

Saskatchewan Government And General Employees' Union **COMMUNICATION**

SIAST Academic Bargaining Unit

September 2006

As we return to the classroom this fall, we hope you had a great summer of rest and relaxation in preparation for a busy academic year.

Because our contract expired at the end of June 2006, the SIAST Academic Negotiating Committee has begun negotiations on our next collective agreement. We met with management three times during June, July and August.

At our first meeting on June 20th, the two negotiating teams discussed what we would like to see happen over the next few months. We were assured by SIAST management that they are “turning the corner” on improving labour relations between the parties. On July 12th we met to exchange packages. We explained our non-monetary proposals while management reviewed the “highlights” of their package. A copy of their proposals is included for your perusal prior to our membership meetings later this month.

On August 24th and 25th, we entered into an extensive dialogue on outstanding policy grievances around scope, contracting out, scheduled preparation day, union representation, class specifications, faculty certificate program, and employee status. We tabled contract language related to Article 3, 13, 19, 23, and 24.

At our Sept 6th and 7th meeting, management responded verbally to the five articles we tabled in August. We continued the discussion on outstanding grievances and problems that have not been addressed for the last two years. We revised and re-tabled Article 13 and 19, and tabled Article 25.

Membership meetings

We would like to invite you to attend membership meetings to discuss management's package and answer any questions you may have about bargaining. Please plan to attend the meeting on your campus:

Woodland	September 27	11:30 am - 1:00 pm	Room 236 Academic Centre
Kelsey	September 27	4:00 pm - 5:30 pm	Lecture Theatre 104
Palliser	September 28	11:30 am - 1:30 pm	Macoun Lounge
Wascana	September 29	11:30 am - 1:00 pm	Room 15

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The extensive discussions we have had with management about our issues are the first in-depth discussions we have ever had with a SIAST negotiating team. We are somewhat encouraged by this because we cannot negotiate changes to the existing SIAST Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) without coming to a mutual understanding of what the current CBA means.

We hope our discussions translate into real improvements in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

In solidarity

SIAST Academic Negotiating Committee

Jim Steele	Chair
Cheryl Solonenko	Wascana Campus
Jim Marcia	Palliser Campus
Bentley Wiebe	Woodland Campus
Garry Ramage	Kelsey Campus

Attachment

SIASST 2006 PROPOSAL PACKAGE

ACADEMIC BARGAINING UNIT

July 12, 2006

Preamble

SIAST is entering this new round of bargaining with the SGEU with an optimistic outlook for the process and the subsequent outcome. Although the union rejected our overtures to utilize an interest-based approach in this round of bargaining, SIAST will still be approaching negotiations with the intent of entering into full dialogue on the important issues that both sides bring into the process. It is recognized that efforts to restore trust in the relationship will need to be made if the parties hope to achieve a settlement that meets the needs of the employees and SIAST. The decision to involve the AVP of Human Resources, as the chairperson of the management negotiating committee, was intended to send a signal to the SGEU that SIAST intended to bring a different approach and perspective to the bargaining table. For that matter, the composition of the entire SIAST negotiating committee has undergone changes as part of this new approach. We intend to seriously discuss and consider all issues that the union will raise and will expect the union to give the same consideration to those brought forward by SIAST.

The issues that SIAST plans to raise through the negotiating process are in response to the many challenges that are currently facing the institution but will also include those that are looming on the horizon. The Training System Review completed this past year is expected to create both opportunities and challenges for the post-secondary sector. A number of initiatives recently introduced including QLO, the FCP and the NIO are all examples of efforts being made to raise the standards and expectations of both staff and students. Other expanding opportunities such as an increase in international assignments, an increase in technology integration and the issues surrounding intellectual property are creating new challenges for SIAST and its staff. Their impact on the future success of SIAST will require significant dialogue to ensure that the organization will continue to be a leader in delivering quality education in the province. An examination of many of our current human resource processes is considered to be important to assessing their impact on SIAST's ability to achieve a representative workforce as well as the organization's effectiveness in meeting future workforce needs. This will be extremely important in areas such as recruitment and retention.

With these challenges in mind, the following issues were identified as important for discussion and resolution.

SIAST PROPOSES REVISIONS TO THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING ISSUES THAT ARE OF CONCERN TO SIAST:

1. **Scope** (Article 2) — There are periodic needs for additional out-of-scope positions to be created to deal with both emerging issues and to address supervisory issues within SIAST. The current administrative restrictions on SIAST's ability to create legitimate OOS positions needs to be addressed.
 - the status of possible trainee positions under special programs related to our representative workforce strategies
2. **No Discrimination** (Article 3) — Discussion to clarify that the union would bear the same onus with respect to no discrimination against employees.
3. **Staffing Processes** (Article 4 and other related provisions) — the need for increased flexibility in our staffing processes to assist with the following issues:
 - Internal secondments
 - Trainee positions
 - Representative workforce initiatives
 - Requirement to mail postings (4.2)
 - Length of posting period (4.3)
 - Definition of internal applicants (1.23); re: probationary employees' rights to apply for other positions
 - Posting with an incumbent (4.5)
 - Union observers (4.10)
 - Supervisory assignments (4.12 & 4.7)
 - International assignments (4.13)
 - Use of equivalents for qualifications
 - Early movement from end-dated positions
4. **Non-Appointment Dispute Resolution Process** (Article 4.21) — The inability to fill jobs while a job is in dispute creates staffing challenges for SIAST; SIAST has an interest in being able to fill jobs permanently if delays occur in the process.
5. **Casual Employment Recall List** (Article 4.22) — The requirements for using internal staff in the absence of a casual employment list, place excessive restrictions on SIAST's ability to hire casuals.
6. **Seniority for Casual Employees** (Article 5) — This has created a systemic barrier to the employment of Aboriginal employees but also limits SIAST's ability to hire the best qualified employees for permanent positions.

7. Seniority Lists (Article 5.3) — Finalizing seniority for employees so that continual revisiting of seniority for employees can be reduced.

8. Probation (Article 6) — Flexibility on timing of performance assessments.

9. Bumping:

(a) Bumping Requirements & Processes (Article 7.4 - 7.7) — Bumping activity is highly disruptive to the efficient operation of the workplace. SIAST wishes to discuss and implement solutions that would reduce the effects of bumping for reasons such as:

- Re-classifications
- Completion of time in end-dated positions
- Reassignments

Also, there needs to be discussion on:

- the principles associated with bumping to clarify that SIAST does not view bumping as an opportunity for training,
- payment of severance for employees accepting end-dated positions
- the need for trial periods in all bumping situations

(b) Dispute Resolution Process — the current process creates significant difficulty in the filling of vacancies on a timely basis.

10. Re-employment List (Article 7.9) —There are administrative issues related to the maintenance of one re-employment list.

11. Hours of Work (Article 9) — New initiatives being undertaken such as online training and applied research may reasonably be expected to create some challenges with respect to the current hours of work model.

12. Pay Administration (Article 10) —There are administrative problems with the current bi-weekly pay system.

13.(a) Educational Supplements (Article 10.6) — Clarification as to employees' responsibilities to provide information.

(b) Allocation to New Educational Supplements (Article 10.9) — Recognition of 500 hours provision is difficult to administer and is too general in its interpretation; the educational institutions that should be recognized---this has created an administrative problem; clarification of the use of program development in attaining an educational supplement.

14. **Supervisory Stipends** (Article 10.12)—The program head positions are important leadership positions within the organization; therefore the amount of the stipends and their impact on the ability of SIAST to attract candidates to these roles needs to be reviewed.
15. **Emergency Advances** (Article 10.23) — The role of the Campus Director in this process should be assessed.
16. **Sick Leave** (Article 15.2)— Use of accumulated sick leave as it relates to the waiting period for LTD benefits.
17. **General Leave** (Article 16.1) — Approval process for definite and indefinite leaves.
18. **Union Release Time** (Article 16.5.2)—Although a considerable amount of release time is currently provided to employees who are serving in official positions within the union hierarchy, there are concerns with the costs and administration issues associated with these provisions.
19. **Personal/Family Leaves** (Article 16.6) — there are concerns as to how employees are viewing these leaves so additional clarification may be needed to ensure consistency in its application.
20. **Extended Health Plan** (Article 18.4) — There is a pending shortfall in the funding for this plan.
21. **Employee And Family Assistance Program** (Article 22) — The current provisions in the agreement appear to be out-of-date; consideration may want to be given to placing this program into policy.
22. **Grievances** (Article 24) — SIAST is concerned with the current processes and time limits for filing and resolving grievances, and the absence of purposeful dialogue at the campus level to resolve issues.
23. **Arbitration** (Article 25)— Process issues and the inability of the parties to have the expedited process used in a timely manner.
24. **Copyright!Course Materials** (Article 26) — The concept of intellectual property is a complex one and its implications for SIAST and our academic staff may need to be explored.

25. Representative Workforce (new) — The representation of target group members in the SIAST workforce should reflect the proportional representation of target group members in the Saskatchewan working age population. Provisions in the collective agreement may be needed to demonstrate commitment by both parties to the concept of a representative workforce. The issues related to this include:

- Seniority provisions for casuals
- Designated positions
- Equity hiring processes

26. Copies of the Agreement (Article 28) — Review the cost-sharing arrangement for printing of the collective agreement.

27. Duration (Article 29) — The implications of a short-term versus longer term agreement for both parties.

28. Educational Supplements (Appendix B) — There are interpretation issues concerning the determination of a Master's level if no Bachelor's degree is held.

29. Salary Increases:

(a) General economic increases - to be determined subject to the government mandate.

(b) Market competitiveness - the allocation of salary increases in areas experiencing hiring challenges will require additional consideration.

30. Letters of Understanding — Review any letters and the interests of the parties in their renewal.