

MY EXCELLENT RUSSIAN ADVENTURE

Part I of II

by Shelagh McCormick, Instructor,
Applied Arts and Sciences Department



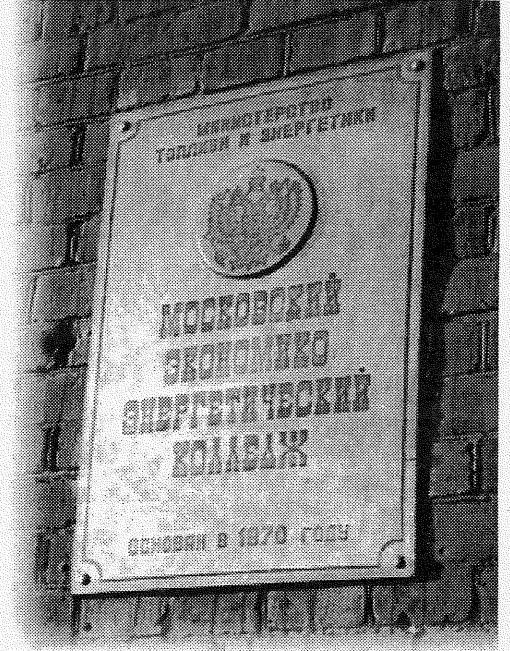
"Expect the unexpected," advised one of my Canadian roommates soon after I arrived in Moscow last fall. This was an expression that we repeated

over and over during our three-month teaching stint in the Russian capital. It seemed to cover everything from the weather to the hot water being turned off just when you were about to step into the shower.

I had been expressing an interest in an overseas posting with SAIT for some time, so I was quite excited when Renee Chernecki e-mailed me last summer asking if I would be interested in teaching two business communications courses at the Russian-Canadian Training Centre which she was managing in Moscow. Initially, I felt that 13 weeks was too long to be away from home, but my husband, daughter, and supervisor all said "Go for it." My husband thought it was a marvellous opportunity for me to visit another exotic country, especially when he found out he could be "invited" through the program to visit for 10 days at Thanksgiving.

Funded by CIDA, the program itself started about two years ago as a partnership between SAIT and the Russian Oil and Gas Ministry. As Russia moves into the global market place, more and more Russians want an understanding of Western economics and management. They also realize that they need English, the international language of business. The program offered four months of study in Moscow and then four months in Calgary at SAIT (you may have been wondering why you keep hearing Russian spoken in the elevators and cafeteria here.) Students take SAIT courses in subjects such as Western accounting practices, economics, financial management, global marketing, computers, ESL, and, of course, business communications. They are expected to be proficient in English when they enter the program, but as I learned, "expect the unexpected." The 26 students who

Continued on Page 5



Moscow Economic & Energy College

EDITORIAL

Discrimination Committee Mandate

In November 1988 the first discrimination policy was developed by the members of the SAIT President's Standing Committee on Discrimination. This document was designed primarily to provide specific recourse for employees and students in the event of an alleged

violation of the Individual's Rights Protection Act. Alberta has recently received new human rights legislation, the HUMAN RIGHTS, CITIZENSHIP AND MULTICULTURALISM ACT, which replaces the Individual's Rights Protection Act and introduces new grounds as well

as a new process for hearing and deciding complaints.

The current Discrimination Committee is comprised of twelve SAIT employees from both the academic and support staff categories and a student executive representative. The functions of

Continued on Page 4

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial.....	1
TLC.....	3
Know Your Collective Agreement	6
Perspective.....	6
Editorial Cartoon.....	7

Spell Check Bloopers

(Comic relief while marking papers.)

Skill on resume - "created all guests"

From a recommendation report:

"Conventional Manufacturer's are attempting to apply mechanical systems to reduce the amount of human involvement"



SAIT
Academic
Faculty
Association

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SAIT

1997/98 SAIT Academic Faculty Association Executive Committee

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Executive Committee meetings are held every Wednesday, 3:00–5:00 p.m. in N201 in the SAFA Board Room.

SAFA Phones/Fax/E-mail:

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E-mail: safa@sait.ab.ca

SAFA office is located in N201 in the Senator Burns Building adjacent to the elevators. ♦♦

Group Benefits Plan for Retired Faculty Members



by Heather Sagan,
SAFA Administrator

The Alberta College-Institutes Faculties Association (ACIFA) has arranged with the Alberta Retired Teachers' Association (ARTA) to provide retired faculty members with access to a group benefits plan.

ARTA offers a comprehensive Benefits Program for retired teachers who are members of ARTA or who are Affiliate Members of ARTA. All retired teachers are welcome—including retired teachers from any educational institution.

In order to access this plan, you are required to be an associate member of ARTA. Associate memberships can be purchased for \$20 annually when you purchase any of the benefit plans. For membership in ARTA, call the Alberta Retired Teachers' Association office toll-free in Alberta at 1-800-232-7208.

If you are currently employed by a college or technical institute, you may purchase any of the benefits without having to take a medical examination. If you have been retired from a college or technical institute for more than two months, a medical will be required. Between April 1 and May 31, 1998, however, no medical will be required if you choose to purchase any of these benefit plans.

The benefits program highlights include

- extended health care
- semi-private hospital
- dental care
- life insurance

If you apply for benefits under the ARTA program within 60 days of the termination of other group insurance coverage, you will be accepted regardless of the state of your health. No maximum age! You don't need to be 65 to apply!

If you are getting close to retirement or know of any retired SAIT faculty members who may be interested in this benefits plan, please pass on this information.

For further information or assistance, call the Program Administrator at Johnson Incorporated:
1-800-461-4597 in North America. ♦♦

SAFAGRAM

Editorial Board

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Luda Paul

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SAFAGRAM is published by the SAIT Academic Faculty Association (SAFA) five times a year on or about the first days 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 email submissions to luda.paul@sait. Please keep submissions under 300 words, double space, and, if possible, submit on floppy disc (Mac or DOS) with an accompanying hard copy. Submissions may be edited for grammar, length, or content.

SAFAGRAM editorial policy, as approved by the SAFA Executive on June 14th, 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 include 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.

Industry Leave Information Session

by Margaret Miyagishima, H.R.



On Friday, April 24, Laura Cuthbertson, Teaching & Learning Centre, and Margaret Miyagishima, H.R., will be presenting a lunch-hour information session on the Industry Leave program. The session is being held in room N1102 from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. This session will be of interest to faculty who are considering a temporary return to industry. Come and find out what is involved in an industry leave. ♦♦

TLC

Teaching & Learning Centre



by Laura Cuthbertson
Coordinator, TLC

What's Happening in the TLC?

The Teaching & Learning Centre (TLC) facilitation team is currently in the midst of delivering an Instructional Skills Workshop. One of the topics that has generated a good deal of discussion is motivation of the adult learner. We all know how lack of motivation can undermine effectiveness of the instructor in the classroom.

I would like to share with you a selection of motivational and de-motivational tips extracted from a handout that is available at the TLC.

Things that Instructors Did to Motivate Me

1. Knew my name
2. Knew subject and kept current
3. Applied knowledge to situations, especially daily living
4. Communicated clearly
5. Showed interest and enthusiasm for the subject
6. Encouraged me to use the library
7. Showed relevance of content to life/work/time
8. Gave exams which related to course content
9. Was available for conferences with me
10. Had good non-verbal communications

Things that Instructors Did to De-Motivate Me

1. Used unfamiliar concepts and classification categories
2. Changed rules while the course was in progress
3. Talked down or ridiculed me or classmates
4. Failed to speak loudly enough so that I could hear
5. Assumed I knew more than I did
6. Failed to return assignments, tests, or other materials until weeks after material was submitted
7. Talked constantly about extreme difficulty of material and high dropout/failure rate in the course
8. Showed disinterest in me, my views, and problems
9. Came to class unprepared
10. Concentrated on "covering" rather than "uncovering" content

One cannot help but notice that the #1 motivator on the list of motivators is "knew my name." Can motivating the adult learner be as simple as beginning with validation of the learner's worth by learning his/her name?

If you find these ideas are "food for thought" and would like a second helping, please drop by the TLC for the complete list of motivators or additional materials regarding instructional delivery and classroom management.

SOD Awards (National Institute for Staff & Organizational Development)

Congratulations and "Hats Off" to several of our faculty and staff who have been recognized for "Excellence in

Leadership Development Program



by Margaret
Miyagishima,
H.R.

By the end of April, over 180 SAIT staff (including faculty, management, support) will have taken part in one or more units of a new leadership training program. The Leadership program, called Leadership 2000, is coordinated through Human Resources and presented by a group of facilitators which represents all groups within SAIT.

Skill units include one-on-one interpersonal skills and enhanced skills supporting team initiatives, quality improvement, and process improvement. All sessions are held in M143

(Staff Training Room) and are scheduled during the day throughout the week. In addition, department or work-group specific sessions can be arranged at a time convenient for the group. Each skill unit is about four hours long. Attendees have indicated that they see the sessions as useful in gaining practical skills that help in dealing with everyday challenges. An added benefit is the opportunity to share perspectives with people from across campus.

Staff are encouraged to discuss their development plans with their supervisors and then register through Lois Skillen in Human Resources at 8856 or via e-mail:

lois.skillen@sait. For further information, contact Margaret Miyagishima at 8664. ♦♦

SAIT Academic Faculty Association



3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Friday, May 29, 1998

4th Floor Staff Lounge – Thomas Riley Building
Burgers (for every palate), Beans, Salads,
and all the trimmings.

Refreshments!

Discrimination Committee Mandate continued from page 1

these individuals vary according to expertise, interest and experience. Those individuals acting as student or staff advisors explain the employer's position on discrimination by reviewing the policy, guidelines and procedures, and the various options available to the complainant. Advisors, at the complainant's request, assist the complainant with arranging an informal resolution with the respondent complainant's requesting or arranging for third-party mediation by an individual or team acceptable to both the complainant and respondent.

Where the seriousness of the incident warrants, the complainant may choose to seek formal resolution or to seek the assistance of another, more appropriate agency. A formal complaint is investigated by a team of committee members who interview the complainant, the respondent, and such other individuals as they deem fit. Pertinent documentation is also reviewed. The investigatory committee reports its findings to the chairperson, who, in turn, reports to the SAIT President. The President shall take such action as he or she deems fit. In combination with these duties, two common denominators are present in each committee member. One is an objective approach to investigation that allows a fair hearing for the complainant and respon-

dent. The second is a commitment to educate and support employees and students on the SAIT campus.

Currently the following individuals form the SAIT discrimination committee: Sheila Newel, Human Resources (Chairperson); Mark Kolodziej, Student Career & Development Services (Advisor); Heather Ravlich, Human Resources (Advisor); Irene Langille, Health Sciences; Mike Rott, SAITSA; Brian Weldon, Business; Maria Straniaglia, Student Housing; Caren DeMille, Auto Diesel;

Malcolm Sharp, Architectural & Civil Engineering; Katie Butler, Student Career & Development Services (Advisor); John Schmale, Auto Diesel; and Tom Skinner, Educational Resources.

As most of you are aware, businesses cannot afford to allow discriminatory behaviour to occur. Organizations must develop current and accurate discrimination guidelines and procedures concurrent with provincial and federal legislation. In addition, it is critical that all employees understand the guidelines and procedures and the role of the discrimination committee.

All individuals who are

"All individuals who are employed by or who attend SAIT, have the right to study and work in an environment that is free from discrimination of any kind."

employed by or who attend SAIT "have the right to study and work in an environment that is free from discrimination of any kind. They also have the responsibility not to discriminate against any member of the SAIT community, including students, instructors or staff" (Policy excerpt).

The current discrimination guidelines and procedures will be available upon request from the Human Resources Department; at present, the older guidelines are available in Human Resources. A discrimination brochure has

been designed to provide an overview of the SAIT policy, definitions, and examples specific to discriminatory issues. A copy of this brochure is also available through the Human Resources Department. "Education in general and awareness heightening in particular are key requirements to reducing the incidence of discriminatory activities. It shall be the responsibility of specific designated administrative areas to carry out a program of continuous awareness and education with general advice from the President's Standing Committee on Discrimination." (Policy excerpt).

The SAIT discrimination committee meets once a month and discusses, among many other issues, policy revision, educational updates, and offerings. Should you have any issues, questions, or concerns relevant to the discriminatory processes or if you have an interest in becoming a member of the committee, please contact the chairperson, Director of SAIT Human Resources, Sheila Newel who will be more than willing to assist you. SAIT does not condone any form of discrimination or exploitation of power. ♦♦

A professor can never better distinguish himself in his work than by encouraging a clever pupil, for the true discoverers are among them, as comets amongst the stars.

-Linnaeus

TLC Continued from Page 3

Teaching." We are pleased to announce that Dana Haggard, Applied Arts & Sciences; Borden McLeod, Applied Arts & Sciences; Laurie Walline, Health Sciences; Martin Lazore, Applied Arts & Sciences; Cliff Bryanton, Access Technologies; and Glen Brost, Electrical/Electronics are recipients of the 1998 NISOD Award for Excellence in Teaching.

NISOD is an outreach organization of the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas at Austin which supports the pursuit of excellence in teaching

and leadership at its more than 600 member colleges throughout the United States, Canada, and Australia.

Only faculty, staff, and administrators at NISOD-member institutions are eligible. The selection criteria are left to the discretion of each institution. (All individuals whose names are submitted will be recognized as 1998 NISOD Excellence Award recipients.)

Congratulations to all of our SAIT recipients on such a well-deserved honor! ♦♦

Russia
continued from page 1



The Class—Moscow 4

came into "Moscow 4", as the fourth class was called, ranged from having just learned the alphabet to possessing university degrees in teaching English. I knew I was in for a challenge.

The Students

The students were probably the best part of the whole experience. They ranged in age from 17 to 34 and came not just from Moscow but from all over Russia. Those who didn't come from Moscow stayed in, what would be

to us, cramped apartments in another wing of the college. (If you don't have an apartment, you can't live

in Moscow. This leads, I learned, to many marriages of inconvenience.) The students were intelligent, keen, polite, hardworking, responsive, and mature (even the 17 year old)—the class of your dreams! I liked them all. They were so eager to learn Canadian English that they even came to tutoring sessions at 8 in the morning despite their very heavy schedules.

When the students wrote their first Western style resumes in my class, I discovered that we were teaching engineers, bankers, managers, economics instructors, etc. All had been in post secondary programs and some had two or more

degrees. Most had been sent to take the program by their companies or institutes, a couple by their fathers, and one or two had paid their own way. One interesting aspect of the Russian learning style is their need to "collaborate." Russian students apparently do very little writing during their school years, and final exams are done individually and orally. We had to keep warning them that their "collaborating" would be

viewed as cheating in North American schools.

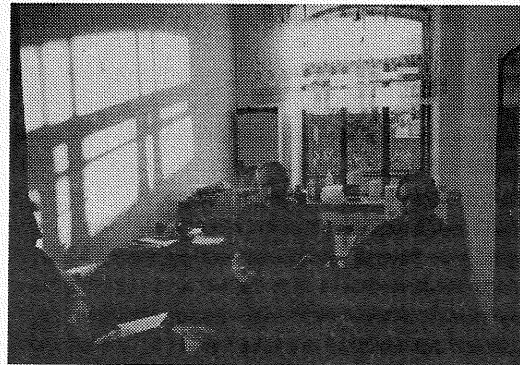
Some of the students had never used a computer,

and we were lucky that we could offer instruction on up-to-date equipment with up-to-date software. SAIT also shipped over boxes of textbooks and our printed modules for them.

But it wasn't all work, work, study, study. It is the Russian custom to throw a big party on your birthday, so we expected that there might be a couple of students missing the day after someone's birthday. The Canadian instructors also threw a party for the students the night before an unexpected holiday. (Do you know why the October Revolution is celebrated November 7?) We provided all sorts of finger foods and

drinks and opened up the doors of the classroom into the large hallways. Someone brought a tape recorder and played loud, excruciating Russian rock music. Everyone dressed up for the event and danced, ate, and drank until absolutely every bite and ounce had been consumed. Then, poof, they all disappeared. One student commented that she was surprised (and pleased) that we socialized with them. The Russian student/teacher relationships are apparently very formal.

Food and Accommodation



Glen Innis and Foster Stewart in the apartment kitchen

Our accommodation and most of our food was provided by the program. The three Canadian instructors shared a newly renovated apartment located on the fourth floor of the college where we taught. My two roommates, Bill Luxton and Foster Stewart from the Business Department, had both taught a semester in Moscow the year before. It was helpful having two people who "knew the ropes" and who had returned to Moscow because they liked

the students, the program, and the city, (not to mention the hockey). The two classrooms and the resource room were just outside our front door and a few steps down the hall. Can you imagine not having to fight snow, traffic, parking, etc., and being able to just roll out of bed, dress, and walk thirty steps to your classroom!

The college was a 125-year-old building located in the heart of Moscow about 15 minutes from the Kremlin. My bedroom looked out over the Moskva River

right across from a permanently anchored casino boat and the new, tremendously ugly statue of Peter the Great rising from the middle of the river. Although the apartment had been newly

renovated, they unfortunately hadn't renovated the decrepit, uninsulated windows. I could hear traffic roaring four floors below night and day, and a cold wind off the river seemed to blow right through the windows. I also thought I might freeze in my bed the first couple of weeks. I didn't know that the whole city of Moscow is centrally heated from 14 power plants located throughout the city. They, whoever "they" were, turned

Continued on Page 6



Moscow College across the Moskva River

Know Your Collective Agreement



by Ed Logue, Electrical/Electronics

Section 1 of the Collective Agreement defines employees in terms of the following four categories:

1. full-time permanent
2. part-time permanent
3. temporary salaried
4. casual employment

All academic staff members are employed in one of these four categories.

Of the four categories, I think the most misunderstood is number 4 casual employment. Casual employment is defined in the Collective Agreement as non-permanent employment on an hourly basis. When continuous casual employment of an academic staff member exceeds six (6) months in an academic year, in a full-time capacity, the academic staff member shall be appointed to a temporary salaried position.

Casual employees pay SAFA dues and are, therefore, covered by most, but not all, of the Collective Agreement. Section 15 [15.02(a)] lists those Sections of the Collective

Agreement that do not apply to casual employees.

As a requirement of employment, casual employees must sign a contract. These contracts are negotiated at the department level and do not seem to be consistent across SAIT. Since casual employees are covered by the Collective Agreement, contracts must conform to the Agreement and, therefore, should be the same for all departments.

All casual employment contracts for instruction in grant-funded programs (apprenticeship, diploma, certificate, and other programs taught on a continuous basis) must include

1. 10.8% for annual vacation entitlement and statutory holidays. [15.02(b)]
2. An hourly rate of pay based on the Instructors' Salary Schedule. [Section 46]
3. A Unit Standard Instructional Workload. [Section 36]

Casual employment contracts for instruction in Business and Industry would be the same except they would not include a Unit Standard Instructional Workload.

Section 8 [8.01] recognizes SAFA as the exclusive bargaining agent for all academic staff members covered by the Collective Agreement. All casual employees, therefore, have the right to have their contracts reviewed by SAFA before they are signed to see if they conform with the provisions of the Collective Agreement. If a signed contract does not conform to the Collective Agreement, casual employees have the right under Section 20 of the Collective Agreement to have any discrepancies resolved, or if necessary, to file a grievance. ♦♦

PERSPECTIVE



by Barry Pratt,
President,
SAIT
Academic
Faculty
Association
The SAIT
Academic

Faculty Association provides many services to instructors and part of our role is to provide assistance, advice and counselling. We are here to help you and hope that you will seek our advice when you have concerns or problems so that you can get the help that will be "best for you" regardless of the circumstances. The exchange of information is confidential, and the Faculty

Association will assist members or act on their behalf to resolve any conflicts that may arise. We recently had a serious situation that could have been solved if the instructor had come and discussed the problem with us in the beginning.

As President, I am available in the SAFA office every afternoon to meet with instructors. The SAFA Administrator, Heather Sagan, is available by phone (8321/8378) or in person any time during the day to answer questions or schedule an appointment with me if necessary. Please call if you have any concerns or questions with which we can assist you. ♦♦

Russia

continued from page 5

the heat on about the first of October. It took three days to finally reach us in its full power.

There was also something mysterious about the hot water delivery that I never did figure out. It was turned off, sometimes for hours, sometimes for a day or two, in no discernable pattern that I could discover. I began to expect it to be off whenever I needed to wash some clothes and often when I was looking forward to a shower.

The cook at the college was wonderful. (When you've been getting dinner on the table for 25 years, you think anyone else's cooking is wonderful.) We had tea and buns and casual conversation with the students every day at 11 and were served a large, three-course meal every weekday at 1 p.m. Food was then sent up to the apartment for an evening meal. I really enjoyed the Russian cheeses, soups, sausage, and bread. We also went out to restaurants from time to time and occasionally were invited to CIDA receptions where we made a meal from the many tasty hors d'oeuvres. Don't ask me about the alcohol. I understand that the Russian champagne is cheap and delicious and that the various colours of Baltika beer are outstanding. (Part II continued in the May/June issue). Call Shelagh if you know why the October Revolution is celebrated in November. ♦♦

FEEDBACK

We would like your feedback on the articles in the SAFAGRAM and on the Faculty Association (N201):

SAFAGRAM Format: _____

Suggestions for Future Articles: _____

Does the Faculty Association meet the needs of members? Suggestions for improved customer service: _____

Using Multimedia in SAIT Modules



by Nick Podolchak

With a little magic from Randy Graf, Rick Steele and Jeff Parker, the Educational Resources Department has developed two templates. One template will generate a print module from a Microsoft Word document. The other template will generate a web module that is ready for the Internet from that same Word document.

This does not mean that once the Word document has been "webified" that you will have endlessly long, web pages that will scroll text forever. The webified document not only will have built-in navigation, but also, and most importantly, it can include multimedia and all its interactivity.

SAIT instructors manage the content that goes into a print module and these same SAIT instructors will manage the content that goes into a web module. And, like the print modules need visuals to communicate more effectively, the web modules need multimedia.

No, this does not imply that SAIT instructors will change their job description to include multimedia authoring. SAIT

instructors still will be required to assemble and to teach the content. But now, the SAIT instructor will be assembling multimedia elements. In order to assemble multimedia, SAIT instructors should know what multimedia authoring is and what it can do so that they can direct programmers as to what has to be done.

I have assembled a module that briefly explains how "Authorware Professional" creates multimedia. I have included in that same module some sample templates that can be applied to deliver the type of content that instructors teach. Also, I am using a demo version of Authorware that you can start from within the lesson itself so that you can explore Authorware. You can even do a little authoring yourself. However, keep in mind that the learning outcome for this module is to examine Authorware and not to learn Authorware programming.

You will find the module "Authoring with Authorware" on the SAIT intranet under "Playstation." The SAIT intranet URL is: <http://in.sait.ab.ca>. ♦

Web Courses Failing to Realize Potential

by Ann, Sullivan, reprinted from the Vancouver Courier

Roger Boshier believes the internet can deliver education efficiently. But judging by most of the on-line courses he's evaluated, the medium is not fulfilling its potential.

Boshier, a professor in UBC's department of educational studies, recently led a study that evaluated 127 on-line courses to see how they rate. The results were disheartening.

"Some Web courses are an unmitigated bore and represent little more than lecture notes posted on the Web," Boshier said. "At the other extreme are those laced with links, animation and more than enough glitter and glam to make Liberace wince."

Increasingly, schools are looking to the Internet as a way to reach potential students no matter where they live. Electronic courses can be an efficient and relatively inexpensive way to deliver education. Ideally, they also help avoid the high cost of a post-secondary education.

Based on the potential benefits, schools—including UBC and post-secondary—schools across the Lower Mainland—are rushing to get their courses on-line.

"There's no money to replace burnt-out light bulbs (at UBC)," Boshier said, "but there's heaps of money for computers for faculty who are interested in putting their courses on the Web."

He added that pressure to offer UBC courses electronically is coming from nearby residents who are concerned about growing commuter traffic to the university.

But most on-line courses have a long way to go before they offer the equivalent of a face-to-face education, according to Boshier. He likens the current scramble to a

"Bre-X type scenario" where people jump into the fray without considering the long-term effects—in this case, the effects of low-quality distance education on learners.

"We need to study (on-line education)," Boshier said. "We can't go rushing into this gold rush thing based on rumours and expectation of rewards without knowing what we're doing."

The majority of the courses Boshier and his research group surveyed were based at colleges and universities in the U.S., with others from Canada, Australia and United Kingdom. (UBC—courses were not included in the study because they are not free.)

Researchers were disappointed to find few of the courses used the Web's interactive potential.

There are far too many people who use the Internet as a blackboard,' Boshier said, noting many of the sites contained little more than pages of hard-to-read lecture notes and text. Some were difficult to navigate or to find a second time, lacked links to other sites, and did not allow students to offer feedback.

The best courses used the Internet's resources—graphics, animation, chatrooms, e-mail, space to post student work, and links to other sites.

Despite reservations about quality, Boshier is optimistic about on-line education.

"Our position is it's exciting and we endorse it," he said, but he added, "People shouldn't engage in technoutopian thinking. Just because it's technology doesn't mean it's better." ♦

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SAFA Elections 1998/99

Election Day is Thursday, May 28

Support your Faculty Association!

Positions on the SAFA Executive are a one year term.

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Secretary Treasurer

Directors — two from each division

Directors Division A: Mechanical Trades & Tech., Auto-Diesel, Energy & Natural Resources, Recreation & Athletics

Directors Division B: Applied Arts & Sciences, Business, Health Sciences, Information Technologies

Directors Division C: ACET, Electrical/Electronics, Hospitality Careers, Counselling, TLC

Board of Governors

one representative for a 2 year term

Academic Council

three representatives for a 2 year term



Irene Lewis takes over SAIT presidency from Ken Myhre July 1st 1998