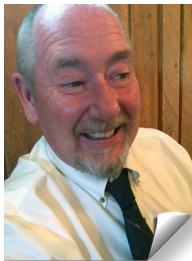




# President’s Message



By Blair Howes

Hello Faculty,

I am writing the spring message on the day the Alberta Government budget drops and hopefully it is not a bomb for post-secondary institutions, but I really do not have a crystal ball to tell me what the Government is thinking. I cannot stress enough how

along this entire bumpy road (that has been almost a year now) how you the Faculty have stepped up to ensure your students have success through these troubling times.

COVID-19 fatigue is a real thing and should not be taken lightly. I encourage anyone who is feeling the pressure to reach out to family and friends and to share a virtual coffee and conversation to help ease the tensions or to seek assistance through the SAIT EFAP (Employee Family Assistance Plan) program.

Here are some ACIFA updates for the spring:

- 1. The annual conference and ACIFA AGM scheduled to take place in Banff this year has been cancelled due to the current restrictions in place. However, it looks like the AGM will proceed in a virtual format. I will keep everyone updated as details become available.
- 2. The ACIFA Executive have approved a new advocacy project for diversity, equality, and inclusion. They have contracted a community-based researcher for this task. I am very proud to have sat on the guiding committee for this project and feel this is long overdue. The kickoff for this project will involve a small group of individual faculty members from all 14 post-secondary institutions across the province. I will reach

*continued on page 3*

# In This Issue:

President’s Message . . . . .Page 1

LRO Report . . . . .Page 2

Library Update . . . . .Page 5

Cartoon . . . . .Page 6

## Editorial Board

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Send submissions to SAFACALGARY, care of the SAFA office, N201 or e-mail submissions to [kathie.dann@saif.ca](mailto:kathie.dann@saif.ca). Please keep submissions under 300 words, double-spaced. Submissions may be edited for grammar, length, or content.

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

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*By Al Brown (LRO)*

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

I know you might be getting tired of hearing about this (and tired of living through it), but it is important to acknowledge that we are in the middle of a journey that is longer than anyone expected, one which will continue to bring challenges in the coming months. I'm very proud of our members and their phenomenal response in coming together to rise above these challenges. The Institution continues to state how much they value our contributions in these circumstances, and we look forward to the tangible expression of their gratitude when we meet at the bargaining table.

However, we must recognize that many of our current concerns are not new but rather have been magnified by recent events. Even before the pandemic, Faculty were facing a wide range of issues. The SAFA salary grid has had no new steps added to it over the past four years, and members have not seen a cost-of-living increase to the salary grid since 2010. Additionally, in the system there have been growing numbers of precarious adjunct instructors who do not receive the assurance of job security that comes with a permanent position and often must reapply for their jobs after every contract.

Now with COVID-19 forcing the move to online teaching for many instructors, supports are not in place. At SAIT, we are seeing increases to class size and a corresponding increase to workload. Additionally, there has been a slow rollout of supports for Faculty who have moved from the traditional in-person classroom to the virtual one. This lack of support for online delivery (lack of equipment/technology, limited IT and ETS support, no time allocated for redesign) and increasing class sizes is compounded by drastic layoffs of support staff who are essential to the work of Faculty.

In addition to this, there is external pressure in the form of provincial budget cuts. During last year's budget, the Provincial Government cut funding to advanced education by 6.3 per cent and more cuts may have been announced in the recent provincial budget. We have urged, and continue to urge, the Government to reconsider this approach. It doesn't have to be this way. These cuts are choices made by a provincial government that doesn't understand the post-secondary system it is charged to lead. Sustainable operational funding will mean job security for Faculty and strong educational programs for our students.

For all these reasons, SAFA supports the actions of the Public Interest Alberta (PIA) campaign (<https://www.stoppsecuts.ca/action>) to stop the cuts to Alberta's post-secondary education system. I encourage you to visit the PIA website—<https://www.stoppsecuts.ca/>. As well, a lawn sign campaign will launch later this month—look for a future e-mail with details about how to request a sign. As it states on the PIA website:

**We need to work together like never before to push for our world-class post-secondary education system to be funded like the essential public service it is. Not only for our economy today, but for the economy of the future.**

Closer to home, I'd like to remind all SAFA members that, particularly in this time of uncertainty, there are many benefits to keeping SAFA in the loop about what is going on in your School or program. Questions, issues, or concerns must not simmer in your mind or be ignored. If you receive information that seems counter to our Collective Agreement or LOUs, contact SAFA for clarification. In general, if you think "Why would SAFA agree to this?" consider that SAFA might not know about it! So, please contact me directly at [al.brown@sait.ca](mailto:al.brown@sait.ca) if you have a question or concern.

In Solidarity,

Al Brown,

SAFA Labour Relations Officer

out to potential candidates privately to ask for your participation. This will be a very wholesome and eye-opening experience and hopefully will yield a strong foundation for faculty associations to have a better understanding of working conditions within each of our organizations. I am very excited about this direction of the ACIFA membership.

There are a couple of things that are “moving and shaking” around the province. Public Interest Alberta (PIA) has a campaign movement to help shed light on the proposed cuts to the institutions’ budgets with the grand thought being “learning conditions are working conditions.” It has been very positive with some targeted action at the Advanced Education Minister’s constituency office and some positive work action. I have been heavily involved in this campaign along with my counterparts at MRU, U of C, U of A, and U of L. (It is not very often that colleges and universities come together on a common ground.) See Al Brown’s Article for more information.

Very soon SAFA will have lawn signs available for you to place in your yard to show your support.

The next scheduled meeting with the Advanced Education Minister is mid-March. We are looking forward to hearing what he will have to say about the budget. The Alberta 2030 report from the McKinsey Group has not been published yet and is currently up for review. I will press the Minister on the release date at the next meeting.

The Skills for Jobs Task Force Report that Dr. Ross co-chaired for the Government is out and it is an interesting read. I encourage all Faculty to go to the Government of Alberta website and have a look at the report.

#### MUTUAL AGREEMENT FORM (Followup information)

In the last SAFAGRAM, a copy of the Mutual Agreement Form, along with some explanatory inserts for you, was published. There has been a glitch in SAIT’s reporting. Through to the end of December there were only about 60 reports available for me to see. That changed in mid-January and about 570 reports were delivered to me for review. I am returning some 300 reports back to SAIT for a Re-Do.

As you the members know, we have had to negotiate LOU’s on items like vacation usage and temporary lay offs. We certainly hold SAIT’s “feet to the fire” on our CA language around mutual agreement. To that end there is a new form that is to be used to obtain individual mutual agreement for things outside the four corners of our Collective Agreement.

#### **A sample form is shown on page 4.**

I *cannot stress enough* to you, the Faculty, that you have ownership of that form and the task is for **YOU** to mutually agree to things outside the CA.

Having said that I can count on 2 hands how many of the 570 forms where **YOU** the Faculty indicated in the comment box as to what **YOU** were agreeing to.

I *cannot stress enough* to you that without filling out the data in the form it is useless to SAFA should the need arise for us to defend you, the Faculty members, in a grievance.

I also *cannot stress enough* for you to tell your **chair and or supervisor** to fill the form out correctly.

There were many mistakes made by the chairs on these forms. For example, course codes of XXX or simply ABC123 are never course code formats. This is simply not acceptable to SAFA or to you.

The purpose of the form is to not give SAIT any power outside of the Collective Agreement and give them blanket permission to breach the same agreement over the course of the academic year.

This erodes SAFA’s bargaining position at the table and ultimately will not be good for you our members.

**The comment box directly below the course code window is where your Chair needs to fill in exactly what he or she is asking you to do.**

#### **Example:**

*I have discussed with Fred that Basket Weaving 101 lab needs to run from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Wed, Thurs, and Saturday due to restrictions placed on SAIT due to COVID-19 for the next 2 intakes or (semester).*

**Your place for your comments is below the acceptance response box.**

#### **Example:**

*I have reviewed the above conditions that my Chair has expressed to me and agree but I cannot commit to those conditions during week 6 of the semester as I have family commitments I must fulfill.*

## 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 to record exactly what you are agreeing to. The lower portion is for your actual agreement and 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**

**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 on the Chair's part would mean that you did not give informed consent.**

**I did file a policy grievance in August and have sent it off to arbitration. I will not withdraw that grievance until SAFA is satisfied that SAIT is complying.**

Again, my message is short as my days are long, but I remain dedicated to you the 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, I am meeting with the Government of Alberta officials in our sector.

In closing, on behalf of me and the SAFA executive team, we wish that everyone stays safe and well while continuing to work from home.

Always, in service of membership.

Best Regards,

Blair Howes, SAFA President

## Library Update

*By Kevin Tanner*

### We Want to Hear from You!

The Library is reviewing the services offered under the liaison program and we want to hear from you! Have you had a great experience when a Librarian supported your research? Have you ever wondered “Why isn’t my Librarian doing this?” Do you have information or research needs that need to be met? We’re looking for any opinions—good, bad, or otherwise—that will help us review services we offer to support you and your students.

You can access the survey at <https://sait-ca.libinsight.com/liaisonsurvey>. The survey will remain open until March 31, 2021. A reminder will be sent out mid-March in the Library Liaison Newsletter.

### Library PIN in your Brightspace Courses

The Library discontinued use of the Library PIN to access resources when we upgraded to our new system in July 2020 and moved to single sign on. Brightspace Masters have been updated to reflect this change, but we have seen an influx of requests for PINs in recent weeks from students in a variety of courses and programs. If you have shells that you have copied over from prior to July 2020, you may still have this information in your course. If you have any questions, [connect with your liaison](#) or [e-mail library@sait.ca](mailto:library@sait.ca).

## Grammar Puns

If the pen is mightier than the sword, then why do actions speak louder than words?

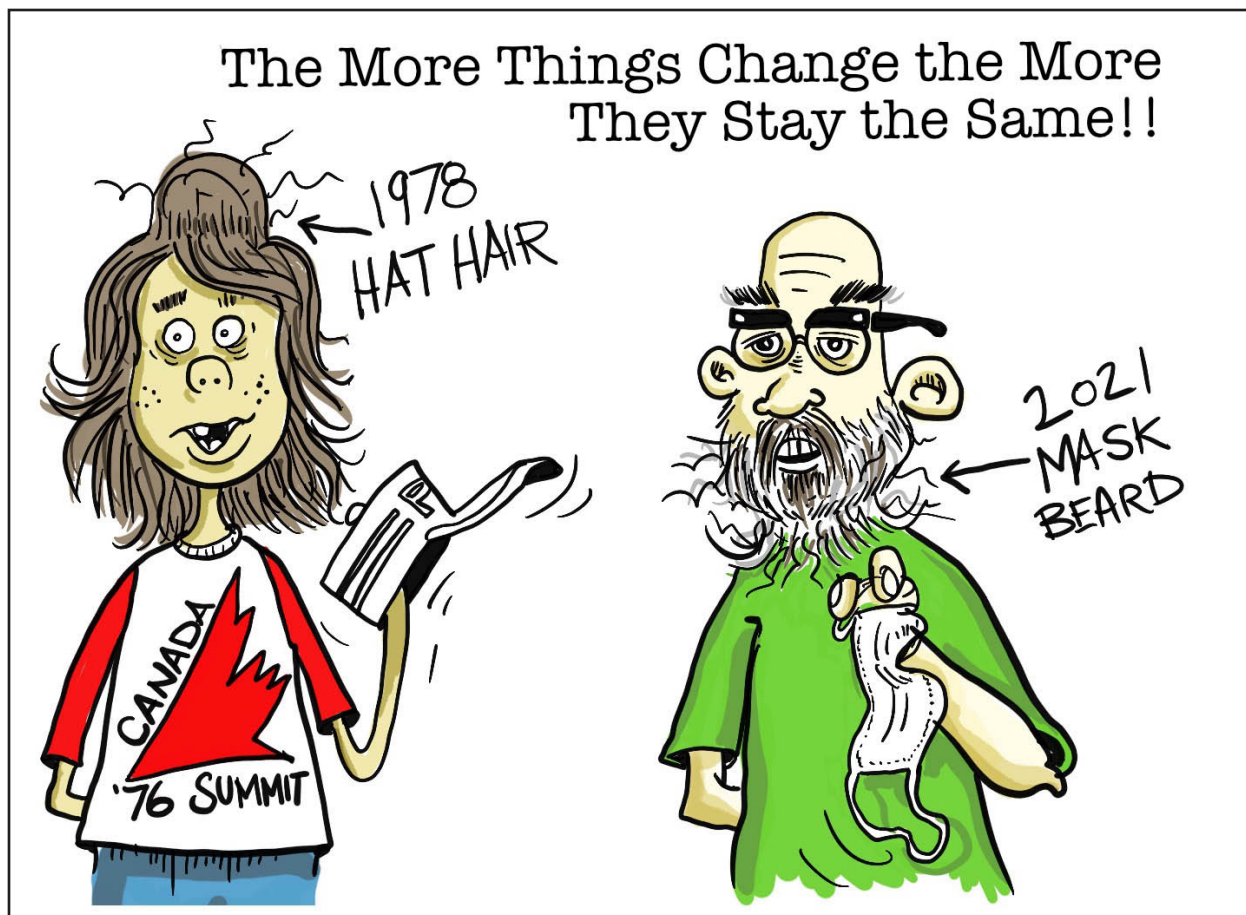
What is the name of a bus you can never enter? *A syllabus.*

What is a teacher's favorite nation? *Expla-nation.*

The past, the present, and the future walked into a bar. It was tense.



The More Things Change the More  
They Stay the Same!!



## Lockdown jokes to keep you smiling through the Winter/Spring:

---

Yeah, I have plans tonight. I'll probably hit the living room around 8 or 9!

So many coronavirus jokes out there, it's a pandemic!

I'll tell you a coronavirus joke now, but you'll have to wait two weeks to see if you got it!

Two grandmothers were bragging about their precious darlings. One of them says to the other, "Mine are so good at social distancing, they won't even call me!"

Did you hear the joke about coronavirus? Never mind, I don't want to spread it around!

My mum always told me I wouldn't accomplish anything by lying in bed all day. But look at me now! I'm saving the world!

Nothing like relaxing on the couch after a long day of being tense on the couch!

What did the sick parent make their kids for lunch? Mac and sneeze!

What's the difference between Covid-19 and Romeo and Juliet? One's the coronavirus and the other is a Verona crisis!

Day 121 at home and the dog is looking at me like, "See? This is why I chew the furniture!"

Why do they call it the novel coronavirus? It's a long story...

Since we're all in quarantine I guess we'll be making only inside jokes from now on!

I'm not talking to myself, I'm having a parent-teacher conference!

Nail salons, hair salons, waxing centres and tanning places are closed. It's about to get ugly out there!