



SIAST

SASKATCHEWAN INSTITUTE OF
APPLIED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Putting knowledge to *work*.

NEWS RELEASE

Note to editors: A background document follows this release

IMMEDIATE

Application process suspended for handful of SIAST programs

Vast majority of SIAST programs accepting students

January 3, 2006 – Beginning today, SIAST will suspend the application process for a handful of programs where demand significantly exceeds capacity. The move is part of an expanded waitlist management program. Applications to the five affected programs will be accepted again when waitlists have shrunk to three years.

“Student demand for a very small number of SIAST programs far outpaces seat capacity for those particular programs,” says David Walls, SIAST’s associate vice president, academic and student affairs. “It doesn’t make sense for people to put their lives on hold waiting for a seat, and it is inefficient for us to devote more and more resources to managing the growing waitlists for these programs.”

“The vast majority of SIAST programs are accepting students in 2006,” Walls adds. “These are programs with great opportunities. There are seats waiting in the classrooms, and there are jobs waiting in the labour market.”

Programs affected by today’s announcement are Combined Laboratory and X-Ray Technician, Cytotechnology, Dental Hygiene, Medical Laboratory Technology and Medical Radiologic Technology. New applicants to these programs would face a wait of more than five years, and there is no option to take the program at a different campus or off-campus location within the province.

Preferential treatment will be given to Saskatchewan applicants to high demand programs. As well, additional waitlist management measures are being implemented to limit the length of time students have to spend on a waitlist.

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 more than 27,000 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.goSIAST.com.



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WAITLIST BACKGROUND

High-demand SIAS programs

SIAS offers more than 170 certificate and diploma programs. Of these, five face such high demand that new applicants would have to wait an estimated five or more years before they could be offered a seat. The programs, the number of people on their waitlists (as of November 25), and the number of seats in each program are:

<i>Program</i>	<i>Applicants</i>	<i>Seats</i>
Combined Laboratory X-Ray Technician	102	16
Cytotechnology	30	4
Dental Hygiene	633	26
Medical Laboratory Technology	121	16
Medical Radiologic Technology	530	16

Immediate opportunities

The majority of SIAS programs are accepting students in the near future. Benefits can include transfer credits with universities, national accreditation and excellent employment prospects. We encourage potential students to explore opportunities in the following program areas and programs:

Agriculture	Biotechnology
Applied/Visual Media	Chemical Technology
Business	
Community/Human Services	
Engineering Technology	
Hospitality/Food Services	
Industrial/Trades	
Natural Resources	
Nursing	
Recreation/Tourism	
Technology	

How capacity is determined

SIAST determines program capacity on three criteria:

1. Employment prospects for graduates / Labour market demand.
2. Availability of SIAST resources (equipment, space, faculty, etc.).
3. Availability of clinical or work placements.

Student capacity in the programs for which we are suspending the application process are generally well-matched with these criteria. That is, neither the Saskatchewan labour market – employers – nor grads who want to stay in the province would be well served by significant increases to capacity in these programs.

Why SIAST maintains waitlists

Colleges and universities traditionally process applications on a competitive basis. That means that they admit the students with the highest marks above their admission requirements and turn the rest away. They don't maintain waitlists; they simply start over every year. At SIAST, to ensure equitable access to programming, we process applications on a first-qualified, first-admitted basis. As a result, people who have demonstrated that they have the academic qualifications to succeed in a program will be admitted in the order in which their applications are approved.

Waitlist management steps

In addition to suspending the application process for programs with exceptionally lengthy waitlists, SIAST will:

- Hold an annual review of applications and waitlist status. Application activity and waitlist status will be reviewed each year to determine whether or not program application suspensions will be implemented or lifted.
- Limit applicants to one deferral. An applicant will be allowed one opportunity to defer the offer of a seat until the next subsequent start date.
- Provide estimates of the length of time applicants will have to wait for a seat, even though the accuracy of estimates declines as the waitlist grows. Until now, we have told applicants on particularly lengthy waitlists that their estimated wait is more than five years.
- Remove most out-of-province applicants from waitlists for programs that are not accepting new applications. Other waitlisted applicants to these programs will be charged a \$20 administration fee annually to help cover waitlist management costs and to sharpen the focus of the waitlist to those most serious applicants. The fee will apply only to programs where applicants can expect to wait through three start dates beyond the then-current year.