



SIAS

SASKATCHEWAN INSTITUTE OF
APPLIED SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Putting knowledge to work.

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SIAS offers online upgrading for Chem Tech lab technologists

Online courses focus on sampling, safety, quality control and math

May 30, 2006 – The Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology is taking the "room" out of classroom with four online Chemical Technology courses that stress safety and accuracy in laboratory analysis. The online courses will be offered this fall.

The courses are designed for working lab technologists, especially those who don't live near a SIAS campus or whose work and personal commitments make it difficult to take a course on campus. The virtual courses are also open to current SIAS students seeking flexibility in their class schedules.

"Chemical technology is a very dynamic field," says Dr. Salim Khalid, SIAS's Chem Tech program head. "These courses will help technologists stay on top of the latest developments at a time and place that suits them."

The four online Chemical Technology courses are:

- Quality Control and Quality Assurance, in 64 hours of course work, focuses on assuring the most accurate lab results.
- Lab Safety, in 16 hours of course work, deals with the care and handling of potentially dangerous substances in the lab.
- Sampling Techniques, a 45-hour course, covers correct sampling procedures for air, water, soil, etc.
- Lab Math, in 32 hours, deals with accuracy in measuring quantities in the lab.

Students work at their own pace, finish within a given period of time and receive a credit for the course or courses they take. They are in contact with SIAS instructors through email and telephone.

"This is the wave of future education," says Kerry Peru, a SIAST graduate employed at Environment Canada as a mass spectrometry technologist. "Students can learn at their own pace, and there are no specific times to attend class, so it's a lot more flexible for their work hours."

Peru, who is chair of SIAST's Chem Tech Program Advisory Committee, says courses such as these support career advancement.

"At the end of the year, during our appraisal time, if you have shown initiative and that you're trying to better yourself, it's certainly looked upon as a very positive thing," he says.

SIAST offers more than 100 courses online and through the Saskatchewan Communication Network (SCN) to about 2,000 students, says David Francis, academic director of SIAST's Virtual Campus.

"The idea is to provide flexible learning opportunities and to do so in a manner that's appropriate for today's learners," says Francis.

Online courses feature the same learning outcomes as face-to-face classes, says Francis. Students can achieve these outcomes via highly-interactive learning activities with multiple opportunities to check their understanding along the way.

For more information about these and other virtual courses, see the SIAST website at www.goSIAST.com or phone 1-866-goSIAST.

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.