

SAFAGRAM

President's Message *by Doug Spurgeon*



A Call for Help

This year the SAFA executive are committed to becoming more proactive. This means that as issues arise, we plan to deal with them. The hope in this approach is to intercept issues before they rise to the point of the executive having to deal with rumours rather than the original issues.

To be proactive, we need your help. When you have a question or concern, I would rather you send an e-mail or give a call so that we can deal with any event as it occurs. Some may turn out to be rumour, while others may be corrected before the situation expands. I also hope that some faculty will step forward to be trained to become either dispute resolution or grievance officers. The more people we have spread amongst the departments who can help resolve the smaller issues just may restrict larger issues from growing.

The meetings that I have had with a few Deans have gone very well. There appears to be a general acceptance from management for dealing with the issues as they arise. So far, it seems that the proactive approach is taking effect. Yes, there is still a great deal of work to do. At this point, I have a verbal commitment that issues will be discussed openly in order to come to a speedy resolution. This open discussion may work for new issues that appear, but older underlying issues may take some more time to work out.

You may ask what you can do to help. I will continue with my e-mail updates so that you are aware of issues that are arising around the campus. Some of these issues are due to your coming forward and letting us know what is happening.

My hope this year is that steps will be taken to make this a more enjoyable workplace. I do believe that this can happen if the fear of bringing issues forward is erased and replaced with the knowledge that your concerns will be listened to and addressed. We all know that knowledge is power, so please don't let those who represent you be powerless. I may not be able to make all the changes you want, but I hopefully can lay the road stones on which the ideas will march. ➡

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First On Colour

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 luda.paul@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.

Library Report



by Dave Weber and Nora Robinson

⇒ Level 0 Renovations

At long last the lower level of the Library is open to students, staff, and instructors. Level 0 was flooded during a severe thunderstorm in June. The carpet and four feet of drywall around the complete perimeter were removed and replaced. During the reconstruction period, the books, videos, and DVDs were placed in storage. Several Library staff were relocated to temporary office space on Level 1.

As of this report date, staff have yet to return to their original offices. The four Level 1 group study rooms are occupied by staff and are unavailable to students. The four study rooms located on Level 0 are now available to students and may now be booked on-line. We are still waiting for network access and power to be restored, and study lamps to be replaced to many of the Level 0 study and audio-visual carrels.

Our Library instruction sessions are available (and we can use the Library classroom again). We opened the classroom for Library research sessions on September 17. Thanks to the CALS technical support staff, we received new computer workstations and now have six more than we had before the flood. If you would like to book a session for your students, please contact Nora at nora.robinson@sait.ca or call 4073.

⇒ Alberta Foundation for the Arts Traveling Exhibition: "Then and Now: Alberta Communities"

The exhibition celebrates Alberta's centenary. Community museums from around the province created story/photograph panels highlighting local childhood memories, wartime secrets, and natural disasters that have helped define Albertans.

A new exhibit will start soon—watch SAIT Business Notices for more information.

⇒ Staff Recruitment

Since September, the Library has been recruiting and interviewing for five positions. The vacant positions are due to three retirements and two resignations. The Library welcomed Danica Dixon and Melissa Jansen, two new evening/weekend staff, in September.

⇒ Lois Hole Campus Alberta Digital Library Launch Event

On September 28, 2007, we were pleased to be the Calgary host site for the launch of the Lois Hole Campus Alberta Digital Library (LHCADL). The provincial government has committed over \$30 million in funding to license a suite of databases that will be accessible by students registered in programs in 35 technical institutes, colleges, and universities across the province. Students, faculty, and

staff now have access to over 4.5 million licensed items including academic journals, encyclopedias, magazine and newspaper articles, critiques, and video clips. There will be more resources added in the future.

The launch was simulcast from the University of Alberta with live visits to SAIT, Medicine Hat College, Portage College, and Red Crow College. Irene Lewis, SAIT President, and David Jones, SAITSA President, spoke about the impact the initiative will have in meeting the information needs of SAIT students, faculty, and staff. Premier Ed Stelmach and Doug Horner, Minister of Advanced Education, along with other college and university presidents, faculty members, and students also spoke during the simulcast.



Kat Marlowe, SAIT Librarian (centre), demonstrates one of the Digital Library databases.

SAIT students, staff, and instructors can access the Lois Hole databases via the Library home page <http://library.sait.ca>. For more information, contact the SAIT Library at library@sait.ca, 284 8616, or the Information Desk. For a complete list of the databases now available, go to the SAIT Library home page at <http://library.sait.ca>. Click on any of the subject areas. When you see the LHCADL logo, click on it for a list of those databases funded through the initiative. 🗨️



Christmas Leave

The floater day for Christmas is December 24, 2007.

The holidays for Christmas break are December 26, 27, 28, and 31.

Christmas Day, Boxing Day, and New Year's Day are all Stat holidays.

In essence, the Christmas leave is from December 24, 2007 – January 1, 2008, inclusive.

FAQs



by Matthew Hamilton

Q. My professional development has been approved, but my Academic Chair insists that I use my vacation to go on it. Can he/she do that?

A. According to the SAIT/SAFA Collective Agreement, Article 39.03 states,

“An academic staff member shall not be required to use vacation days for in-service training and other development activities except by mutual written agreement.”

Q. When does the Christmas holiday float start?

A. According to the SAIT/SAFA Collective Agreement, Article 43.02 states,

“The Christmas float holiday, pursuant to Section 37 of this collective agreement shall be observed:

- (a) on December 22nd when Christmas Day falls on a Monday,
- (b) on December 23rd when Christmas Day falls on a Sunday.
- (c) on December 24th when Christmas Day falls on any other day of the week.” ♦♦

Faculty Focus

By Roxanne Wheaton

I embarked upon my Masters of Educational Technology journey in January 2005 at the University of British Columbia. This program is course-based and must be completed within a five-year time frame. It is administered in partnership with Tec de Monterrey in Mexico (giving it an international flavour). I completed eight courses from UBC and two from the University of Nebraska Lincoln (leadership courses). I was able to apply theory and practice from every course. This program is delivered 100 percent online; therefore, I was able to learn many delivery technologies and techniques hands-on. The quality of the professors was extremely high, and there were many “teaching” tips that I picked up and incorporated into my own classroom. For me, the online learning environment was extremely positive, and many relationships were built during my studies. In August 2007, I completed my Masters journey and am now looking forward to applying my knowledge and enthusiasm for the online environment in a full-time capacity as SAIT moves in this direction.

Fast Facts:

University: University of British Columbia and Tec de Monterrey
 Degree: Masters of Educational Technology
 Courses: 10 (2 may be taken at another institute)
 Thesis: No
 Length: 5-year maximum
 Learning environment: Fully online
 Experience: Absolutely Positive ♦♦

SAIT Aquatic Centre Expands Hours

By Erin Minor

Great news! The SAIT Aquatic Centre has expanded its hours of operation. Instead of thinking, “Oh, I have time for a swim today. Is the pool open?,” you can now simply think, “I have time for a swim today!” The choice to enjoy a refreshing dip is now easier to make than ever.

The catch is that the new hours are on a trial basis only. If not enough people use the facility between September 17th and December 17th, the hours will revert to the old schedule.

The 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. time is, as it always has been, an “open swim,” which means that the diving board and three lane lines are open. Over the course of the semester, there will be times when only two or three lanes are open because lessons may be scheduled; however, for the most part, the new schedule is a simple one. Drop in to the pool for a swim and/or a soak anytime between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. Wonderful!

Keep in mind that this is only a TRIAL CHANGE. In other words, if we do not use it, we will lose it; so the Aquatic Centre needs your help. Consider a change in your weekly routine. Drop in to the pool for a leisurely swim or a soak in the hot tub. Bring your friends. Tell your colleagues. Make it a semester-long pool party, or simply establish a new healthy routine.

Please support the Aquatic Centre. See you in the pool!



A Trial Basis Starting Sept. 17th - Dec. 17th

Pool & Hot Tub Hours will be:

6 a.m. – 3 p.m. - Lane Swim - Monday through Friday
 5 p.m. – 7 p.m. - Lane Swim - Mondays & Wednesdays
 5 p.m. – 6 p.m. - Lane Swim - Tuesdays & Thursdays
 3 p.m. – 5 p.m. - Open Swim - Monday through Friday
 1 p.m. – 4 p.m. - Open Swim - Saturdays & Sundays

All hours are subject to pool bookings.

For more information contact 284-8029 ♦♦

SAIT and SAFA ... Are things getting better?

by Swartzie

School of Transportation

I have personally noticed that some things are getting better between SAIT management and SAFA faculty, especially after this last round of contract negotiations.

With the current Hays Survey report that should now be on SAFA members' desks, the interpretation (however it reads) shows progress, however slight, on almost all surveyed sections. Wages and benefits are the exception, however. As this survey was prepared before the last contract negotiations, I am certain that there will be a positive movement on this section when the new survey is presented.

Not everything is as rosy. One big concern that is prevalent in my department is the overload interpretation sent out (via e-mail) by the "Overload Task Team" on August 30, 2007. Many faculty members in my department have suggested that they require a law degree to decipher the language of the document; and if it was the intent of the task team to bring clarity and interpretation on the subject, it was definitely lost in this 12-page document. I can only hope that SAFA will be reviewing this document and supplying SAFA members with an interpretation on the overload topic.

All in all, we know that the "us and them" rift is still alive and well here on campus; but in my department, there have been great strides toward the approachability between most staff members, their deans, and upper management.

There is a long way to go before any side can claim a victory,

but if SAIT management stands behind the core value of

- We will do what we say we will do,
- We are accountable for our actions, and
- We treat people the way we would like to be treated ourselves;

then there is definite opportunity for optimism to grow. Things are getting better! ♦

Teachers' Quotes

http://www.indianchild.com/teachers_quotes.htm

A good teacher is like a candle—it consumes itself to light the way for others.

~Author Unknown

Good teachers are costly, but bad teachers cost more.

~Bob Talbert

Teaching should be full of ideas instead of stuffed with facts.

~Author Unknown

The true teacher defends his pupils against his own personal influence. He inspires self-distrust. He guides their eyes from himself to the spirit that quickens him. He will have no disciple.

~Amos Bronson Alcott

Working Together for Student Success

by Student Counselling Staff

Getting through college can be challenging. Many students experience stress due to the combined demands of their studies and multiple life roles. We want students to know they are not alone in their struggles.

We are a team of professional counsellors trained to deal with a wide range of student issues. Our counsellors have completed a minimum of a Masters degree in counselling psychology or social work. Most importantly, we enjoy helping students.

As instructors, you have daily contact with students and may be the first to notice when they are having problems. Some signs of trouble include missing classes, a sudden drop in performance or change in behaviour, arriving intoxicated or hung over, withdrawing from others, sleeping in class, or repeatedly asking for special treatment.

HOW TO REFER:

You can arrange an appointment for the student or she/he can contact us directly. If you are concerned about the student's safety, you can accompany the student to Counselling Services. In the event of an emergency, we will make every effort to see the student immediately. All our services are strictly confidential. This means that we cannot inform you, or anyone else, whether a student attended counselling or the particulars of the session without the student's written consent.

You can consult with us by phone or in person if you are

uncertain how to approach a student or whether to refer him/her for counselling. If the student is displaying dangerous behaviour toward others, contact campus security immediately.

HOW WE CAN HELP:

Our goal is to enhance students' success by supporting personal well being, academic achievement, and career satisfaction.

We provide counselling for:

- Educational Issues such as exam anxiety, goal setting, academic difficulties, etc.
- Personal Issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, relationship difficulties, assertiveness, communication skills, etc.
- Career Issues such as decision-making, researching occupations, identifying career interests and goals, etc.
- Crisis Issues such as thoughts or plans of suicide, sudden death of a classmate, trauma, etc.

We also offer workshops and group sessions on a variety of topics such as Stress Management, Relaxation, and Success Teams. You can request a presentation for your class.

Contact us at 284-7023

Location: MA205, Heritage Hall (2nd floor, next to Customer Services) ♦

THE FIVE STAGES OF A SEMESTER

