

## PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

01 November 2005

(week 44)

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**Present:** Said Irandoust (*Chair*)  
Dennes T Bergado  
Peter Haddawy  
Nusrat Sharmin Huq  
Nazrul Islam  
Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai  
Sivanappan Kumar  
Stephen Ogunlana

Sudip K Rakshit  
Jonathan Shaw  
Ng Eng Wan  
Vilas Wuwongse

*Secretaries:* Karma Rana  
Renedith A Calabdan

**By invitation:** Ginette Chamart  
Matthew Laszewski  
Ann Lopez-Fontanilla  
Aekavute Sujarae

**Apologies:**  
Chainarong Na Lamphun  
M Shrinivas Rao

### **PROCEDURAL MATTERS AND FOLLOW-UP ISSUES**

#### **PAC 01.11.01 Welcome**

All members were welcomed to PAC meeting. Ms. Ginette Chamart, who was attending on behalf of the Chair of the Employees Committee, was also welcomed. Apologies were received.

#### **PAC 01.11.02 Review of the Minutes of the PAC Meeting of 18 November 2005**

The minutes of the 18 October 2005 PAC meeting were confirmed.

### **POLICY AND STRATEGY MATTERS**

#### **PAC 01.11.04 President's Office Retreat**

PAC was provided with the summary report of the President's Office Retreat which was held at the Kum Luang Resort, Nakhon Nayok, courtesy of Mr. Chainarong Na Lapmphon, President, AIT Alumni Association, Mother Chapter on from 29-30 October 2005 . The President provided a brief on the main outcomes which are as follows:

- Establishment of the "Decision Making Meeting" renamed at PAC as the "Decision Meeting" which the President will Chair, shall be a platform open to all whereby decisions on issues of strategic importance and of having serious impact to the institute will be made and formalized. This mechanism is put in place to avoid ad-hoc decisions, promote transparency and to provide an opportunity to the members of the AIT community, who may have different views and valid inputs pertaining to issues at hand, to affect the decision-making process. Announcement on the recommended decisions together with the rationale on which they were based will be provided in advance through a special website on the intranet. The President

stressed that it will not be a venue for debates. As a methodology, members wanting to contest a recommended decision will have to present his/her input, comments, arguments etc. in writing to the particular person. While PAC discussions will be one of the sources of input for the Decision Meetings, it could also come from other sources (faculty, staff and students). It will be scheduled fortnightly as a start but may have to be adjusted as the need arises. PAC meetings will be aimed at addressing strategic and policy issues such as promotion and tuition fee structures, recommendations from WGs etc. The PAC will be purely advisory to the decision meetings.

- Strategy outlines prepared by the VPs will be further revised taking into account comments made at the retreat which will be forwarded to the Academic Senate.
- The Executive Summary Reports of each of the WGs and final reports of WG 2 and 3 were received. It was decided that as soon as final reports of all WGs are available, the following schedules for further actions will be followed:

4 Nov. 2005	week 44	Circulation of the final draft reports to Schools and Units for comments and suggestions.
18 Nov. 2005	week 46	Deadline for receiving comments and suggestions.
18 Nov. – 2 Dec. 2005	week 46 to week 48	Working Groups to integrate feedback in preparation of the final report.
7 Dec. 2005	week 49	Special PAC meeting at which areas requiring further study will be identified and discussed. Specific recommendations will be translated into concrete decisions (P&P, guidelines, regulations etc.)
9 Dec. 2005	week 49	Present final reports to the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees.
13 Dec. 2005	week 50	Decision Meeting – at which specific recommendations will be approved for implementation in January 2006.

- The titles of the Administrative Office Heads will be kept as “Heads” to reflect a more academic connotation rather than “Directors”, with heads and people in-charge of sub-units as “Coordinators”. Only in the case of the AIT Extension will the title of Director will be maintained since it is within the realm of academic activities and it delivers such kind of activities. The President reiterated that the organizational structure must be kept of flat as possible at the same time avoid proliferation of sub-units. Appropriate adjustments will be made in the salary and not in the form of supplementary allowance for the AOHs who would be assuming additional responsibilities.

#### **PAC 01.11.05 AIT Homepage (launch of the new AIT website)**

PAC viewed the new webpage for AIT which is currently undergoing work by the Task Force chaired by the Vice President (External Relations) charged to carry out the re-design and re-development of the AIT Website with the purpose of reflecting a good, and over-all picture of AIT’s educational programmes, its research undertakings and other academic and outreach activities. The PAC commended the work of the Task Force and for giving the AIT homepage a much needed facelift and provided additional inputs for further improvement before its launching. The following ideas were put forward:

- The new Website should be launched featuring the three new schools.

- Schools' respective websites need to have the same theme as that of the main AIT website thus re-design and re-development of schools' website should be looked into.
- Focus on research themes and agenda, rather than FoS oriented undertakings.
- Use of pictures of people (students, faculty, staff) is encouraged to convey a people-oriented academic institution.
- "Upcoming Events" highlights.
- Use of templates and data bases.
- Include updated facts and figures, and downloadable annual report.

The web team will incorporate agreed changes and suggestions. The date of launching will have to be set.

#### **PAC 01.11.06 Central Administration Structure**

The President reported that Dr. Ni Ni Thein, VP-ER has provided her input on the central administration organizational structure. As previously scheduled, a formal introduction meeting of the six Administrative Office Heads will be held 3 November 2005 at the AIT Conference Center Auditorium where Office Heads will have the opportunity to outline their plans, objectives, strategies etc. and also respond to queries from staff members.

#### **PAC 01.11.07 One-Stop Student Center (Annex 1)**

PAC endorsed the "One-Stop Student Center" concept proposed and presented to the PAC by the Head of the Students Office, Ms. Ann Lopez-Fontanilla. PAC also approved utilization of the remaining amount of approximately Baht500,000 from the budget of Registry and Admissions for 2005 for the purpose of refurbishing the physical set up of the current Registry and Admission office to become the one-stop student center. Likewise, the PAC strongly recommended that other Administrative Office Heads also consider a similar concept for their respective units. Information on this initiative will be conveyed to students during the student orientation.

The concept, details of which were also deliberated in the SU Working Group, puts forward the principle that places student issues and needs first. It would allow students to access admissions, assistantship/financial aid, registry, cashier / invoicing and maybe later on, student accommodation, in one place which is envisaged to become more of a self-service center in the future. Implementation of the concept will be in carried out in 3 dimensions, viz. physical, operational, and system/technology and would require all staff involved to challenge boundaries and traditional work load, promote change towards a team- and service-centered working methods and commit to eventual paperless processing.

The Head of Student Office will initiate the necessary processes for the implementation of the approved concept.

#### **PAC 01.11.08 Proposed Guidelines for Administering Examination**

PAC endorsed the guidelines for administering examinations (see Annex 2) proposed by the VP Education with the last item as an optional measure. These guidelines will be added to the existing Academic Practices Manual. Preventive/detective and penalty structures are normally set up to do away with any form of cheating which degrades the quality of an AIT degree. It was pointed out that guidelines must be enforced consistently and effectively which require cooperation from faculty as well as students. Suggestions (e.g. engaging doctoral students/responsible staff as invigilators during the entire duration of the

examination, multiple classes concept of administering examination, etc.) from PAC members were noted and other innovative concepts will be further explored and considered.

The proposed guidelines will be incorporated in the current Academic Practices Manual.

#### **PAC 01.11.09 Cost of Living Allowance (CoLA)**

The President had recently appointed members of the 2006 CoLA Committee, chaired by Prof. Haddawy to review and analyze the average changes of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Bangkok Metropolis, which will be used as a basis for 2006 fiscal year CoLA adjustments for staff members whose basics salaries are less than Baht 25,000/month. The Chair reported that the committee will soon convene its first meeting and will report back resulting recommendations.

### **FINANCE AND AUDIT**

#### **PAC 01.11.10 Budget 2006 Update**

The budget instructions ensuing from the Budget Committee meeting of 31 October 2005 were received from CFO. Schools' budget will be sent back for further review as Schools are required to balance their fund 10 revenue and expenses. SERD is required to revise the budget so that a more realistic revenue growth and a moderated cost will be set. Centers are also required to balance their Fund 10 and Fund 21 budgets. A Task Force will be set up to review operations of centers and determine viability and relevance of activities.

The central administration (President Office and the 6 Offices) are required to ensure reduction of the 2006 total operating expenditure by 20% from 2005 forecast. Administrative Office Heads shall take full responsibility in managing cost of units under them to meet the set target. Outsourcing of services which can result in cost savings is recommended for all offices to consider, particularly Infrastructure. Budgets will be reviewed after the first 6 months of 2006 and if results are unfavourable, downsizing of personnel or salary cut will have to be implemented.

Some schools that may not be able to fully recover within a year will need to present a plan how to recover the deficit before the budget is approved. Likewise, if set targets for the schools are not met and the trend does not improve, the President will need the honest judgment of the Deans to identify areas needing further development which are to be kept and those which need to be discontinued. The P & Ps related to the current practice of allowing faculty to earn from approved revenue-generating Institute activities on top of their salary without the mechanism of recovering the time of faculty engaged in sponsored /contracted projects will be reviewed. It was agreed to set-up a Task Force to review and evaluate the operation of currently running centers. Close collaboration with the AIT Extension on feasible schemes of compensating faculty/staff involved in training activities will be pursued.

It was also pointed out that the calculation of schools performance should be done in a way such that the total income and the total expenditure are clearly reflected.

In line with above the CFO was requested to present the Fund 10 items for the Schools in a manner that reflects all related incomes and expenditures.

### **OPERATION**

### **PAC 01.11.11 Appointment and Renewal / Re-appointment Cases**

The following cases were endorsed:

#### *Faculty Appointments:*

1. Dr Ho Dinh Duan, Adjunct Lecturer, 1 year , SAT-RSGIS, AIT-Vietnam.
2. Prof Dr Zhang Jixian, Visiting Professor, 1 year, SAT-RSGIS, self-support /no cost to AIT.
3. Dr Denis Sweatman, Adjunct Lecturer, 5 months, SAT-Microelectronics, self-support /no cost to AIT.
4. Dr Mikko Kovalainen, Visiting Senior Researcher, 6 months, SAT – ICT, seconded by the Government of Finland.
5. Dr Chutiporn Anutariya, Adjunct Lecturer, 4 months, SAT-CSIM, Fund 10.

#### *Staff renewals/reappointments:*

1. Ms Farhat J Chowdhury, Project Associate, 1 year & 2 months, SERD–UEM, Fixed-term.
2. Mr Bimalendu Mohanty, Project Associate, 1 year & 2 months, SERD–UEM, Fixed-term.
3. Mr Prajapati Shapkota, Project Associate, 1 year & 1.5 months, SERD–UEM, Fixed-term.
4. Ms Neelawat Intaraksa, Project Associate (System & Electronic Resources), 1 year & 2 months, Library, Fixed-term.
5. Ms Rungtiwa Saranyapipat, Librarian I, Acquisition Section, 1 year, Fund 10.
6. Mr Reynaldo A Calabdan, Senior Program Officer, 2 years, AIT Extension, Fund 21.
7. Ms Maria Socorro G Fontanilla, System Analyst, 1 year, AIT Extension, Fund 21.

Renewal cases from ITServ were deferred to the next PAC meeting. VP-Research was requested to review the overall staffing of ITServ with reference to the required functions in the unit and with the view of exploring the possibility of outsourcing technical expertise. Provision of job descriptions for each of the required position should also be prepared.

The renewal cases from SOM were deferred to the next meeting. The PAC requested that cases be presented by the Acting Dean/SOM providing necessary justification for the posts.

### **PAC 01.11.12 On-campus Travel Agent**

The company profile and travel management proposal of the “Turismo Asia” were provided by the CFO who reported that the company had expressed interest to set up an office at AIT. PAC was informed that the UN-ESCAP Office in Bangkok also uses the same company. In view of the need for a professional travel company at AIT which can provide cost-effective and quality / efficient services to the Institute, the PAC endorsed that a formal bidding process be initiated by inviting travel companies to participate, from whom presentations and financial proposals could be requested prior to the bidding. For AIT’s part, clear contractual conditions should be drawn and the travel company’s TOR should cover the conduct of bookings, familiarization to AIT travel policies etc. Tendering procedures need to be formalized as well as set the evaluation criteria.

The CFO will initiate and facilitate the bidding process and draw up the TOR of the travel company AIT needs.
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#### **PAC 01.11.13 Concessionaires’ Rental Charges**

PAC received the recommendation to increase AIT concessionaires’ rental charges by 10% proposed by the Head of Infrastructure (formerly ARCA). The Head of Infrastructure will be requested to make a careful analysis on the possible implications of such a measure for deliberation at the next PAC meeting. Advantages such as revenue to be generated should be weighed against possible negative impacts to students and the community as whole. The historical trend on rental increases to AIT concessionaires, and the complete data on the current AIT concessionaires which should include contract renewal dates etc. should also be provided.

#### **PAC 01.11.14 Policies on Internal Charging**

A memorandum pertaining to problems encountered on the current internal charging system and recommended measures prepared by the Head of Infrastructure were received. The Coordinator of the Administrative Office Heads will discuss this matter further at the next meeting of the Unit Heads and report back to PAC.

#### **PAC 01.11.15 MoU Between AIT and Université de Montréal**

The request from the University of Montreal to renew the MoU for Academic Exchange and Cooperation with AIT was put forward by the Dean of the School of Sustainable Development (SSD). The PAC members were in agreement on the need for a standard guideline in initiating MoU with other institutions to be developed. On-going partnership agreements should also be reviewed.

VP-External Relations will further consider the implications to AIT of the MoU with Université de Montréal and bring at the next PAC meeting.
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#### **PAC 01.11.16 Advisory Board**

Standard structure and guidelines should be set for all three schools and AIT Extension, and presented to PAC.

#### **PAC 01.11.17 Board Reception**

PAC members were invited and also provided with the list of those attending the Board Reception on 2 November 2005.

**PAC 01.11.18 Next Meeting**

The next PAC meeting, is scheduled for *Tuesday, 15 November 2005*, from 08.30 hours, in the Board Room, Administration Building.

**ANNEX 1**

**One-Stop Student Center  
A Term of Reference for the Student Unit**

*The One-Stop Student Center Concept is:*

1. a principle that places the needs of students first,
2. a partnership that emphasizes working together,
3. people who are guided by quality and who view service as their job,
4. a technology that encourages round-the clock self-service, and
5. a workplace that is service-friendly.

*It requires us to:*

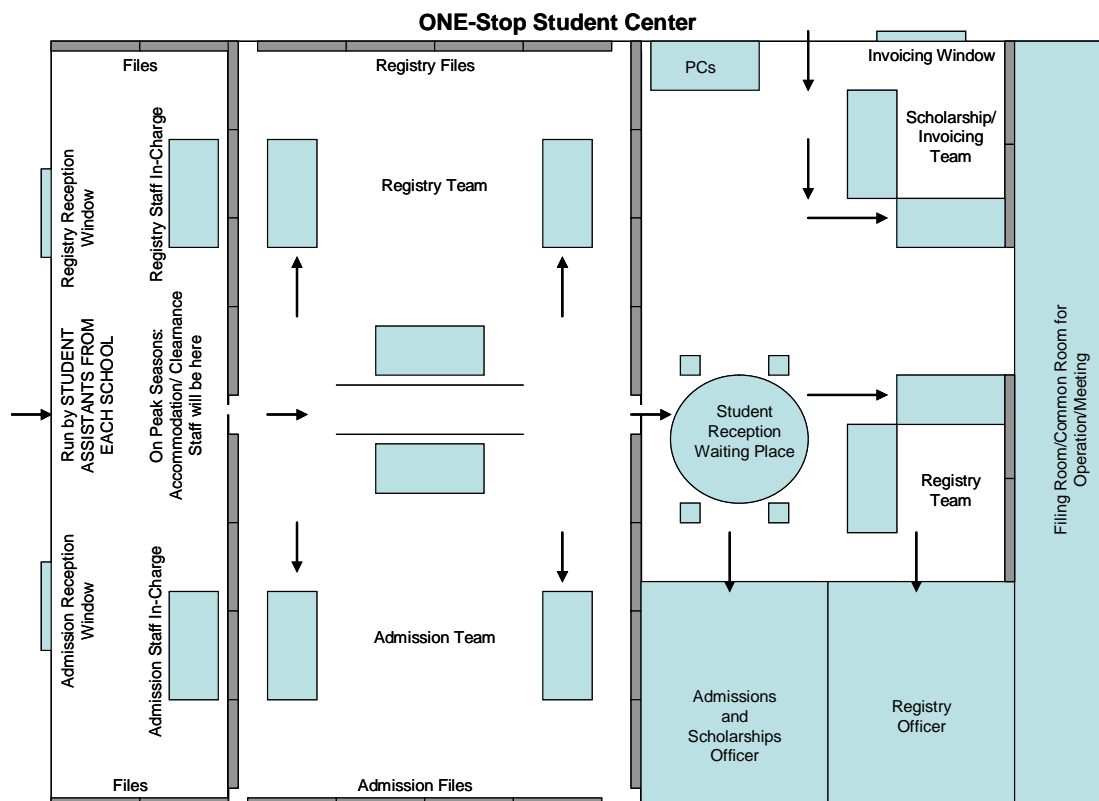
1. challenge boundaries and traditional work loads,
2. promote change, and
3. commit to eventual paperless processing.

*The One-Stop Student Center* will hopefully provide a continuous service environment, eliminate barriers, and promote challenges in learning rather than in the delivery of services. The concept will be implemented in 3 dimensions: (a) physical; (b) operational; and (c) system/technology.

**PHYSICAL DIMENSION - TEAR DOWN DIVISIONS.** The Institute continues to operate in ‘divisions or units’. However, students do not define their needs and concerns based on administrative or office boundaries. We need to remember that student affairs are not a set of separate student transactions labeled as admissions, financial aid, registry, and so on. The Student Unit should be built on a competent group of people working on a foundation of cooperation and interaction. We should be team- and service-centered. We should tear down service divisions that challenge students’ patience and by merging procedures, staffing, technology, and facilities to improve services. Responsibilities should blend and artificial barriers between units will have to recede.

**Proposal:**

PHYSICALLY, the one-stop center will allow students to access admissions, assistantship/financial aid, registry, cashier/invoicing and maybe later on, student accommodation, in one place.





**OPERATIONAL DIMENSION: INCULCATE SERVICE ORIENTATION THROUGH 3-STAGE INTERACTION.** Education is first and foremost a service and not a product; our students are our customers—they are people/professionals who need attention. Unfortunately, we are not really service-oriented.

**Proposals:**

- Three-stage interaction: (a) student-to-student; (b) student units' staff (general assistance); and (c) student units' officers (functional experts/specialist assistance – admissions officer, registry officer, invoicing officer, scholarships officer, counseling officer, etc.).
- **What Students can do (the frontliners)?** We will train and use students to walk other students through their problems – this will be the essence of our service. If these student assistants can find their ways in and out of the system, they can also walk other students with them. After all, who can best serve students than students themselves? This is also in view of the proposal to require students receiving funding to do assistantship work. The frontliners' work will mostly focus on repetitive tasks and routine questions that are ideally completed on a self-service mode, for example: (a) requests for information or queries that are answerable by leading students to relevant websites or FAQ sites; (b) how to fill up forms (e.g. transcript request, application, certification requests), which sooner or later should be online; and (c) assisting co-students to concerns specific to their school/field.
- **What Generalists do?** General assistance may pertain to transactions that require intervention of staff members who have broad knowledge base and can answer a variety of general questions about processes in addition to specific knowledge in a particular area e.g. admissions, registry, assistantship. Sample tasks: (a) build up FAQ sites/respond to email queries; (b) interpret/give results of a process; (c) troubleshoot routine problems; (d) prepare adhoc reports; etc.
- **What Specialists do?** Specialist assistance may pertain to transactions that require specialists who have comprehensive, detailed, in-depth knowledge in their area of expertise such that they can analyze complex, difficult, and unusual cases and have the ability and authority to resolve them. Sample tasks: (a) extended student concerns; (b) forecasts/projection reports; (c) statistical reports required by the administration; (c) faculty concerns pertaining to academic practices, etc.
- **Response Time.** When possible, we will walk students through their problem, to a solution. If an on-the-spot solution is not possible, we will follow-up with the student within 48 hours. If the problem takes longer to solve, we will stay in touch by phone or e-mail to apprise students of the progress being made. Whenever possible, we will honor the one-stop concept by making contact with other units across the Institute, rather than just sending students to other campus offices.
- **Delivery.** Quality service should be marked by friendly and caring interactions with students to determine the nature of their concerns, needs, or problems and by prompt, accurate attention to those concerns.

**SYSTEM/TECHNOLOGY DIMENSION: AIM FOR PAPERLESS PROCESSES.** We have made great steps in automating our systems, for example, we now have the Student Information System, which provides an integrated platform to record and handle individual student information, thesis information, up-to-date transcript information, and current financial accountability. It provides the courses offered/catalogues and timetable. But more importantly, it allows online registration, invoicing and accommodation booking. However, aside from these services, we may need to explore the other systems so that ultimately 70 to 80% of student concerns can be self-service, readily available on a continuous and dynamic basis. New systems may include:

**Proposals:**

**Admission System**

A web site may be developed for applicants to submit application forms for admission and inquire about admission status. It should facilitate the tracking of each round of the application process. Internet inquiry on application progress allows each applicant to better understand his/her current application status and or view if he/she is on wait list. It may also include yearly admission statistics reports to help management with valuable information in order to make enrollment more competitive.

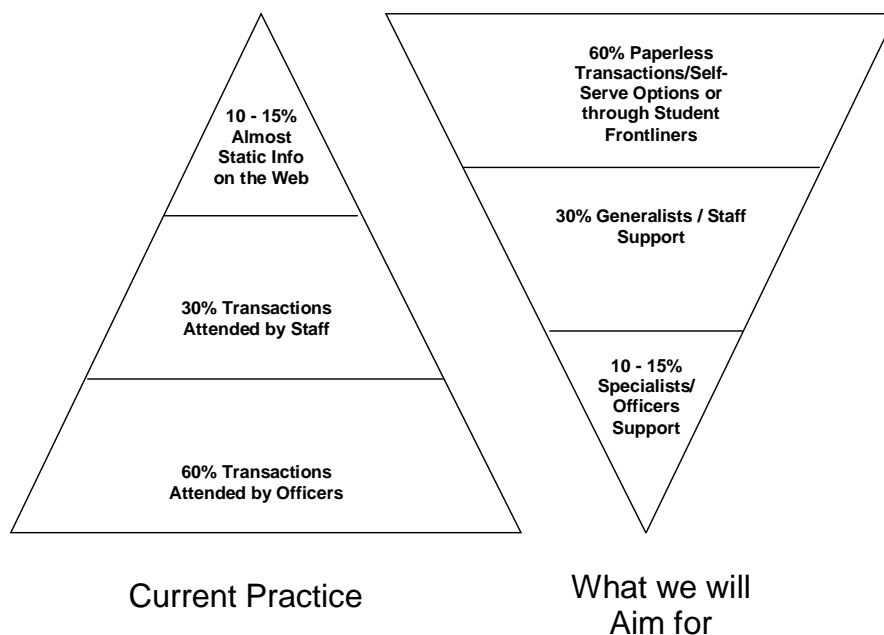
**Financial Aid and Assistantship /Medical Support System**

The system may provide functions to capture grants forms and record the financial support approval status. For the unit, it may provide functions to print relevant financial offer letters by batch. Additionally, it may include records for medical/insurance benefits.

**Alerts** – Personalized process built in the SIS that will set a “red flag” to alert students of critical processes (for example, midterm/final exams, schedules of payments, etc.) that need to be completed within given timeframes.

**FAQ** - We should exert efforts at developing the student unit FAQ pages that provide instant access to frequently-asked questions. We shall look forward to lesser and lesser face-to-face problem solving by placing a higher priority on educating students on the use of online services, finding ways to provide expanded electronic services and training students working in the one-stop-center to teach other students how to handle routine inquiries online. When students ask ‘why’ and ‘how’, we will make every effort to provide the information necessary for them to become independent users of our services.

**IN THE END, WHAT DO WE INTEND TO ACHIEVE:**



- **Self-Service via the Web.** Hopefully, with more and more online systems, we can achieve 60% of student services that are repetitive/routine to be carried through the web; tools that student frontliners may use when attending to student concerns. By automating, we could achieve accuracy and consistency in our response, less misinformation and 24-hour access. In the future, maybe we could also think of chat modes for generalists/specialists to be able to respond to special concerns on-line, real-time.
- **Responsive and Student-Centered.** Through the one-stop center and by aiming for paperless transactions, we become more responsive and student-centered.
- **Aim for Continuous Improvement.** If we could release valuable staff time through more transactions through the web and through use of student frontliners, the staff could respond faster to special/critical or problematic issues and can venture to activities bent towards continuous and quality improvement. Releasing their time means also more time for concerns of faculty/staff. Hopefully, this will lead to both student/faculty satisfaction as well as to the student unit staff’s own satisfaction.

## [ANNEX 2](#)

### **Proposed Guidelines for Administering Examinations**

Peter Haddawy

31 October 2005

There is currently a disturbing level of cheating on exams going on at AIT. This was brought to my attention through reports of cheating on midterm exams in several courses this semester. Cheating in any form degrades the quality of an AIT degree and must not be tolerated. Going by the maxim that prevention is the best cure, I would like to introduce the following guidelines for administering of examinations in order to reduce the chance that students are able to cheat.

- The exam room must be large enough so that there is space equivalent to one empty seat or desk between each pair of students.
- There must be one invigilator for every 30 students taking the exam.
- Students must be assigned to seats rather than being permitted to choose where they sit.
- There should be at least two sets of exam questions in order to reduce the chance that students can copy answers from one another. This can be done by varying the order of questions, by varying the problem parameters for questions involving calculation, and by varying the order of answers for multiple-choice questions.