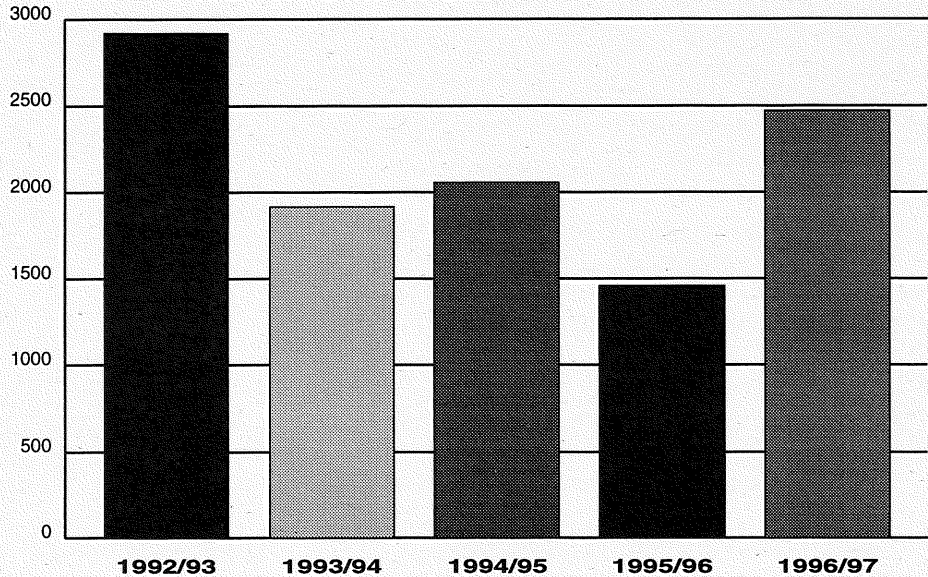


This fall's enrollment at SAIT has been spectacular—we have reached capacity enrollment in traditional classes. In addition to that good news, enrollment is up in the non-traditional courses. One unsung contributor to SAIT's success is the Distributed Learning Centre which provides alternatives to classroom learning. These alternatives are changing the meaning of "reach out and touch someone." SAIT is reaching out and touching thousands, offering opportunities to learn—wherever people are.

The Distributed Learning Centre has been operating for 25 years. Formerly, this department was called the Distance Education Department. Yvonne Alway, Coordinator, said the name change resulted from the need to include all forms of distance education, not just the traditional correspondence courses. Courses offered include teleconferencing, the traditional correspondence courses, CML (Computer Managed Learning), TLM (The Learning Manager, an updated form of Computer Managed Learning), and in the very near future, internet courses.

While teleconferencing is not as popular as it once was, the other formats are steadily growing. In 1992/93, 2,919 students were enrolled in Distance Ed courses. During 1993 to 1996, fewer students were enrolled in courses, mainly due to the changes in the health industry. The 1996/97 year has shown a dramatic increase—2,498 students, and the numbers are continuing to climb. The graph below shows the actual numbers.

DISTRIBUTED LEARNING
Total New Distance Education Students Served



The Distributed Learning Centre provides a total of 156 courses (and 23 new courses are being added) from eight departments: Applied Arts & Sciences, Architectural and Civil Engineering, Automotive, Business, Electrical, Health Mechanical Trades & Technologies, Oil & Gas Production. (Energy and Natural Resources also have distance learning, which is coordinated through their department). Some of the students live in Calgary, but there are others from Newfoundland to British Columbia, from the Northwest Territories to Texas, but it doesn't end there. There are students in Indonesia, China, the West Indies, and Saudi Arabia.

What does all this mean for SAIT staff? It means two things:

1. We can be very proud of the learning opportunities we provide
2. There are opportunities for people who wish to be part of SAIT's initiatives for Distance Learning in the 21st century. ⇨

SAIT ACADEMIC FACULTY ASSOCIATION



Christmas Leave Day 

Christmas Leave Day shall be observed on Wednesday, December 24.

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial 1
 FAQ's 2
 Blow Your Horn 3
 Perspective 3

FAQs

by Heather Sagan



In the June issues of the ACIFA newsletter, a survey was included on Extended Health Care Benefits for retirees.

Q: Upon retirement do faculty members receive any health care benefits?

A: When retiring from SAIT, there is currently no health care plan in place for retirees.

Q: What were the results of the ACIFA Extended Health Care Benefits survey?

A: Approximately 100 SAIT faculty members responded to the ACIFA survey to indicate whether or not there would be interest in extended health care benefits. The results of the survey are as follows:

Extended Medical Insurance

This benefit allows you to top-up your post-retirement, provincial government health coverage and maintain the level of benefits you have now.

100/100 would take advantage of this benefit if offered at a competitive rate.

Dental Benefits

This plan is intended as a supplement to the Alberta government's dental plan for seniors. This will allow you to maintain your level of coverage as you move onto the senior's plan and for as long as you choose after your government coverage begins.

98 would take advantage of this benefit if offered at a competitive rate.

Life Insurance

Having adequate life insurance after retirement is a

perceived need for many seniors. Low-cost life insurance can be provided (typically, medically underwritten) and issued up to age 70.

75 would take advantage of this benefit if offered at a competitive rate

15 would not take advantage of this benefit

Out-of-Country Travel Coverage

This benefit would provide out-of-country travel benefits and would supplement any credit-card programs or existing travel programs that you currently have.

85 would take advantage of this benefit if offered at a competitive rate

7 would not take advantage of this benefit

Medical Cost-recovery Programs

These plans allow you to pre-pay long-term health expenses. These would offset the costs of nursing homes and home-care in the future.

65 would take advantage of this benefit if offered at a competitive rate

6 would not take advantage of this benefit

THANK YOU TO ALL SAIT FACULTY MEMBERS WHO TOOK THE TIME TO RESPOND TO THE SURVEY.

UPDATE ON SEPTEMBER 8 FROM ACIFA:

Of the 205 responses received, 157 were from instructors planning on retiring within the next five years. Interest in purchasing extended health and dental insurance was fairly high (96 and 95% respectively). Travel insurance also showed substantial levels of interest (70%). Life Insurance and pre-paid medical expenses garnered a 65% level of interest.

ACIFA is currently waiting to hear the results of an October 23 meeting of the Alberta Retired Teachers' Federation. The successful amendment of their constitution would allow ACIFA to refer our members to them upon retirement for access to their benefits plan thereby minimizing the workload on the ACIFA office. ♦♦

SAFAGRAM

Editorial Board

Bonnie Benoit
Marilyn Hall
B.J. Hamilton
Kay Hunter
Heather Sagan

Layout

Luda Paul

Printed by

Quick Print Graphic Services

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 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.

Benefit Plan for Casual Instructors

In the last academic year a group of instructors employed on a casual (contract) basis worked with the faculty association to put together a benefits survey. Approximately 150 surveys were sent out to casual instructors and about 45 were returned indicating interest in

"150 surveys were sent out to casual instructors"

employee benefits. On investigation, we learned that any benefits package independent of the employer is very costly.

In the SAIT Tactical Plan, one of the objectives for the Human Resources

Department in 1997/98 is: 4.6.4 "Develop benefits package for wage and con-

tract employees."

Human Resources has done considerable research about the provision of a benefits plan for contract and wages employees.

Meetings have been held with several potential providers of benefit plans for these employee categories, and an analysis of

the issues and options is currently underway. Human Resources will continue to work with the Joint Advisory Committee and the SAFA Benefits Committee in this regard. James Saik, Benefits Coordinator in Human Resources, will continue to provide further updates at this project progresses. ♦♦

Blow Your Horn



"Blow Your Horn" is an opportunity for instructors to educate the rest of us about their program by providing a personal view of what they and their students are up to.

MT&T Provides Instruction to the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering at the U of C



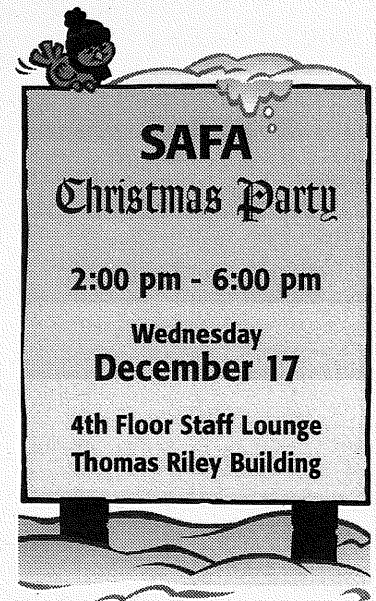
by Peter Bagg,
Mechanical
Trades &
Technologies

Mechanical Trades & Technologies provides instruction to the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Calgary.

For several years the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Calgary has been developing a B.Sc. program in Manufacturing Engineering. This program is now in place and was recently accredited by the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board. As part of this initiative, a new course entitled Manufacturing Practicum was developed in 1995 by U of C's Dr. Rod Fauvel, SAIT's Peter Bagg and David Macaulay, with the assistance of the Spring/Summer Innovation Fund of the Faculty of Continuing Education at the U of C. The

course (now listed in the program as ENMF 521) has been offered for three years and is aimed at senior Manufacturing Engineering students. It may also be taken as a technical elective by students in the Mechanical Engineering program.

The 60-hour course is delivered on the SAIT campus using joint instruction from the Mechanical Trades & Technologies Department as well as from the U of C. It provides considerable hands-on exposure to manufacturing processes such as machining and casting as well as extensive written work emphasizing aspects of product design, process planning, and communication issues. The course has received favourable feedback from the students as well as from accreditation personnel and is expected to remain an important part of the program. ♦♦



Spell Check Bloopers

(Comic relief while marking papers.)

From a set of instruction:

Put the grinned coffee in the filter.

From a summary:

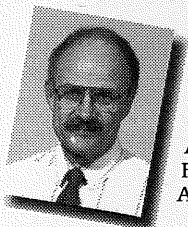
When management is left with money after paying all expenses, they tend to lavish in a good lifestyle.

From a resume:

- hand costumers

SAFA REPORTS

PERSPECTIVE



by Barry Pratt,
President, SAIT
Academic
Faculty
Association

Welcome back for another year. I look forward to serving the faculty members this year.

I have met individually with Ken Myhre, Gary Kerr and Sheila Newel during the last week of August. In those meetings I emphasized the need to cooperate as much as possible to make SAIT a

better work place for all of us. This will have the effect of making it a better place for students to learn. At the same time we agreed that there will be times when we may disagree. An example of this is occurring right now. We have referred some of the disputed details of the arbitration award back to the Arbitration Board for further clarification (e.g. do the % raises apply to the Con Ed rate and the Academic Coordinator's modifier).

I am optimistic that we can have a better SAIT. A better SAIT requires a better SAFA and the way to have a better SAFA is to have a lot of involvement in our

Association by you, the members. (A group is only as strong as the involvement of its members.) With this in mind, I would like to encourage all of you to become involved. I also welcome any suggestions you may have on what we can do to make a better SAIT.

We have a number of committees that need your involvement. Last year, for example, we had just two people on the Grievance Committee, John Schmale and myself. Together we spent well over 600 hours working with you, our members, helping you solve a variety of problems. We only had one grievance

which was withdrawn and the issue was resolved in favour of the instructor. (The spirit of cooperation does work!) However, we need more than two people to help with the committee. We also have other committees which need your help and input. PLEASE GIVE CONSIDERATION TO REQUESTS FOR VOLUNTEERS.

The SAFA office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with a lunch break around noon. I am available in the afternoons. Our office Administrator, Heather Sagan, is very knowledgeable, and both of us are only too happy to serve you. ♦♦

