

NEWS RELEASE

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SIAS adjusts admission policy

New processes eliminate waitlists, ensure broad and fair access

December 6, 2006 – SIAS announced today that it has developed a new policy that will streamline its admission processes. The new processes will apply to programs starting after July 1, 2008.

“Our new policy will enable applicants to high-demand programs to assume a more proactive role with respect to planning and managing their education,” says David Walls, SIAS’s senior vice-president, academic.

Most SIAS programs will continue to admit students in the order in which they meet fundamental admission requirements. For high-demand programs, however, additional selection criteria will be developed. Depending on the program, the additional criteria could include such measures as aptitude tests and structured career explorations.

“For most applicants, little will change,” says Walls. “They will continue to be admitted to programs within one or two years of qualifying. For high-demand programs, we will consult with stakeholders to develop additional selection criteria.”

The July 1, 2008, implementation gives applicants to high-demand programs a significant length of time to prepare for the selection criteria. Information about the new criteria will be available on SIAS’s website by the end of December.

All potential students will be required to apply annually. Those who are applying to programs that have not been designated high demand will continue to be admitted based on the date they first qualified provided they meet the application requirement. This new provision will help maintain a high degree of commitment among applicants. It will also result in the elimination of waitlists.

Applicants currently waitlisted for high-demand programs will be automatically considered for the 2008-09 academic year. Their applications will be evaluated according to the new

selection criteria. If they are not offered a seat for 2008-09, they will be required to reapply annually. Applicants currently waitlisted for programs that are not high demand will be grandfathered, and their applications will remain active until they are offered a seat. They will not have to reapply.

For the purposes of the new policy, programs considered high demand will typically be those that receive applications in excess of 2.5 times capacity, and that are available at only one location in the province. The status of programs will be evaluated annually. Based on assessments for July 1, 2008, only six programs will implement additional selection criteria. They are:

- Applied Photography
- Cytotechnology
- Medical Laboratory Technology
- Combined Laboratory and X-Ray Technician
- Dental Hygiene
- Medical Radiologic Technology

The changes announced today result from an admissions policy review initiated in July. The task force recruited to conduct the review included representatives from faculty, students and Advanced Education and Employment. Employer representatives will be actively involved in developing new selection criteria.

“Changes to our admission policy were initiated in response to public concerns and perceptions about program access, and industry stakeholders will be consulted on admission criteria,” says Walls. “This consultative approach is consistent with our commitment to providing training that responds to the needs of both students and employers.”

Last January, SIAST announced that it was suspending the application process to five programs – Combined Laboratory and X-Ray Technician, Cytotechnology, Dental Hygiene, Medical Laboratory Technology and Medical Radiologic Technology – and returning most out-of-province applications to those programs. Waitlisted applicants were encouraged to pursue other options, including other SIAST programs. All five programs have since seen significant reductions in their waitlists. For three programs, the waitlists have dropped to below three years.

SIAST is Saskatchewan's primary public institution for post-secondary technical education and skills training, recognized nationally and internationally for its expertise and innovation. Almost 12,000 students are registered in SIAST programs, which touch every sector of the economy; additionally, the organization draws almost 25,000 individual course registrations. It operates campuses in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon, and provides a number of courses and programs through distance education.

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Additional information about SIAST can be found at www.goSIASST.com