

SAFAGRAM

President's Message

By James McWilliams



Important Awareness of Updated Legislation

I would like to make you aware, if you are not already, of significant new legislation relating to strike legislation for post-secondary institutions. "Strike, We are going on strike." The sound of these words, to many employees, would be profoundly alarming and in due course may be accompanied with feelings of uncertainty, apprehension, and fear. It may be followed by an array of questions: Why are we going on strike? How long is the strike? How much do I get paid? Do I have to walk a picket line? What if I don't want to go on strike? For many employees, and specifically Faculty Associations within Post-Secondary in Alberta, most have

never experienced a strike or lockout scenario. A strike is a very unfamiliar concept to them and completely outside their comfort zone. Individuals who have experienced a strike can attest to the fact that it requires an unwavering commitment to the strike cause and a steadfast belief that it is for the betterment of the workers.

In 2004, Post-Secondary Colleges in the Province of Alberta were protected under the Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA). The PSLA mandated compulsory binding arbitration to resolve disputes that occur during collective bargaining. The compulsory binding arbitration requirement was introduced with the passage of the PSLA and effectively prohibited strikes and lockouts in most of Alberta's public post-secondary sector. For the Faculty Associations at Alberta's four comprehensive academic and research institutions, the right to strike was "bargained away" prior to the PSLA coming into force.

In 2015, the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) found that the right to strike is constitutionally protected.

Starting in the Fall of 2015, Alberta Advanced Education consulted with academic staff associations, graduate student associations, and public post-secondary institutions about how to implement the right to strike in the post-secondary sector. SAFA attended several of these meetings. In response to the SCC decision, and after all the

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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



Hi Everyone:

I came across a parable I'd like to share. It's a story about a hard-working Ant that I've "SAITenized."

Every day, a small Ant arrives at work very early and starts work immediately. She produces a lot and she is happy instructing in the classroom!

The Dean—a Lion—was surprised to see that the Ant was working without supervision. He thought "If the Ant can produce so much without any supervision, wouldn't she produce even more if she had a supervisor!"

So... he recruited a Flea who had extensive experience as a supervisor and who was famous for writing excellent reports. The Flea's first decision was to set up a clocking-in attendance system. She also needed a secretary to help her write and type her reports. So... she recruited a Spider who managed the archives and monitored all phone calls.

The Lion was delighted with the Flea's reports and asked her to produce graphs to describe productivity rates and to analyse trends so that he could use them for presentations at Executive meetings.

So... the Flea had to buy a new computer, a laser printer... and recruited a Fly to manage the IT department.

Now, the Ant, who had once been so productive and relaxed, hated this new plethora of paperwork and meetings which used up most of her time!

The Lion came to the conclusion that it was high time to nominate a person in charge of the department where the Ant worked.

So... the position was given to the Grasshopper, whose first decision was to buy a carpet and an ergonomic chair for his office. The new person in charge, the Grasshopper, also needed a computer and a personal assistant, whom he brought from his previous department, to help him prepare a "Work and Budget Control Strategic Optimization Plan."

The department where the Ant works is now a sad place, where nobody laughs anymore, and everybody has become upset.

It was at that time that the Flea convinced the Lion and the Grasshopper of the absolute necessity to start a "Climate Study" of the work environment.

Having reviewed the charges for running the Ant's department, the Lion found out that the production was much less than before.

So... he recruited the Owl, a prestigious and renowned consultant, to carry out an audit and suggest solutions. The Owl spent three months in the department and came up with an enormous report, in several volumes, that concluded: "The department is overstaffed..."

Guess who the Lion fires first?

The Ant, of course, because she "showed lack of motivation and had a negative attitude."

Sound familiar? Today, Instructors are being asked to do more with less—increasing class sizes, continuous expansion of "assignable duties," and work that is traditionally that of their Academic Chair being downloaded onto the Instructor. At the same time they may be told there is no money for salary increases—despite a burgeoning Management.

While it is true that Instructors' salaries are the single largest share of the overall salary and benefits envelope at SAIT, it is only 46.25 percent of the entire salary and benefits package. The take-away from this: less than 50 percent of the salaries paid at SAIT are actually in the classroom. So where is the rest? There is 13.5 percent for Executive and Management compensation; 23 percent, AUPE; and 17.25 percent, APT. Remember, every time a manager is hired that triggers hiring of Admin and Tech support staff as well. Looking at the K to 12 teaching environment, you will see a much larger proportion of salary is in the classroom.

So, does this mean higher salaries to Academic Staff, or more Instructors, or both? I think we must never lose sight that it's about the quality of instruction and the student. Everyone working at SAIT—Academic Chairs, all levels of management and support staff, AUPE and APT—is employed to support and assist the Instructor deliver the highest level of education to the students in the classroom.

As you will know from my many bargaining updates, it's been "tough sledding"—sorry for the "snow" pun—at the bargaining table. We have made some headway on many "smaller ticket" items, but we remain far apart on money and workload. I share in your frustration and can say it is only matched by that of your bargaining team. However, I'm hopeful that, with the arrival of Spring thaw, we will see some of the ice jams removed and get movement at the bargaining table.

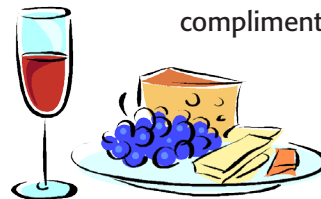
I look forward to seeing all of you at the SAFA BBQ. As always, if you have any questions, please call me, stop by the SAFA office (N201 Senator Burns Building), or e-mail me at al.brown@sait.ca. ☛

SAFA ANNUAL 'END THE YEAR' SOCIAL

May 24 @ 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. | The Gateway

Join your SAFA colleagues for pizza and other delicious appetizers. Find us at the SAFA table to claim your 2 free drink tickets (per person) and your complimentary taxi chits. There will

be a cash bar at SAITSA prices but pop and water are free.



Missing the ice already?



SAIT Curling League

The SAIT Curling League is looking for teams and interested individuals to join our community of friends, colleagues, and alumni for the 2018/2019 season. Since 1963 we have carried on a tradition of friendly and fun competition. Our regular season runs from October to March culminating with a Bonspiel and wrap up party. Games are held on Thursdays and start at 4:30 p.m. We curl at the Calgary Curling Club which is located at 720 - 3 Street NW.

Please contact Kevin.campbell@sait.ca for more info.

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consultation input had been correlated, on April 6, 2017, the Government introduced Bill 7: An Act to Enhance Post-Secondary Academic Bargaining. Bill 7 revokes the provisions of the PSLA that address collective bargaining and brings academic labour relations under the Labour Relations Code.

With the introduction of the new legislation, and its future impact on the collective bargaining process, post-secondary associations now have the arduous task of assessing how important it will be to establish a Defense Fund. More importantly, the questions are asked: Is there a possibility of a strike in the distant future? Are relationships with the institution's Executive management and BOG unstable and strained? Would the uncertainty of future government funding to the institution, increasing operating costs, and upper management salaries be the foundation for a strike? Furthermore, what if the relationship between the employer and Faculty becomes strained, and pressure to do more with less becomes an expectation? Does Faculty withdraw from those extracurricular activities and the coaching and mentoring responsibilities? Volunteer commitments? Will the employer adopt a no-leniency stance and exercise their right to "lock-out" Faculty?

Being vulnerable to a lock-out scenario is unacceptable to SAFA. It will certainly be in the best interests of the Association and its Faculty to move forward constructively and informatively with a process to build a "Defense Fund." Independent reliance to manage our own fund demonstrates the commitment to the potential of a future strike. At the same time, we will support an alliance with our provincial association, ACIFA, by providing an annual monetary contribution to an overall combined Defense Fund. This enables all associations to benefit through financial assistance from ACIFA to support Faculty and sustain the strike mandate. Our counterparts to the East, CAUT (Canadian Association of University Teachers) provide additional financial aid to Associations on strike. All universities in Ontario pay an annual Defense Fund fee to CAUT, which varies according to the size of the faculty membership per university.

Presently there is no appetite for a strike within our borders, and we remain cautiously optimistic that effective negotiations will avert any strike. However, we must be vigilant so that we do not get lured into a false sense of security... being prepared well in advance is very much to our advantage. ➡

"Have you seen my fuzzy Wookiee"

Last SAFA Social – Join us on

May 3 at 3:30 p.m. at The Odyssey

Light snacks and tasty beverages are courtesy of SAFA and Brad.

* Taxi chits will be provided *

Prize for the best Star Wars themed outfit!

Fond Farewell

A number of our long-time faculty members have accepted the SAIT Voluntary Departure Incentive Programme. Congratulations to all of you who are starting an exciting new chapter in your lives. With fond memories of your SAIT career, best wishes for the future.



Interesting facts

Glass takes one million years to decompose, which means it never wears out and can be recycled an infinite amount of times!

Gold is the only metal that doesn't rust, even if it's buried in the ground for thousands of years.

Your tongue is the only muscle in your body that is attached at only one end.

If you stop getting thirsty, you need to drink more water. When a human body is dehydrated, its thirst mechanism shuts off.

Zero is the only number that cannot be represented by Roman numerals.

Kites were used in the American Civil War to deliver letters and newspapers.

The song, Auld Lang Syne, is sung at the stroke of midnight in almost every English-speaking country in the world to bring in the new year.

Drinking water after eating reduces the acid in your mouth by 61 percent.

Peanut oil is used for cooking in submarines because it doesn't smoke unless it's heated above 450F.

The roar that we hear when we place a seashell next to our ear is not the ocean, but rather the sound of blood surging through the veins in the ear.

Nine out of every 10 living things live in the ocean.

The banana cannot reproduce itself. It can be propagated only by the hand of man.

Airports at higher altitudes require a longer airstrip due to lower air density.

The University of Alaska spans four time zones.

The tooth is the only part of the human body that cannot heal itself.

In ancient Greece, tossing an apple to a girl was a traditional proposal of marriage. Catching it meant she accepted.

Warner Communications paid \$28 million for the copyright to the song Happy Birthday.

Intelligent people have more zinc and copper in their hair.

A comet's tail always points away from the sun.

The Swine Flu vaccine in 1976 caused more death and illness than the disease it was intended to prevent.

Caffeine increases the power of aspirin and other painkillers, that is why it is found in some medicines.

The military salute is a motion that evolved from medieval times, when knights in armor raised their visors to reveal their identity. ➡

Suspension of Thermal Retention Laws on SAIT's Main Campus



How can my coffee go from “burn your lips” hot to “spit-take” cold in the time it takes to walk from Johnson-Cobbe to Senator Burns? There must be a research project in this somewhere!