbitrator Allan Beattie on the employment of casuals at SAIT. The Arbitration Award ruled that several instructors employed under casual employment agreements should have been hired into temporary salaried positions. The Arbitrator also ruled that, on a go-forward basis, the Employer will hire instructors with full teaching loads into temporary salaried positions. The Association has had some discussion with the Employer on the implementation of this Award. However, to date, the Employer has not taken the necessary steps to compensate instructors who were identified through the arbitration process nor has the Employer hired instructors into temporary salaried positions on a go-forward basis.

The use of SIRs at SAIT continues to be a significant issue to faculty members. Faculty has not had any input into this process. The Vice President Academic has had focus group meetings with instructors and has had lots of feedback on SIRs. Regardless of what instructors are saying, the process of incorporating the SIR into PPRs proceeds. The concern of faculty is not that SIRs are being conducted but how they are being used at SAIT.

The Board of Governors continues to hold its meetings in camera. Since we know that the future of mankind does not depend on decisions made by this Board, one wonders at their paranoia. The FOIP Inquiry initiated by the Association into this matter of secrecy is ongoing.

If you have any questions or concerns about these or other matters, please contact the SAFA office at 8321, by e-mail, or drop by N201 in the Burns Building. ♦♦

SAFAGRAM

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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.

Transitioning of the Enrollment Management Project

Lynn Hoover, Enrollment Management Project Coordinator

In the previous issue of the SAFAGRAM, I shared with you the progress of the Enrollment Management Steering Committee on the "Management of the Academic Year." It is a way of ensuring proper integration of all key processes that affect the SAIT student experience. Feel free to view the documentation on this in Outlook—in Public Folders \ Campus Information.

This time, I want to share with you the progress of the other teams and let you know where the project is heading. When this project began in December 2001, the plan was to meet all the objectives defined in the original Enrollment Management Committee Report (May 2001). Six teams were formed to achieve the objectives associated with learner support products and communication systems, data management, recruitment, retention, and customer processes. Later, an additional team was formed to work on loading and scheduling. I want to thank all the staff and students from across campus who have put in a great deal of time and effort to achieve the goals. We're still in the midst of completing some of the objectives. The main focus now is to

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FAQs



by Heather Sagan

FAQ: Are instructors employed on fee-for-service contracts, casual employment agreements—instruction, and as independent contractors eligible for health care and dental benefits?

A: At SAIT there is no provision for benefits for instructors employed on a fee-for-service, casual employment, or independent contractors basis.

FAQ: Is there provision for religious leave?

A: Sub-section 37.06 of the SAIT/SAFA Collective Agreement provides for leave without pay on religious holidays. Requests for leave will be considered by the Employer provided adequate notice of the request is given.

FAQ: When is an instructor eligible for Long Term Disability (LTD)?

A: An eligible academic staff member who becomes ill or disabled and who, as a result of such illness or disability is absent from work for a period of 80 consecutive work days, may apply for longer term disability benefits as provided under the LTD Plan. The final ruling as to whether or not the claimant's disability is of a nature which qualifies the claimant for benefits within the interpretation of the provisions of the Plan shall be made by the carrier (insurance company).

FAQ: If an instructor has outstanding vacation, does it have to be taken prior to going on LTD?

A: If an instructor has outstanding vacation days, s/he has the option of taking the vacation after the 80 consecutive

work days of general illness have been used. However, when an instructor goes on LTD, s/he has up to two years to take accrued vacation. Prior to the second anniversary of being on LTD, the instructor must be paid the outstanding vacation days by the Employer. LTD payments are reduced by the amount of vacation pay.

FAQ: In the event that SAIT does not renew my temporary salaried position, what will happen with respect to my vacation?

A: Vacation for temporary employees can occur as either actual vacation days taken prior to the end of their contract or paid in a lump sum payout if operational exigencies do not allow for the vacation time to actually be taken.

FAQ: What percentage has the dental fee guide increased since 1997?

A: The Alberta Dental Association decided effective January 1, 1998, to discontinue its annual suggested provincial fee guide. What increases have there been since 1998 to dental fees? (Alberta year-over-year increases using 1997 ADA Fee Guide as the base.)

1998	- no change
1999	- no change
2000	- 3.40%
2001	- 2.90%
2002	- 2.97%
2003	- 3.76%

Increases are the weighted average of several dental procedures. These are the rates that Sun Life increased to pay dentists. They may not necessarily be what dentists are actually charging. ♦

Transitioning of the Enrollment Management Project continued from page 2

sustain day-to-day the positive changes that have been made. Team membership has changed occasionally, but the majority of the people involved from the outset are still involved.

- The Learner Support Products Team and Communication Systems Team completed their objectives last year by implementing new and improved communication processes and creating a presentation that communicates the role of each of SAIT's learner support services. A working session will be held every year to review and ensure SAIT's Communication Flow Plan (between SAIT and its incoming and returning students) is timely, accurate, and welcoming.
- The Data Management Team is no longer meeting, but they successfully improved enrolment data capabilities through enrolment funnel reports. We now have three years of data, making trend analysis possible.
- The Recruitment Team is in the final stages of finishing the 2005/2006 Student Recruitment Plan. You may ask...why 2005/2006? Isn't that a bit early? We're

actually heading into the 2005/2006 recruitment cycle as of August 2004. The Student Recruitment Plan will be reviewed annually to provide a means for strategically and collaboratively planning SAIT's recruitment efforts.

- The Retention Team has completed a draft Student Success Plan. In the transition of the project, the Student Success Plan will evolve to be reviewed on an annual basis. This team is currently working on recommendations to support student retention, which will be presented to the Enrollment Management Project Sponsor Team.
- The Customer Process Team has implemented several new initiatives about fees and billing and is currently completing a review of the policies and processes associated with different program types. This will be combined with work from a Deans' Council subcommittee on academic administrative tracking. In the end, this structure will form a clear and common understanding of program types and associated processes and policies.

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Enterprise Learning Management System (ELMS) Project

Tim Loblaw
Faculty Development Services
Centre for Instructional & Technology
Development

Come July, the infrastructure of the learning management system at SAIT will change. This may not seem particularly meaningful or relevant to you right now, but the changes could have an impact on some of your teaching and learning practices (particularly if you are using WebCT).

The institution is currently upgrading and integrating a number of its technology platforms. Integrating to an Enterprise Learning Management System (ELMS) is the new trend in post-secondary institutions. Within a single enterprise system, and using a single sign-on, students and staff can access personalized services and "execute other activities in pursuit of their academic and personal goals" (Taggart, 2004). The Enterprise Learning Management Project represents an initiative aligned with SAIT's Academic and Strategic Plans with support from EnCana and CIBC. Specifically, SAIT is integrating Banner, mySAIT.ca, and WebCT. Once the integration is complete, faculty will be able to access all three of these systems from a single sign-on point through mySAIT.ca.

Banner, mySAIT.ca, and WebCT: What do they mean to you as an instructor?

- Banner is the student information system at SAIT; in essence, it is the database of official student records. From a faculty perspective, generally final course grades end up in the Banner system.
- mySAIT.ca is a web portal system. Depending on how long you have been at SAIT, you may hear colleagues refer to mySAIT.ca as Campus Pipeline, Pipeline, or Luminus. As stated on its site, "[mySAIT.ca] provides SAIT students, faculty and staff a secure way to view Academic and Campus Information." In addition to accessing employee-related information, you can use mySAIT.ca to enter final marks or set up an online grade book for each course. mySAIT.ca is already integrated with Banner, which means that once you enter final grades, the grades "roll into Banner" and become official.
- WebCT is SAIT's official course management system (sometimes called a learning platform). WebCT was featured in the Nov/Dec edition of this newsletter, but to summarize, instructors and students can use the online course management system for organizing course content, communicating, delivering assignments and assessments, or facilitating access to course resources.

SAIT will be promoting and explaining the integration with a fairly aggressive communications plan this spring and summer. The most significant impact on faculty following this integration concerns WebCT:

- Currently, we are using WebCT (campus edition) version 3.8; come July, we upgrade to version 4.1. The interface (i.e., the look) of WebCT (ce) 4.1 is different, and some of the procedures/processes you may be accustomed to will be different.
- If you are familiar with WebCT 3.8, an executive

summary outlining the changes will be available.

- Since the integration utilizes a single sign-on process, you will be able to access WebCT only through mySAIT.ca using your mySAIT.ca user id (i.e., your SAIT employee number); current WebCT global id's (i.e., firstnamelastname) will not work in the new environment.
- LMS Support will be moving WebCT courses from the 3.8 server over to the new 4.1 server this summer; if you want to ensure that an existing WebCT course is moved, contact your curriculum and academic coordinators.
- The Banner system will now automatically create a WebCT course shell (as required) and register students into active WebCT courses.
- Although specifics are not confirmed before the publication of this newsletter, the grade book within WebCT will communicate with and feed into the Banner system.

The ELMS project has been and will be an evolving process, but it represents a collaborative effort from the SAIT community, including members of our Faculty Association. Ultimately, an Enterprise Learning Management System is designed to make SAIT more efficient, effective, and responsive to learner needs.

References:

Taggart, B. M. (2004, February). "Portal integration and a scalable, flexible enterprise system." *Syllabus*, 17 (7), pp. 20 - 24. ♦

*Transitioning of the Enrollment Management Project
continued from page 3*

- The Loading and Scheduling Team has been revamped to act as a steering committee. Two work teams are defining standards for collecting and storing data on rooms and loading. Then they will be making recommendations to the Loading and Scheduling Steering Committee on how to store this data. Since both room data and loading data are inputs into the timetabling process, it will help increase the efficiency and accuracy of the timetabling process to store and update room and loading data in a standardized manner.

A full transition plan and final documentation of the teams' efforts and hard work are being compiled. A process will be developed to review and implement three annual plans (Student Recruitment, Student Success, and Communication Flow) to ensure the efforts of all team members are sustained for many years to come.

Participation, ideas, opinions, and efforts have been tremendous from those who have been involved, whether it's been for only a few months or more than two years. ♦

LIBRARY REPORT



by Dave Weber (284-8476)

- ⇒ Nora Robinson and Dave Weber have been awarded a Centre for Instructional Technology and Development Grant to create a WebCT library skills course. The course will help the Library in achieving its goal of providing information service to all on-campus and distance learners. Initial meetings were held in February, with the completion of the course scheduled for June. The Library plans to offer the course to learners by September. The course will be a marked assignment within many CALS technical communications courses. It will be linked in the Library home page and be available as an orientation tool to all users.
- ⇒ February and March are student survey months for the Library. The survey was available in hard copy from the Library Information Desk, in electronic form via the Library home page, and through a mass e-mailing to all SAIT students. To date, we have received over 300 completed surveys. The Library will compile and announce results later this spring.
- ⇒ Hosting Library and Information Technology practicum is a great way for the Library to contribute to the academic success of SAIT students. Once again in January, the Library hosted the first-year Library and Information Technology students for their circulation skills practicum. The students spent four hours each working with our Information Desk staff gaining experience using the Library automated circulation system. The Library also
- hosted a second-year student for his major three-week, full-time practicum in January.
- ⇒ The Library has applied for supplementary funding for two summer student positions. One application is with the provincial Summer Temporary Employment Program, and the second application is with the Human and Resource Development, Summer Career Placement Program. We are planning to fill the positions by the beginning of May.
- ⇒ Exciting things are happening with access to magazines and newspapers. The software package called Serials Solutions was installed in March. Serials Solutions will identify the Library's on-site hard-copy subscriptions and subscriptions carried by its electronic resources. The "Search the Catalog" feature or the "E-Journal Listings" feature of the Library home page (www.sait.ca/library) can be used to locate over 8,000 subscriptions. This is especially helpful to identify the contents of our ever-expanding electronic resource databases that contain thousands of subscriptions each. Clients will no longer have to guess the location of particular titles.
- ⇒ In December, the Library said farewell to Kathleen James. A library reception was held to celebrate a year and a half of wonderful service at our Information Desk during the evenings and weekends. Kathleen accepted a position with the University of Calgary Medical Library at Foothills. In January, we welcomed Dianne Tichelaar to our staff. Dianne recently moved to Calgary from the Edmonton area where she worked in the school system libraries. ♦

SAFA Annual Election

Support YOUR Faculty Association!

The SAIT Academic Faculty Association is mandated by the Alberta Post-Secondary Learning Act (formerly the Technical Institutes Act). Section 86 outlines that the business and affairs of an academic staff association shall be managed by an executive, the members of which shall be elected by the academic staff members. Section 85 (3) provides that each academic staff association shall have the exclusive authority, on behalf of the academic staff members, to negotiate and enter into an agreement with the Board of Governors of the public post-secondary institution.

The agreement governs the working conditions for academic staff members at SAIT. The more active faculty members are, the better the Association can serve them. It is important that we get a high number of candidates so that all positions benefit from competition. Every year the Association has up to 35 faculty members interested in attending the ACIFA Conference, yet we seldom field a full slate of candidates to have an election for the SAFA Executive Committee! Contrary to the perception of what the Association does, being involved can be a very worthwhile and informative experience. Your Association needs your support and involvement!

Positions on the SAFA Executive are a one-year term. The SAFA President and Secretary-Treasurer must be full-time permanent faculty members. Any faculty member can be nominated for all other positions on the SAFA Executive, Faculty Council, Academic Council, and the Board of Governors. The position of President has a 50 percent off-load and can be up to 70 percent off-load.

Election Day is May 19, 2004.

Nominations open April 21, 2004 and close May 5, 2004 and will be held for the following positions:

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President

Secretary-Treasurer

Directors – two from each division

Directors Division I:

Construction, Manufacturing & Automation, Transportation

Directors Division II:

Energy, Information & Communications Technologies, Centre for Instructional & Technology Development

Directors Division C:

Health & Public Safety, Business & Tourism, Centre for Academic Learner Services

Board of Governors

One representative for a 2-year term

Academic Council

Three representatives for a 2-year term (one from each Division) ♦♦

