

SAFAGRAM

President's Message

By Blair Howes



We are full on in winter mode so with that I would like to wish everyone Happy Holidays, Merry Christmas, and Seasons Greetings from me and the SAFA Executive and Office Staff.

As a reminder, Monday, December 24, is the SAFA Christmas floater day, and SAIT management has given the rest of staff the day off as well.

Now would be a good time to use up your new personal days as they expire December 31. I would suggest December 20 and 21 as good days to use if you haven't already done so. As a reminder, the HR 11 code is "245" for your form.

It has been a busy November for SAFA with town halls concluding and other issues popping up, and I would like to remind everyone to complete the ACIFA climate survey if you haven't already done so. The data is very valuable to SAFA and ACIFA.

The SAFA Christmas party is on December 13, and we look forward to seeing many of you there.

I am pleased to announce that SAFA has inked a deal with ARTA (Alberta Retired Teachers Association) to provide an alternate to health and travel benefits for those faculty employees 65 and older looking for an alternative to the SAIT benefits program. I would like to thank Sheldon Thundstrom for setting up the initial conversation with ARTA. Watch for SAFA news about this exciting opportunity late January or early February.

As the fall semester winds down and the winter semester begins in January, I would also remind everyone that the load verification sheets have probably come and gone, but for some in Apprenticeship training, the finalized loads must be out prior to December 31 as per the Collective Agreement

One of the issues that seems to be repeating in November is that many of you have dropped in to see either Al Brown or me about the "fairness" of your loading.

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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



Season's Greetings Everyone!

The Christmas break is approaching, but before we leave for the holidays, I thought it may be beneficial to discuss the topic of social media in the workplace. In particular, how has it complicated employment law?

Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Spotify, Snapchat, etc. and even e-mail are from a labour relations viewpoint relatively new. Remember Facebook has only been around since 2004! However, these platforms 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 an employee 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 am sure you are aware of the privacy settings on your Facebook account (and if not, you should be), but 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 disciplines or dismissal arbitrations.

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."

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."

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. SAIT has a social media policy in place – ER 1.2.1 and the attendant procedures.

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 over tired.
9. Don't facebook when you've been drinking or are under the influence.
10. Remember that, when you facebook with someone, you're potentially facebooking with everyone they've facebooked with.

If you have any questions or comments, please stop by the SAFAGRAM office N201 in the Burns Building or contact me directly Ext. 4067 or e-mail Al.Brown@sait.ca

In closing, I hope everyone has a joyful and restful time over the Holidays! See you in 2019! ➡

Tips for Instructors

By Eugene Blanchard

Like many of you, I received my instructor training by the school of hard knocks (jumping in with both feet) and the short Instructional Skills Workshop. When I first started, I asked my father, who was an industrial trainer, what I should know about teaching; and he replied with a quick lesson. He wrote a 10 digit number "94503827261" on a piece of paper and showed it to me for 10 seconds. Then covered it and ask me to write down the number. I could remember some of the digits but not many. Then he wrote the same digits in order: "0123456789." The purpose of the exercise was to illustrate that the order or sequencing of content is the key to teaching. If you can find the right order for delivering content, then it will be logical and easy for the students to learn. It will be a natural progression from one objective to another.

When I present curriculum to the students, I'm always thinking about the order, "Did I cover the prerequisites?" Sometimes, during a presentation, I'll realize that a better order

would be to teach A before B. I change, adapt, and fine-tune the delivery until it is right.

I also talked to an instructor who was a long-time friend of mine. I asked him, "How do you start to prepare for a course?" He said, get a blank binder, open it up, start with the course outline, then a course schedule (map), then week one, week two, and so on. The point that he was making was that you organize the complete semester using a course schedule (week 1 cover this, week 2 cover that, etc.) then you start on each week. You don't need to be prepared with all of the semester's content before you teach it. You just need to be one week ahead of the students.

I like to say that the difference between an instructor and a student is sometimes 15 minutes. You may be solidifying concepts right up to the moment that you are walking into the classroom to present them.

Students will rise to your expectations. I have a second semester course, and the feedback from third semester students is that they wished that the first year was more difficult so the shock of second year wasn't so great. So every year for the past five years, I've increased the course load, and every year the students have done better. I don't get it! I made the course harder, and the students do better!

There was a study in the early 60s by psychologist Robert Rosenthal on teacher expectations and student performance. He gave an IQ test to an elementary class and then told the teacher that he had identified certain students who were destined for success. At the end of the year, the identified students were at the top of the class for performance, but the students who Rosenthal had identified were chosen randomly without the input of the IQ tests.

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2012/09/18/161159263/teachers-expectations-can-influence-how-students-perform>



Teachers' Expectations Can Influence How Students Perform : Shots - Health News - NPR : National Public Radio

www.npr.org

Teachers' Expectations Can Influence How Students Perform : Shots - Health News Teachers' expectations about their students' abilities affect classroom interactions in myriad ways that can impact ...

I have a motto: "To struggle is to learn." Sometimes for students to move forward, they have to struggle and overcome the wall that they have hit. If you give them the answer, it may not be the help that they actually need. They may need to bang their head against that wall for a while for the thought process to develop and the solution to appear. At this point, I will give them guidance but not the answer. I like to say "I could give you the answer, but then I would have trouble sleeping at night because I would be robbing you of an education." I often see new instructors over-explaining concepts at the beginning of a lab class when all they have to do is let the students jump in and attempt the lab, struggle, and ask questions. The students are very receptive for the information at that time because it has importance.

Brightspace (D2L) is your friend and once you start, you will be asking "Why didn't someone tell me about it before?" It can be a great timesaver for the instructor especially on the marking side. A strong point for Brightspace is cross-listing

of courses. One shell is created for multiple courses and/or instructors. A common shell is used by all courses and each course can be sorted by sections. The advantage is that all courses see the same content—update the one shell and everyone receives the revisions. Quizzes can be scheduled individually for each section as needed. It makes life so much easier versus trying to coordinate the content (presentations, labs, assignments, notes, links, quizzes) between many different shells for multiple courses and/or instructors.

You can create online quizzes that consist of multiple choice, true/false, matching, multi-select, short answer, fill in the blank, etc. It takes about the same amount of time as creating a paper quiz. The bonus is that it automatically marks and grades the quiz immediately upon submission. The students know their grade and the questions that were incorrectly answered immediately. This is a huge timesaver--no more marking until midnight and on weekends! It may take a while to figure out how to translate a multipart paper question to make it an online question, but it will be well worth the effort.

There are two shells to consider: master and the working shell. At the end of a semester, you must leave the working shell alone as any changes to it may affect the current students' grades. The nice part is that I can go back 10 years and see every Brightspace shell that I've used; they are all still there exactly the same as when the course finished.

The master shell is not associated with any class. It can be modified without affecting any section. Unfortunately, you must be designated as a "designer" in order to modify the master. Few instructors are designers. A solution has been to create a third shell called the development master that instructors can access. The development then gets pushed to the master which then is pushed to the working shells loaded with a class list. Working shells only appear just before the semester starts and the course is scheduled. In May/June, the time when most instructors are preparing for the Fall semester, the working shell will not appear until August. The development master is then used to bridge this gap.

Sometimes, there may be multiple instructors teaching the same section. The Brightspace shell belongs to the instructor teaching the theory. The lab instructors can obtain access to the shell by becoming a hidden instructor. This way all of the instructors teaching the same section can work on a common shell. ⇄

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.