



**Sobey School
of Business**
Saint Mary's University

SOBEY RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

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As we start our summer and move to wind down the 2025-2026 academic year, Sobey Research and Advancement Committee (RAC) would like to thank faculty members, students, and staff members for their contributions in maintaining and growing the research reputation and capacity of our school. Tremendous effort from them also led to significant improvements in our enrolment prospect for the upcoming academic year. Active engagement from our faculty members in developing and implementing the *Lead with Purpose 2025-2030* strategic plan is expected to usher in a brighter future for our school.

In this issue, we report on faculty members joining our school and assuming new responsibilities. Impressive bios of our faculty members and students provide us insights into their unique achievements and talents; be it providing training for academic and corporate leadership, or hosting academic symposium and conferences, our school and faculty members continue to provide excellent leadership. Equally, our students continue to lead in national and international events.

Good research takes time — the gestation period. A large number of conference presentations reported in this issue reflects just that. We are looking forward to many published articles in near future. We also report on published works by our faculty members. Faculty members' reported works involve climate transition risk, enterprise risk management, Markov switching model for asset market, asset pricing in concentrated market, distributed leadership, corporate apology, illusion of inclusion, workplace harassment, technology and work, wage pay gap, immigration, long-term care facilities, COVID-19 pandemic and mental health, measuring SDGs for co-operatives, and new approaches for alternative organizing for organizations. In the recent period, our faculty members secured research funding totaling over \$140,000 from different funding institutions including SSHRC and NSERC and won multiple awards for their research. Faculty members have also been engaged with the broader community by hosting podcasts and events on HR and immigration. The body of our faculty contributions is rich and growing. We are truly a productive team, and we are proud it.

Sincerely,
Research Advancement Committee

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World without limits.

Sobey News

Recruitment Update

As of the 3rd of June, Sobey School enrolment for 26-27 was up by 142 students over last year at this time, with 75 additional registrants in the BComm and a 67 person increase in graduate programs.

Faculty News

New Accounting assistant professor Dr. Ke Feng joined faculty July 1. His research focuses on corporate governance and shareholder voting, with particular attention to proxy advisory firms as information intermediaries.

Program Coordinators: Dr. Hai Wang is the new Academic Program Coordinator for the MBA program and Dr. Majid Taghavi for the MBAN.

Acting Chair: Dr. Mahdi Tajeddin is now Acting Chair for the Management Department.

Union role: Dr. Bui Petersen was elected President of SMUFU in May.

Awards at Convocation:

The Dr. Geraldine Thomas Educational Leadership Award was given to Dr. Vurain Tabvuma.

The William A. Stewart, S.J., Medal for Excellence in Teaching Award was awarded to Dr. Matthew Boland.

Accreditation and Impact update

The Sobey School has been recognized again in 2026 as a Level 4 "Transforming School" in the Positive Impact Rating (PIR), a global assessment of business schools conducted by students, for students.

BSIS information gathering continues. Reviewers will be on hand October 1-2.

Events

Business Schools Association of Canada (BSAC) held their annual conference in Halifax in May. Sobey School was co-host with Dalhousie University. On May 8, Canadian Business Deans came to campus for a day of workshops and meetings. Feedback on the organization and content of the conference was very positive.

On June 15 the Atlantic Research Group on Economics of Immigration, Aging and Diversity (ARGEIAD) hosted **Beatrice Baribeau, Assistant Chief Statistician for StatsCan Ottawa**.

ARGEIAD posted the [April issue of their newsletter](#).

ICD events in May and June. Sobey School hosted an ICD Maritime Chapter event focused on the Indigenous

Clearwater purchase. Speakers included Membertou's Chief Terry Paul, Clearwater CEO Ian Smith, Cheryl Copage-Gehue and Fiona Kirkpatrick Parsons. Then, over 550 delegates from the Institute of Corporate Directors for the ICD National Director Conference and Fellowship Awards Gala met in Halifax. Associate Dean Margaret McKee served as chair of the Local Host Committee.

Accounting Interdisciplinary Colloquium was well received and attended. [Read more here](#).

Global Co-op Symposium 430 attendees. 52 countries. 46 speakers. Slides can be found at [identitysymposium2026.coop](#).

Executive Education

- First session with Sobey's corporate team held.
- ICD-DEP Cohort #7 graduated.
- RISE, the David Sobey Centre Executive Education course, RISE, had 11 participants from 5 companies.

Student Competitions

LA Win for Sobey Team: Olivia Sanderson, Robert Francis, Jada Roy and Alice Zhou competed at the International Business Ethics and Sustainability Case Competition at the Loyola Marymount University (LA) in April. In the in-person division the team earned:

- 1st place for the 25-minute presentation
- 2nd place for the 10-minute presentation
- 1st place for the 90-second presentation.

The team was coached by Dr. Amna Chalwati (who accompanied them) and Mr. Jeff Mutton.

Enactus Nationals: Saint Mary's was named first runner up at the 2026 national Enactus Canada Exposition.

- Alaagi™ named Enactus Alumni National Champion of the Innovation & Impact Challenge
- Placed 2nd in the TD Entrepreneurship Challenge with the project Square Roots and Gluten-Free Living.

Oh Deer! Hackathon: The Arthur L. Irving Entrepreneurship Centre, Centre for Leadership Excellence, City of Halifax, CLARI, Common Roots Urban Farm and JustFood [hosted a hackathon](#) to design a sustainable solution for managing urban deer in Halifax. First place went to Saint Mary's University students Malik Abdullahi, Chloe Staple, Wyn Go and Elijah Bucci.

Faculty Corner

Búi Petersen

Búi Petersen is an associate professor in the Management department. His research spans a diverse range of topics within the fields of industrial relations and organization studies. Core to most of his research is an interest in how societal and organizational norms, values, beliefs, and practices shape the behaviours and activities of individuals and organizations.

Inspired by his prior experience as a conflict resolution and negotiation consultant, Búi made negotiation the focus of his PhD dissertation, choosing collective bargaining in his birth country (the Faroe Islands) as the focal case. In contrast to the psychology- and economics-based approaches that dominate negotiation research, Búi employed a practice-theoretical lens to demonstrate that prior established (often routinized) negotiation practices are often the strongest predictors of negotiators' behaviours and strategies. While he has moved on to other research topics, negotiation (and conflict resolution) remain central to his teaching (regularly teaching the negotiation course in the MBA program) and practice (having served as the faculty union's Lead Negotiator).



Since completing his PhD, much of Búi's research has focused on various topics related to technological change, first as part of an interdisciplinary postdoctoral project on the digitalization of extractive industries, which involved collaborations with engineering, history, information systems and other management and social science researchers. This has led to co-authored publications in journals as diverse as IEEE Access, IEEE Transactions on Automation Science and Engineering, Economic and Industrial Democracy, Technovation, and Information Systems Management.

Since 2020, Búi's research has increasingly focused on the impact of technology on the future of work. This included a SSHRC (Insight Development Grant) funded project examining the intersections of both the exploitative and emancipatory potential technology has for the work of musicians, a project inspired by Búi's own past experience as a professional musician. As an extension of this project, he is now developing a project that explores the meaning of the concepts "worker", especially in non-standard work contexts, and how it intersects with the concept of "entrepreneur", and how the meanings of both concepts are shaped by the societal (e.g., cultural, economic, and technological) discourse.

Búi has also long has interest in the research on business education. This includes an article examining the relationship between undergraduate students' chosen field of study and their personal values and conflict management propensities, an article that received the 2020 Best Paper Award in the Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences (CJAS). Most recently, an article, which won the 2025 Best Paper Award in the Academy of Management Learning & Education (AMLE), examines the (apparently common) disconnect between business schools' espoused values and the schools' actual performance in the areas related to the values espoused.

Faculty Corner

Ather H. Akbari

Dr. Ather H. Akbari is full Professor of Economics at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, and an established scholar in the field of labour economics with focus on immigration, demographic change and education. His research examines how immigration, labour markets, education, demographic trends, and public policy interact to shape economic outcomes in Canada, with particular emphasis on Atlantic Canada. His work is recognized for combining rigorous empirical analysis with practical policy relevance.

Over the course of his career, Dr. Akbari has built an extensive research expertise on immigration and labour market integration, immigrant retention, skills utilization, workforce diversity, international students, population aging, and regional economic development. His research has advanced understanding of the economic and demographic challenges facing Atlantic Canada and has helped inform policies aimed at strengthening labour force growth, improving immigrant integration, addressing skill shortages, and supporting long-term economic prosperity.

Dr. Akbari's scholarship has influenced public policy at both the federal and provincial levels and has contributed to evidence-based decision-making by governments, employers, educational institutions, and community organizations. He is committed to translating academic research into practical solutions that address contemporary economic and social challenges. He has also appeared before House Commons subcommittees to testify on the economic impacts of immigration.

His research has been published in reputable peer reviewed journals such as International Migration Review, Applied Economics, Canadian Journal of Economics, Canadian Public Policy, Education Economics, Social Science Quarterly, and Canadian Journal of Higher Education. His work has been featured or cited in leading publications including The Globe and Mail, The Financial Post, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, and The Economist. He is also a frequent commentator on economic and public policy issues and has been interviewed by CBC, CTV, and other Canadian media outlets on topics such as immigration, labour markets, demographic change, and Canada's economic outlook.

Dr. Akbari has also supervised and sat on the Ph.D and Master's theses committees, and secured competitive research funding from organizations including SSHRC, IRCC, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the Governments of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland & Labrador, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

As Chair of Atlantic Research Group on Economics of Immigration, Aging and Diversity, Dr. Akbari promotes evidence-based dialogue on labour market issues and facilitates collaboration between academia, governments, employers, and community partners.



PhD Students' Corner

Lin Li

My name is Lin Li, and I am currently a PhD candidate in Finance at the Sobey School of Business, Saint Mary's University. Before pursuing my doctoral studies, I completed my master's degree at Boston University in the United States and spent several years gaining industry experience working within a commercial bank and an insurance company in China.

Under the supervision of Dr. Mohammad Rahaman, my current research focuses on global supply chain and the syndicated loan market, with a particular emphasis on how risk transmits through supply chain networks to impact a firm's cost of debt. As part of this work, I have built a comprehensive global supply chain dataset tracking S&P 500 firms. My ultimate career goal is to join academia as a professor, where I aim to conduct leading-edge research in finance.

Outside of my academic pursuits, my favorite sport is football. I love both playing the game and watching matches, and Juventus is my home team. Beyond sports, I am highly interested in Chinese calligraphy and Weiqi (Go). I deeply appreciate both as the art of black and white, finding that the practice and strategy behind them reveal many profound insights into life.



Scott Grant

My name is Scott Grant (Scott) (he/him), and I am a third year PhD candidate in management. I am also a SMU alum, as I completed my EMBA at Sobey's in 2023. I have more than 25 years of experience in the financial services industry and a strong interest in personal finance. I have enjoyed working with people who wanted to understand more about their personal finances in an effort to assist them in achieving personal financial well-being (PFWB). The intervention I have used over the course of my career has been to enhance the personal financial literacy of those with whom I worked.

My primary research focus is on PFWB, looking to identify factors that contribute to PFWB. One of the factors I believe to be of significant importance is financial resilience. My thesis work will look to deeply explore these under-researched factors. My supervisor is Kevin Kelloway, whom I had the good fortune to meet and work with during the final stage of my EMBA.

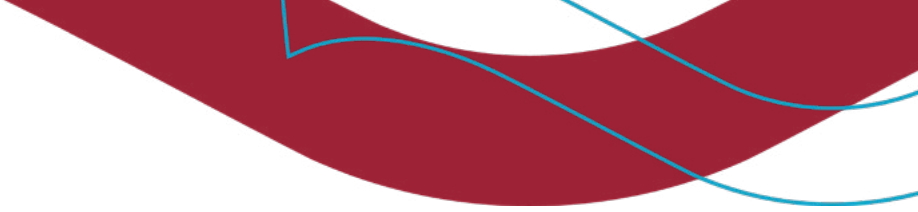
I also hold a designation from the Association of Certified Financial Crime Specialists, two Advanced Diplomas from the International Compliance Association in the areas of Compliance and Anti-Money Laundering and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Manitoba. In my spare time, I enjoy reading science fiction, fantasy, graphic novels, watching movies, and hiking in the woods of Nova Scotia with my wife and our energetic vizsla, Books.

Peer Reviewed Journals

- Dilmaghani, M., Islam, R., & Tabvuma, V. (2026). Fat pay gaps: wage consequences of overweight and obesity by sexual orientation. *International Journal of Manpower*, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJM-08-2025-0685>
- Fahmy, H., Apergis, N. (2026). Climate policy risks, market volatility, and credibility: evidence from the US transition climate policy and textual analysis. *npj Clim. Action*. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44168-026-00373-3>
- Pahlevani, M., Afshari, H., Taghavi, M., & Vanberkel, P. (2026). Capacity planning in long-term care facilities: A multi-period mathematical model with interfacility transfers. *Computers & Operations Research*, 192, 107498. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cor.2026.107498>

Conference Paper Presentations

- Akbari, A. (2026, March). Economic integration and retention of immigrants in Canada [Conference presentation]. 28th National Metropolis Conference, Halifax, NS, Canada.
- Akbari, A. (2026, March). Network effects on job-education matching of international students in Atlantic Canada [Conference presentation]. 28th National Metropolis Conference, Halifax, NS, Canada.
- Akbari, A. (2026, March). Making the case for immigration: What do employers want? [Plenary session presentation]. 28th National Metropolis Conference, Halifax, NS, Canada.
- Akbari, A. (2026, March). Twenty-five years of immigration in Atlantic Canada in statistics [Conference presentation]. 28th National Metropolis Conference, Halifax, NS, Canada.
- Akbari, A. (2026, May). Immigration in Atlantic Canada: Twenty-five years in statistics [Invited presentation]. AI, Future Skills and Productivity Conference, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NL, Canada.
- Bhamra, H., Dorion, C., Jeanneret, A., & Shirazi, A. (2026). Asset pricing in a concentrated economy [Best Paper Award in Asset Pricing]. 2026 SAIF Research Conference. https://www.cafr.ca/events/SAIF_Conference_2026.html
- Fahmy, H. (2026). Climate policy confidence sentiment and sustainable investing in equilibrium, 4th Conference on Sustainable Banking and Finance (CSBF), July 1-2, 2026, The University of Naples Parthenope Naples, Italy. <https://www.csbfconference.eu>
- Fiset, J., & Oldford, E. (2026, May 25). When more is not better: A typology of apology structures and their effects across corporate crises. Administrative Sciences Association of Canada, Calgary, AB.
- Grandy, K. (2026, May). Worth a Listen: Podcast interviews with Google CEO Sundar Pichai [Conference Presentation]. Canadian Communication Association Conference, Windsor, Ontario.
- Grandy, K. (2026, May). 'Why aren't you moving fast and breaking things again?': 2023 Podcast interviews with Google CEO Sundar Pichai [Poster Session]. Administrative Science Association of Canada, Calgary, AB.
- Head, E., & Carroll, W. (2026, May 24). Workplace harassment, gender-based violence, and organizational harm in extractive industries: A scoping review of reporting systems, power, and gendered organizations, Administrative Sciences Association of Canada, Calgary, AB.

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- Hinds, D., Furey, M., Weigand, H., & Rixon, D. (2026, April). COVID-19 and mental health: Bridging the gap through community collaboration. Administration Sciences Association of Canada Conference.
- Hinds, D., Furey, M., Weigand, H., & Rixon, D. (2026, April). Distributed leadership in decentralized teams: Learning from close calls in turbulent environments. Administration Sciences Association of Canada Conference. Invited presentation to senior co-operative executives in the United Kingdom.
- Liu, J., Maheu, J., & Song, Y. (2026, May). A Common Factor Markov Switching Model for Bull and Bear Markets, 60th Annual Meetings of the Canadian Economics Association, Vancouver, BC, Canada
- Lu, H. L., X.; Kleffner, A.; Wang, H. (2026, May). Enterprise Risk Management and Firm Resilience to External Shocks: Evidence from the COVID-19 Pandemic. Administrative Science Association of Canada, Calgary, AB.
- Mostafavi Sani, M., Hosseini, D., Zhang, M., Taghavi, M. (2026). Data-driven prescriptions in long-term care: Integrated learning-optimization for capacity expansion and placement of patients under uncertainty. CORS Annual Conference, Kingston, ON, Canada.
- Nawar, A., & Fiset, J. (2026, May). The illusion of inclusion: A visual audit of images across Fortune 500 diversity pages. Administrative Sciences Association of Canada, Calgary, AB.
- Petersen, B., Adeniyi, J., Kanewischer, B., Dwyer L., & Brown, T. (2026, May). New Technology and Work: The Good, Bad, and the Ambivalent. Symposium organized for the Administrative Sciences Association of Canada (ASAC) Conference, Calgary, AB.
- Petersen, B., Sweet, P., Cooke, G.B., & MacNeil, R. (2026, June) When is a Gig a Gig? Exploring the Concept of "The Entrepreneurial Worker". Presentation at Canadian Industrial Relations Association (CIRA) Conference, Quebec City, Montreal.
- Rixon, D. and F. Duguid (2026, May), Accounting for Co-operative Transformation: Measuring SDGs and Co-operative Principles, Co-operatives UK Masterclass 10 - Triple Bottom Line, Virtual.
- Rixon, D., & Duguid, F. (2026, May). Time for co-operatives to get their sustainability reporting ACT in gear. In Co-operative Identity and Energizing the Co-operative Brand. International Centre of Co-operative Management, Virtual.
- Rixon, D., & Duguid, F. (2026, May). Using participatory action research (PAR) with co-operatives to develop indicators for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. UK Society for Co-operative Studies Conference, Birmingham, United Kingdom.
- Shourkaei, M. (2026, May). Fostering Dynamic Collective Reflexivity in Management Learning and Education to Advance Alternative Organizing. Administrative Science Association of Canada, Calgary, AB.

Organization of Conferences and Events

- Amna Chalwati: Saint Mary's University (member of the scientific and organizing committee) co-hosted the 2026 International Journal of Accounting (TIJA) Symposium at Brock University, held in Niagara Falls, Ontario, from June 3–6, 2026.
- Karen Grandy: Canadian Communications Association Annual Conference. University of Windsor. June 2026.
- Claudia De Fuentes: NACLICS 2026 Research Conference and PhD Academy, Modeling Tomorrow: Innovation for Sustainable Development, held in Barbados from June 22-26.
- Joniada Milla/Claudia De Fuentes: Workshop on Policy Impact, with CIPA. Held on campus May 1.

Research-Related Awards and Honours

Ali Shirazi	Best Paper Award in Asset Pricing 2026 Shanghai Advanced Institute of Finance (SAIF) Research Conference
Majid Taghavi	• Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), Discovery Development Grant (2026-28), Funding: \$59,000 • Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Insight Development Grant (2026-28), Funding: \$77,261
Hany Fahmy	First Year Undergraduate Summer Research Award for summer 2026 – Supervising the award winner student: Chloe Staples. Award value \$7000. Topic: Constructing climate policy sentiment using machine learning and textual analysis.
John Fiset Bui Petersen	Academy of Management Learning & Education (AMLE) 2025 Best Paper Award Fiset, J., Al Hajj, R., Petersen, B., & Oldford, E. (2025). Do business schools walk the talk? A critical examination of espoused values and reputational façades. <i>Academy of Management Learning & Education</i> , 24(4), 423–445. https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2023.0458
Mahdi Tajeddin Hadi Eslami	Ivey Publishing has recognized the teaching case "Zipline Drones: Diffusion of AI-Based Innovations in Health Care Systems" as a bestseller. The case was developed by Mahdi and Hadi with Yasser Rahrovani (Western).



Dr. Megan Walsh and Dr. John Fiset co-facilitated the HR Roundtable. Alumni attendees raised both expected and unexpected challenges and pressures.

Community Engagement

Dr. Wendy Carroll and Dr. Megan Walsh

- 25 HR professionals and alumni, graduate students and faculty members joined in a rich discussion intended to surface the current challenges and pressures on the HR profession. Dr. John Fiset co-facilitated the event.

Dr. Ather Akbari

- **An Hour with Canada's Chief Statistician.** Virtual Public outreach event held June 15, 2026. "Extension of project, Twenty Five years of immigration in Atlantic Canada, to hold a conference on The Future of Labour Force: Immigration, Diversity, AI and Atlantic Canada, to be held on October 16, 2026. Supported by Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, the provinces of Newfoundland & Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island.
- **CBC Radio news (NS – 9:00 am on April 21, 2026) on labour disruptions in education institutions.** [The interview was conducted by Ben Dorman.](#) The Atlantic Research Group on Economics of Immigration, Aging and Diversity has completed five project reports on immigration in Atlantic Canada, which are being reviewed. These will be shared on the ARGEIAD website soon. Impact of PNP programs on regional inflows of immigrants (Literature review, econometric modeling and estimations).

Dr. Tony Charles

- On World Oceans Day, the Royal Society of Canada featured RSC Fellow and Sobey School professor Tony Charles on [RSC Voices](#).