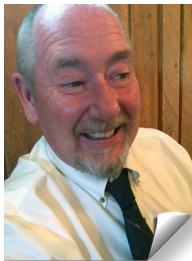




President’s Message



By Blair Howes

Hello Faculty,
We have now had some time to adjust to the “new normal” caused by the pandemic, but I fear this new lifestyle will have an effect on all of us: missing time with loved ones, looking after pre-schoolers or school age children, and of course, issues around elder

care. You are not alone in this as we will all feel this stress in some way, shape, or form. We must find a way to maintain some form of work-life balance.

Students are feeling the pressure, Faculty are feeling it and yes, I can imagine the academic chairs and managers are feeling much the same stressors.

For me, I can’t seem to find the off button! I find myself sitting in front of the computer from 6:00 a.m. to around 7:00 p.m. daily (luckily, it’s a short walk to the office and it takes about 45 seconds for me to get there). I imagine most of you find yourselves in the same boat.

I cannot stress enough that maintaining your conversation and social contact with your colleagues is very important these days. Although some “shop talk” is required, I would encourage other conversations of mutual interest other than work.

In my SAFACALGARY article in March I stated, “I remain to you, the Faculty members, as the guardian and enforcer of our Collective Agreement but caution that we are in a unique storm and as the wind blows the tree must bend a bit or it will break.”

continued on page 3

In This Issue:

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| President’s Message | Page 1 |
| LRO Report | Page 2 |
| Library Report | Page 6 |
| Cartoon | Page 7 |

Editorial Board

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SAFACALGARY 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 SAFACALGARY do not necessarily represent the views of the Editorial Board or SAFA.

<http://www.safacalgary.com/>

Labour Relations Officer Report



By Al Brown (LRO)

I'm sure you're all aware that SAIT and SAFA are commencing collective bargaining again after being interrupted by COVID-19 (as has so many other things!). In light of this delay and changes to the SAFA Constitution and legislation, I'd like to take this opportunity to give you an overview of our upcoming bargaining process:

Background

On April 6, 2017, the Alberta Provincial Government introduced legislation in the form of BILL 7 – AN ACT TO ENHANCE POST-SECONDARY ACADEMIC BARGAINING that fundamentally changed our bargaining process. Previously, our Collective Agreement had provisions to use binding arbitration to settle any bargaining impasse.

However, this legislation eliminated binding arbitration as a method of dispute resolution. Instead, Academic Staff Associations (i.e., SAFA) have the right to withdraw their services (strike) and their employers (i.e., SAIT) have the right to “lock out” their staff. Having that as the default dispute resolution doesn't mean that it is used often; in fact, the opposite is true. Most collective bargaining cycles end in a ratified collective agreement without having to go on strike. At any rate, any strike or “lock out” would be subject to the process and restrictions clearly set out in the Alberta Labour Relations Code.

Bargaining Process

Step 1: Consultation (CURRENT STAGE)

In preparation for bargaining, SAFA's Executive convened a Negotiating Committee. This Committee includes the Chief Negotiator and Faculty members who represent a cross-section of the Association's membership by gender, school, and appointment type. The Negotiating Committee for this round of bargaining consists of Al Brown (SAFA LRO and Chief Negotiator), Ken Upton (Permanent Faculty Member from the School of Hospitality and Tourism), Earl Simpson (Permanent Faculty Member from the School of Manufacturing and Automation), and Adrienne Jones (Adjunct Faculty Member). Kathie Dann (SAFA Office Manager) will attend the bargaining meetings as SAFA's recorder. Jessica Norman (Librarian Faculty Member) is assisting the Negotiating Committee with communications and research.

In addition to consultation with the SAFA Table of Officers, the professional staff of our affiliates (ACIFA and CAUT), and our legal counsel, the Negotiating Committee is hosting “town hall” meetings with Faculty in each school. The purpose of these sessions is to get input from Faculty regarding what issues are top-most on your mind for this coming round of collective bargaining so we can develop the bargaining Mandate. If you would like to provide additional comments, please contact your Division Representative.

Step 2: Preparing a Proposal

The Negotiating Committee will consult with all members at a General or Special Meeting on our initial bargaining Mandate before we meet with SAIT. The Negotiating Committee will then review the information and perspectives received from all sources and draft a bargaining Mandate. This draft Mandate is presented for discussion, modification, and approval by the SAFA Executive Board.

Once approved, the Mandate guides the Negotiating Committee through the negotiation process. A good Mandate reflects the needs of members, is accountable, and fairly balances individual and collective interests. It also serves as a roadmap for the Bargaining Team as it develops the Association's initial proposal for presentation to the Employer.

The exchange of initial proposals between the Employer and SAFA can be handled in different ways but SAIT's chief negotiator has indicated she intends to exchange a complete package of all proposals at the outset of negotiations including monetary.

Step 3: Bargaining

During bargaining, the Chief Negotiator becomes the primary conduit through which the Association communicates with the Employer. At the bargaining table, the Association can resolve outstanding grievances and other disputes, can address policy concerns, and can require the Employer to provide financial, personnel, and other information applicable to negotiations.

continued on page 3

Bargaining updates will be provided to membership after each bargaining meeting. The update will paint, in broad strokes, the flavour of the meeting and the topics discussed. However, it won't go into specific details or a "blow-by-blow" analysis.

Step 4: Reaching a Deal

Through the process of proposal, counterproposal, and negotiation, SAFA and SAIT will work toward a final agreement. However, if SAFA is unable to make progress on important issues, the normal bargaining process provides ways for us to escalate matters and put constructive pressure on the Employer.

At the end of the negotiation process, members get to vote through a secret ballot to accept or reject the new agreement. Similarly, SAIT Board of Governors must also ratify the new Collective Agreement. Both parties must ratify an agreement before it can be implemented.

Stage 1 Update

As noted above, the Negotiating Committee is currently in Stage 1 of bargaining (Consultation) and welcomes your comments regarding issues and priorities for negotiation. The Committee would also like to thank the over 350 members who participated in the recent surveys. This information is invaluable at the negotiation table.

Not surprisingly, the topic of workload has generated a lot of feedback in our recent consultations. The ever-growing list of "assignable duties" and the expanded numbers of students in each class are contributing to a general feeling of fatigue. The move to a virtual teaching environment has only added to this, with many instructors commenting they are consistently taking work home in the evening and on weekends. It is important to note that we have a loading (workload) appeal process in the current Collective Agreement that you can use if you consider your workload unfair, unreasonable, or arbitrary. Please contact me for more details.

Another major topic has been the use of adjunct instructors. During the previous round of bargaining, SAFA was successful in making sure that adjunct instructors (formally known as fee for service instructors) have the same rights to representation and collective bargaining that all SAFA members enjoy. In this bargaining round, SAFA is committed to improving the entitlements for adjunct instructors. High on our list is more transparency for adjunct contracts and a "bridging" clause that gives a path to permanent, full time employment for adjunct and casual contract employees.

Last, but hardly least, is money. By now, we've all heard about Government Mandates to the Board of Governors of Alberta Post-Secondary Institutes. In response to any talk of roll backs, I will remind SAIT that, while there have been "steps" added to the salary grid, SAFA members haven't seen a "cost of living" increase on the salary grid since 2009! We gain little when the economy is booming in comparison to employees in other industries. So, for these reasons, it is not inappropriate for your salary increase, even during these extraordinary times, to at least compensate for your decreasing purchasing power.

Remember—while we bargain, the current Collective Agreement stays in effect until a new one is ratified. As always, please contact me directly at al.brown@sait.ca if you have questions regarding the current Collective Agreement or any workplace issues.



Although it is still a month away, I wish you joy in the holiday season.

See you in 2021!!



President's Message – continued from page 1

I want to expand a bit on that statement. As you know, we have had to negotiate the Letters of Understanding (LOUs) on items like vacation usage, temporary lay off, and certainly hold SAIT's feet to the fire on our Collective Agreement (CA) language regarding mutual agreement. To that end there is a new form that is to be used to obtain individual mutual agreement for things outside the Collective Agreement.

See next page for a sample of the form.

Mutual Agreement Form [Reference Current SAFA Collective Agreement](#)

This Mutual Agreement covers the following period:

Start*

End*

This Mutual Agreement is intended for:

First Name*

Last Name*

Employee ID Number

Email Address (SAIT or non-SAIT)*

Approval to Work

☐

Exceeding 4 hours in a row

☐

Exceeding 6 hours per day

☐

Exceeding the greater of 20 hours or 3% of the applicable Class Contact Hours, in any given week averaged over a 15-week period

☐

Mornings before 8am

☐

Evenings after 6pm

☐

Weekends

Course referenced by Mutual Agreement:

Course Code*

Course Title*

Comments

Requested By

Requester Department

Requester Title*

Date of Request

The portion of the form above is to be filled out in detail as to what you are agreeing to, and the lower portion is for your actual agreement with a place for you to make any comments you wish to include.

Response*

☐ I agree to the terms of this agreement.

☐ I do not agree to the terms of this agreement.

Comments (Max 250 Characters)

Completed By*

Response Date

Submit

continued on page 5

Once this form is completed, then a copy will be forwarded to SAFA. I cannot stress enough to you that this is simply not just a conversation but in fact must be filled out with the details. Failure to do so by the Academic Chair would mean that you did not give informed consent. The form is then signed off by both you the member and your Academic Chair.

I am very proud of you the Faculty members for stepping up to the challenges that have been thrust upon us in the pandemic situation and to your dedication to the students we serve. Again, I stress you must find balance as this “new normal” will lead to premature burn out.

Please see Al Brown’s article on bargaining and that process as it is a bit different this cycle. Also watch for town hall meetings and e-mail communications from both of us on these very important issues.

Again, my message is short as my days are long, but I remain dedicated to Faculty and remind everyone that I continue to meet with the other Faculty Association presidents throughout ACIFA to ensure we have current and up-to-date information as to what is happening at the other institutions. As well, we are meeting with the Government of Alberta officials in our sector.

In closing I would like to wish everyone a safe (and hopefully no one ends up sick) work from home experience and to wish you and your families the very best for the upcoming holiday season.

On behalf of me and the SAFA executive team be well and stay safe.

Always, in service of membership.



The SAFA Executive would like to thank Moira MacLoughlin for all the hard work she has done for the Association. Moira has been on the SAFA Executive for many years—her kindness, compassion, and knowledge will be dearly missed.

Moira, you are simply irreplaceable. Congratulations on your well-deserved retirement!

Wishing you all the best from the SAFA Executive.



A Shoutout from Jean Paterson

School of Information and Communications Technology

I would like to say thank you to two colleagues who have been helping me so much—Andrew Stevenson and Dan Stephenson. Their knowledge, patience, and insight into my course needs have been phenomenal!

They are my heroes!



Security System in Home Office

By Marta Edgar, Learner and Academic Services

The transition from campus office to remote work from home happened suddenly in the spring of 2020. I am glad to report that I immediately implemented a new security system to protect the materials and equipment brought home. In case of an attempted break-in, first of all the intruder would have to pass through a wall of thorny shrubs interspersed with compost piles and nests of wild bees surrounding the house. If the resident skunk is on duty, it may also attack. This should discourage most attempts, but there are further precautions to stop a persistent robber. To reach the house, one has to know exactly where to step; otherwise, a paving stone gives way to a trapping pit. An attempt to go around it triggers a cold frame to flip over anyone who passes by. If the intruder manages to enter the house, he or she will trip over the stack of books set up by the entrance, which in turn will trigger a collapse of a tower of file boxes. This development will be noisy enough to alert me and may also immobilize the intruder. I will have time to release the guard cat and call the police. At this point, if the intruder is still able to move, he or she will likely make a hasty retreat, pursued by a hissing cat, a skunk, and a swarm of bees.

I realize that most of these systems will work only during the summer months. I am preparing viable alternatives for winter.

Accessing Information at the Reg Erhardt Library Just Got Easier!

By Kevin Tanner

The Reg Erhardt Library is happy to announce two new services to support learning, teaching, and research at SAIT during these unprecedented times. As of October 26, 2020 the Library is offering a **curbside pickup service** as well as a **digitization service** for current SAIT students, faculty, and staff.

We are offering contactless [curbside pick-up](#) of library materials from Monday to Thursday between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. (times and dates subject to change). Just place a hold on the book you want and wait for the e-mail letting you know it's ready—with instructions on how to pick it up. Library materials can be returned from Monday to Thursday between 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. All items checked out before the COVID-19 closure must be returned by December 18, 2020.

Additionally, the Library is providing a small-scale [on-demand digitization service](#) for members of our SAIT community if they need access to the Library's physical collection. This service is limited to one chapter or 10 percent per book or one article per journal volume. Exceptions and limits may apply as this service is offered under fair dealing provisions as outlined in the Copyright Act of Canada.

For research and curriculum support (including locating additional or supplementary learning materials), connect with your [Library Liaison via email](#) or [book an appointment](#) with them via voice, video, or chat. Visit the [Faculty Services page](#) for more information about the services and resources that are available to Faculty through the Library.

Meet your Liaison Librarian

Each school has a dedicated liaison librarian, your direct contact for help with research, citations, using the Library, and more!



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Collection Development Librarian
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Construction + M&A

Jessica Norman
OER Librarian
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Scan this QR code or visit bit.ly/33ef7g1 to book an appointment

Not sure who to contact? Email library@sait.ca and we'll connect you with the right person



Learner and
Academic Services
Reg Erhardt
Library

Last updated November 2020

A Seasoned Instructor's Approach to COVID-19

By Michelle LeGrandeur, Health and Public Safety

Let's just get to it. After 14 years as an instructor at SAIT, the pandemic has brought changes and uncertainties that remind me of the experiences encountered when I first began teaching. The unforeseeable workload, everything taking more time than predicted to sort out or complete and who can forget the "Buddy" system for new instructors. You remember, the Faculty member who was more like an imaginary friend than a mentor since you rarely encountered them. Because of COVID-19, those days of yesterday have flooded my memories and senses in so many ways. I asked myself, "How am I going to do things differently now, compared to what I did those first couple of years? How do I do this without compromising the integrity of my courses or the student's learning experience?" Then it dawned on me. We are the Subject Matter Experts (SME) in our industries, and COVID-19 can't take that away from us, nor can it take away my passion, experience, and expertise. I am still in charge of my courses and how I deliver my content. There's nothing in my course outcomes and objectives that say "how" I am to teach my courses. They do not dictate the amount of time I spend on a concept or the teaching method I use. All these decisions are mine to make.

With that being said, this is how I have decided to approach this predicament. I told myself, it's like packing for a trip. You throw everything you want to bring on the bed. Then you say to yourself, what do I need to bring and divide the pile of items in half. Since I am the SME, I must trust my judgement when deciding what I need to bring. By using this approach, I find myself to be confident and calm because I have a plan, and appreciating, of course, like all best laid plans they don't always work out. As it's been said before, we learn more from our failures than our successes. To some degree, COVID-19 has allowed me the opportunity to evolve and reinvent myself. If I were to be honest, often it's the unexpected parts of any trip that make it memorable. So, let's start packing!

Regards from your "has little to no experience with digital tools" SAFA member.

