



President's Message

By Blair Howes



Hello Faculty,

Here it is almost mid-June, and we have had a shaky start to the summer season weather-wise. As we started to enjoy longer days of sunshine (ever hopeful the forest fires would subside), Mother Nature decided not to send the April showers for May or June flowers. I am hopeful the rains will come soon for the farmers and gardeners (probably not until stampede week 😊).

This year, I started the garden late, but the rose bushes and flowers are blooming and now waiting for the tiger lilies to open.

Now on with the rest of the updates.

I meet biweekly with the Presidents of the 13 other colleges (ACIFA), and of those institutions, only Lakeland College is still in collective bargaining.

Keyano has a tentative deal ready to move to be ratified, and Lakeland College will likely follow.

I enjoyed reconnecting with folks at the ACIFA Conference in May at the Chateau Lake Louise and am very proud of the work done by all the presenters there.

We had a hypnotist for the Sunday evening entertainment, and I was "voluntold" to participate in the activity but alas this mystical magic did not work on me.

continued on page 2

In This Issue:

President's Message	Page 1
LRO Report	Page 3
2023 President's Medal Award Recipient	Page 4
Cartoon	Page 6

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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.

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The new year spring/summer programs are in full operation, and the campus on the surface seems busier this year. However, SAIT still doesn't seem to be adjusting to the "new normal" with some confusion around Hybrid work.

As a reminder to all Faculty, we do NOT have Core and/or office hours contemplated in our Collective Agreement (CA) and never have.

Also, as a reminder to our contingent Instructors and those under casual contract, we have language in our CA that is new and affects them as the academic year ends (see language below). If you feel it applies to you and you are not getting any indications from your academic chair, then please contact SAFA to investigate.

- i. "casual employment" is non-permanent employment on an hourly basis for use in approved programming before 6 pm. A casual academic staff member may work up to the standard hours of work in Section 31, Hours of Work however, when the hours of work exceeds eight hundred (800) contract hours in an academic year, the academic staff member MUST be assigned to a temporary salaried or permanent position for the subsequent academic year. For the purposes of determining the 800-hour threshold, any adjunct contract hours worked in any approved program that academic year will apply.*

As I take some time to reflect on this academic year, I recognize that many of us (including management) in the post-secondary world (support staff, Faculty, or students) are still struggling with the new CA language and as well as suffering to some level of uncertainty with other daily issues that are always included in just living a life, whether it's elder care issues, mental health and well-being issues, child care issues, job uncertainty, precarious employment, the new and emerging issues with Artificial Intelligence, and yes even perhaps global supply chain issues although I believe the supply chain issues are getting better—thanks to Amazon.ca 😊.

If nothing else, the pandemic accelerated the administrations of our institutions long-term plans and goals by five to seven years, and they will struggle with infrastructure upgrades that will surely be needed to keep pace.

As a reminder, we have had a Provincial election, and I have high hopes that some lessons were learned from the outcome of that event.

Our Minister of Advanced Education (Demetrious Nicolaides) moves to the K through 12 Education Portfolios moving forward. I would like to thank the Minister for his time and his timely resolve for the many issues that were brought forward to him as our Minister over the course of his term, by the ACIFA group of Presidents. He was truly a listener of our issues and worked with us to resolve the matters.

I said this in March, and it still rings true in June:

The ray of sunshine and hope simply is that we got through this time the best we could, and we all should be proud of the fact that we have persevered. As time passes, sadly this will be forgotten by those who come after us... to replace us in the world of instruction.

I have said this before many times, and it is still relevant today:

I cannot stress enough that maintaining your conversation and social contact with your colleagues is very important these days and not just through the holiday seasons. Although some "shop talk" is required, I would also encourage other conversations of mutual interest other than work.

Watch for the upcoming live and in-person SAFA events. It was great to see everyone at the social gatherings and not just on a flat screen for a change.

In the 2023/2024 Academic year, I want to remind everyone of the need for all SAFA members to send an alternate e-mail address to Kathie in the SAFA office in case of a communication breakdown between SAFA and SAIT (**as SAFA no longer gets new hire reports from management**). Also, visit the SAFA website often for regular updates.

I remain dedicated to Faculty and remind everyone that I continue to meet with the other Faculty Association Presidents throughout ACIFA to ensure that we have current and up-to-date information as to what is happening at the other institutions (*this will be of paramount importance as we all enter into a new bargaining cycle, and I can give you a 100 percent guarantee that is what our employers are doing*).

As well, we are meeting with the Government of Alberta officials in our sector. ♦

For those who are about to start vacation enjoy the summer. Take the time to recharge the batteries, read a book, go for a walk, and play with your children or grandchildren. For those teaching this summer, pace yourselves as this is a new thing for all of us.

On behalf of the SAFA Executive Team and me, be well and stay safe.

Always, in service of membership.

Blair

Labour Relations Officer Report



By Craig Coolahan (LRO)

Hello SAFA members,

If you haven't had the chance to read my introduction to you in the SAFA Update, or if you have yet to meet me in person, allow me to introduce myself. My name is Craig Coolahan, and I am the new SAFA Labour Relations Officer. SAFA is the third union in which I have represented members with grievances, bargaining, and other labour relations needs.

While I've been spending my time becoming familiar with the Collective Agreement (CA), SAIT policies, the SAFA Board, and the overall institutional processes, the upcoming bargaining of your Collective Agreement is always on my mind, as I am sure it is on yours, too.

SAFA's Bargaining Committee will include Board members Earl Simpson, Jessica Norman, and Amir Fard. As the LRO, I will be leading the negotiations. In the months leading up to bargaining, we will be seeking input from members on what is working with the Collective Agreement, what is not, and what members would like to see added to the CA. All suggestions are welcome, and your input will form SAFA's initial bargaining proposals.

While there were some good gains made in the last round of bargaining establishing workload, gaining a career ladder for casual Faculty members and bringing adjunct Faculty into the fold, gains on wages continue to be elusive.

If the current trends continue, we will be bargaining for the first time in an inflationary environment. The cost of everything has increased, and a dollar doesn't go as far as it used to (not to mention the rising interest rates that put financial pressure on existing home owners and make it difficult for anyone trying to enter the real estate market).

The bottom line is that SAFA members have seen too many zeros in bargaining, and it is time that your wage increases reflect the sacrifices that you have made over the last decade. The priority of bargaining will be wage increases that respect both the sacrifices that you have made and the rising costs of living.

Communicating with SAFA members during the bargaining process is an important part of bargaining. To receive SAFA bargaining updates, please ensure that the SAFA office has a personal phone number and a personal e-mail address. We will not communicate any information about bargaining through SAIT e-mail. Also, should a job action occur, SAFA will need this information not only to communicate but also to provide picket pay in the event of job action. To be clear, this is not a place anyone wants to go, but it is a tool that SAFA members now have.

I am so pleased to be working for SAFA and advocating on your behalf. Please drop by the SAFA office to say hello and/or provide your e-mail information.

Have a great summer, and I look forward to working with all of you on continually improving your Collective Agreement and working conditions. ♦

2023 President's Medal Awarded for Determination and Commitment to Empowerment Through Technology



Sanoop Sadique (IT Computer Systems '23) first came to SAIT to drop off a delivery as an UberEATS driver. He never imagined that three years later, he would graduate with his third post-secondary credential and join SAIT's Faculty as an Instructor. His passion for exploring new opportunities and making the world a happier place has taken Sadique and his family from India to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and then Canada.

"Canada was not in the plan initially," says Sadique. "I was worried about the weather, but then I decided to take on the adventure of going from plus 50 to minus 40 degrees."

Sadique grew up in a small village in Kerala, India, and has had a curious and inquisitive mind for as long as he can remember.

"It gives me new challenges to solve constantly and keeps me occupied and learning new things," he says.

Sadique completed an MBA in India in 2010 and shortly after moved to Dubai to pursue a career at Sony Electronics, where he worked on their product marketing and branding team. For the next eight years, Sadique and his partner Anjoom built a life in the UAE, making great friends and starting a family. However, his constant search for new opportunities led him to explore some life-changing decisions.

"Once you're established in your career [in the UAE], it becomes difficult to change your job profile since your residency is dependent on your job," he explains. "Another reason was to move someplace where we could call home that offers better living standards for our family."

With the decision to start a new life in Calgary, the family was excited by what lay ahead, not to mention the news that they were expecting their second child. Arriving in Calgary in late 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic would dramatically impact their situation. With two small children at home and Anjoom pursuing further education, Sadique had to work as a food delivery driver on top of his job at London Drugs. He also continued volunteering at the Calgary Public Library as a Tech Mentor. His experiences working at London Drugs and as a Tech Mentor sparked a passion for helping people feel empowered through technology.

"I came across a lot of people struggling with technology," he recalls. "The trivial things that a lot of people take for granted can be challenges for others. I was able to help people get hold of confusing technology, and it gave me immense pleasure. It felt like I was contributing my part to make this world a happier place."

That day after dropping off his delivery at SAIT, Sadique spent some time exploring the campus and liked what he saw. His passion for helping people with technology and recommendations from friends led him to enroll in the Information Technology Program at SAIT, a return to post-secondary education after over a decade.

"It was great and weird," he shares. "I was doing something that I wanted to do, reskilling, but I never thought I would be able to do that with a toddler and infant at home...but the online learning helped me transition into a learning phase, and the recorded sessions let me catch up on any content I had difficulty with."

His first exposure to student life on campus was the 2021 Big SAIT Welcome. He was completely taken in by the positive spirit and energy of the event. This experience inspired Sadique to actively involve himself throughout SAIT in a number of ways.

"I made very meaningful connections with my instructors, students, and other staff members. It was a wonderful experience volunteering with SAITSA and to be part of discussions with the Interfaith society."

Shortly before completing his program, he was offered a position with SAIT's IT team where he worked for several months. In January 2023, he joined SAIT's School for Advanced Digital Technology (SADT) as a part-time Instructor while also working in his IT role. In May 2023, he became a full-time Faculty member working in SADT and SAIT's School of Business.

For his commitments to the SAIT community and his passion for empowerment through technology, Sadique was awarded SAIT's 2023 President's Medal.

"It means the world to me," he reflects on this accomplishment. "Everything that happened in my life brought me to this point. Every single step and misstep led me to this." ♦

SHOUT OUT – Ms. Emma Baky



I would like to give recognition to our remarkable Department Chair, Ms. Emma Baky. Since I joined SAIT in the Fall 2019 term, she has provided never-ending support. She continues to trust my skills even when I falter and continues to help me to be a better instructor. I would not have been here for this long if it was not for her trust in me. Thank you for continuously motivating me to believe that I can DO IT!

Jean Parnacio

Business Math & Technology Literacy

A few good puns ...

I once dated a lady. who broke up with me because I only have 9 toes. *Yes, she was lack-toes intolerant.*

I've started telling everyone about the benefits of eating dried grapes. *It's all about raisin awareness.*

I've started investing in stocks: beef, vegetable, chicken. *One day I hope to be a bouillianaire.*

If you boil a funny bone, it becomes a laughing stock. *Now that's humerus.*

I accidentally rubbed ketchup in my eyes. *Now I have Heinzsight.*

Did you know muffins spelled backwards is what you do when you take them out of the oven?

Scientifically, a raven has 17 primary wing feathers, the big ones at the end of the wing are called pinion feathers. A crow has 16. *So, the difference between a raven and a crow is only a matter of a pinion.* ♦

Best wishes for a relaxing and rejuvenating Summer break!

SUMMER

SAFAGRAM Board

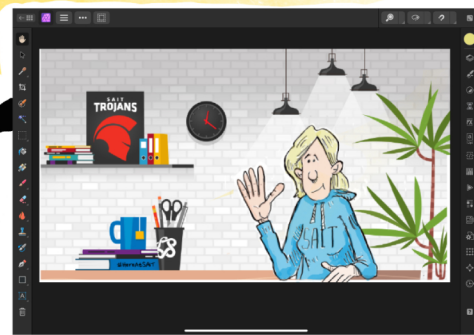
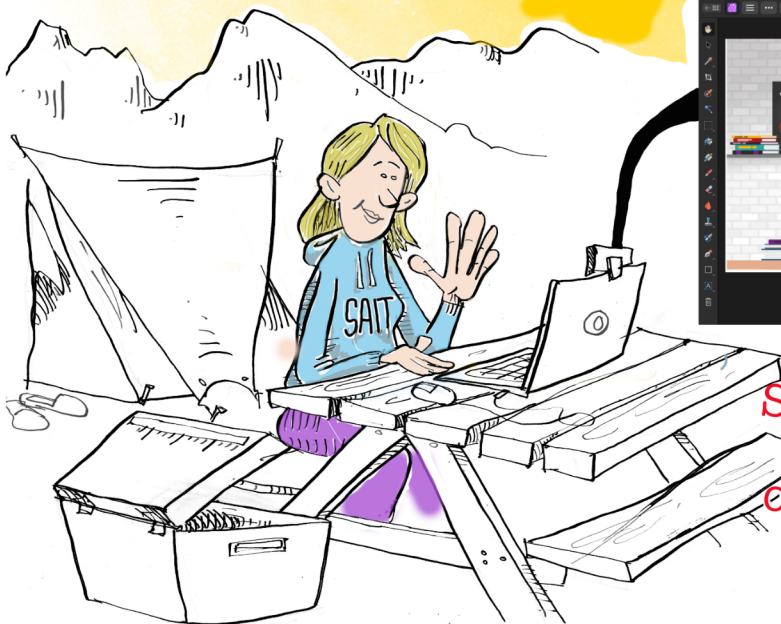


WF Abwiaa*

*WORK FROM ANYWHERE BUT WHERE I ACTUALLY AM



Fall and Winter
Semesters call for
outdoor backgrounds



Spring and Summer
Semesters mean
office backgrounds

J. Logan