

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

02 May 2006
(week 18)

Present: Said Irandoust (*Chair*)
Peter Haddawy
Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai
Sivanappan Kumar
Nisha Onta
I M Pandey

Jonathan Shaw
Sudip K Rakshit
Vilas Wuwongse
Ann Lopez-Fontanilla

Secretaries: Karma Rana
Renedith Calabdan

Apology: Stephen Ogunlana
Dennes T Bergado

Invited: Ralf Kircher

PAC 06.05.01 Welcome and Apologies

The President welcomed all present to the PAC meeting.

PAC 06.05.02 Review of the Minutes of the PAC Meeting of 18 April 2006.

The minutes of the 18 April 2006 PAC meeting were confirmed.

PAC 06.05.03 Follow-up on Actions Taken

PAC took note of the report on "Follow-up Actions Taken". Since most of the issues would be taken up under separate agenda items, and towards optimizing the time, the report was not reviewed in detail but considered more from a reference perspective.

PAC 06.05.04 Issues from the President

1. Outcome of the 27 April 2006 Board of Trustees Meeting

- *Chairmanship* - The Chairman of the Board has expressed his intention to formally step down as Chairman at the next Board meeting (30 October 2006) and wish to nominate Dr. Tej Bunnag, Advisor to the office of His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary and also former Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Thailand, as his successor
- *SDP* - The President reported that the Board has some additional comments on the SDP regarding the concept of ownership and governance. The importance of maintaining close and friendly ties with old benefactors and donors to AIT, which if not feasible under the proposed core and associate member concept, could be addressed through setting up of an Advisory Council, under the Assembly of States, was one such suggestion in particular. Other comments are available in the summary report of the 27 April 2006 meeting of the Board of Trustees, (Annex 1).

- **Student Recruitment** - There were queries raised by members of the Board on the use of agents in the student recruitment process. The President clarified that the use of agents is becoming a common phenomenon and also used by other well established universities and further explained that the agents enlisted in the AIT context have good track records in terms of the universities and institutions they have serviced. However, depending on the quality of students applying through this model, this concept may need to be further reviewed and evaluated. In this context the President welcomed the idea put forward by the SU President in PAC on the possibility of using students as agents. Ms. Onta reported that she had made initial discussions with the graduating SOM students who have shown interest in preparing the business plan. The proposed business plan prepared by students is expected to be submitted to the President by the end of May 2006.
- **UNESCO-AIT Collaboration** - The Board has endorsed the proposals for the establishment of close collaboration between AIT and UNESCO, through the establishment of UNESCO Professorial Chairs and UNESCO category II Centers. Although there would be no direct funding provided by UNESCO for the professorial chairs, such partnership would be beneficial to AIT in a number of ways such as through co-branding, in addressing funding for core activities which can be gained indirectly etc.

2. Election of Staff Representatives

In light of the approved amendments in the bye-laws, the HR Office will be requested to coordinate the election of the 6 staff representatives one of whom could represent the staff in meetings of the Board in like manner as the faculty has a faculty relations committee and have a representation to the Board of Trustees.

3. Outsourcing of AIT Conference Center Services

PAC received the document presenting the financial implications of AIT joining the Best Western hotel chain. PAC was of the view that the proposed financial arrangements will need to be re-negotiate with Best Western.

The VPAA was requested to discuss with Best Western possible revision in the proposed financial arrangements and inform PAC of the outcome.

Other suggestions and comments raised were noted as follows:

- Need for more conference and seminar rooms in AITCC.
- Plans for upgrading AITCC to become an attractive venue for corporate retreats and training should be considered.
- Need for the development of on-line computerized booking.
- Staff training program should be must.

4. Graduation Ceremony (24 May 2006)

The Head of Student Office provided an update on the progress of arrangements being made in preparation for the forthcoming 105th AIT Graduation Ceremony which will be presided over by HRH Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. Due to the large number of graduating students and lack of adequate space in the AIT premises, the venue has been changed to the Thailand Science Park Convention Center, located at the National Science and Technology Development Agency (Thailand Science Park), which is closely located and adjacent to the AIT campus, and with whom AIT enjoys close ties. Each student will be allowed to bring two guests free of charge to witness the ceremony while their additional guests will be charged with an entrance fee of Baht 250.

POLICY AND STRATEGY MATTERS**PAC 06.05.05 P&P Statements**

- Credit Policy (feedback from the Admissions Committee)

The feedback ensuing from the Admissions Committee (AC) meeting of 28 April 2006 concerning the PAC-approved P&P on Credit Policy was received. AC has recommended a more stringent policy of not allowing students with outstanding bills to register at the beginning of the semester. Among the recommendations are: (a) if fees remain unpaid before the start of the succeeding semester, viewing of grades, transcripts and registration for the current semester will be disallowed and student's status will be "suspended due to financial liability" and (b) final semester students will not be permitted to graduate if fees remain unpaid at the end of two consecutive semesters including the semester in which he/she was suspended due to financial liability, the student shall be recommended for dismissal etc.

PAC approved the recommendations of the Admissions Committee as indicated in revised P&P on Credit Policy in Annex 2. Towards enhancing the process in student registration into the future, it was suggested that the AC consider exploring the use of coding as part of the system.

AOH Coordinator to convey to Head, RES, PAC endorsement of the Credit Policy as well as the suggestions put forward to the AC.

PAC 06.05.06 Strategic Development Plan (SDP)

The School Deans were requested to submit the official written feedback from the Schools on the Strategic Development Plan latest by week 19 (8-12 May 2006) which is expected to be based on the result of thorough discussions with the members of the faculty. Faculty meetings of SOM and SERD are scheduled for 9 and 17 May 2006, respectively to deliberate the draft SDP.

School Deans to submit to the President official written feedback by the schools, latest by week 19 (8-12 May 2006)

PAC 06.05.07 School and AIT Extension Boards

- SOM - Invitation letters have been sent to proposed members. Dean, SOM reported that additional names are being proposed.
- SERD - Names have been proposed and Dean, SERD is seeking informal confirmations;
- SET - Proposed names that will come from the Dean will be discussed with the President;
- AIT Extension - Proposed names of the external members of the AIT Extension Board have been discussed between the President and Director, AIT Extension. As informal confirmations were received, the President will soon issue the formal invitation letters.

The School Deans and Director AIT Extension were requested to try and schedule the first meeting of their respective Boards in August 2006.

PAC 06.05.08 Donors Meeting

The first stage of the Donor's meeting, which is to brainstorm with partners and donors on the draft strategic development plan, will be held on 7 and 8 June 2006. Professor Roger Johansson will serve as the facilitator for the brainstorming meeting with the private sector on the 7th while Mr. Borje Wallberg will facilitate the deliberation with government agencies and other partners on the 8th of June. The second stage wherein the finalized version of the strategic development plan could be presented will be scheduled sometime in November 2006, after it has been presented to the Board of Trustees in October 2006.

The President also informed PAC that Mr. Folke Hjalms, former Director of International Relations at Chalmers will visit AIT in the beginning of June, and be assisting AIT in finalizing the strategies for fund raising linked to the SDP.

PAC 06.05.09 Issues from the AOH Coordinator

- Coordinator Administrative Office Heads

Ms. Ann Lopez-Fontanilla, Head of the Student Office who served as the Coordinator of the Administrative Office Heads (AOH) for the past three months informed the meeting that her term as AOH Coordinator would be ending soon and that the appointment of the next AOH Coordinator would be made at the 9 May AOH meeting. PAC offered a vote of thanks to Ms. Lopez-Fontanilla for the very efficient and thorough manner in which he has performed her duties as Coordinator of the AOH.

- Student Passports

The AOH Coordinator reported that there is no written P&P pertaining to the safekeeping of students passports by the Government Relations Unit (GRU). The main reason for keeping the students passports with GRU has been in order to keep track of the dates for visa renewal which could be addressed if a database for such purpose is in place. PAC endorsed the recommendation of the AOH Coordinator to allow students to keep their passports (as soon as the database is operational) but at the same time provide options to continue the current arrangement should some students prefer to let GRU do the safekeeping.

Head, Student Office to make a formal announcement to students as soon as the database system is ready.

PAC 06.05.10 Academic Issues

Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA)

PAC endorsed in principle the new DBA program proposed by SOM which will also be forwarded for review and endorsement of the Academic Senate. PAC welcomed and encouraged more of such innovative type of programs which would provide an opportunity for practicing professionals to pursue their doctoral studies while at the same time help provide fresh input to the curriculum in terms of the creation of new knowledge. The new DBA program is intended to create a body of knowledge ingrained

in practice which may be offered in Thailand as well as outside in collaboration with an established industry/institution. The first offshore DBA program is proposed to be offered in Sri Lanka with the administrative and marketing program support of the Ceylinco Consolidated's educational arm, International College of Business and Technology (ICBT).

PAC 06.05.11

Dean, SOM will submit the relevant documents to the Academic Senate.
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There is a standing agenda item at PAC on issues to be brought to the Decision Meeting. To date the following issues have been identified for presentation at the next Decision Meeting:

- Overhead Scheme
- Water Charging System in AIT residential areas
- Vehicle Inspection process

FINANCE AND AUDIT**PAC 06.04.12 FY 2005 Un-audited Financial Results and FY 2006 1st Quarter Results**

PAC requested the Head of Finance to:

- make available to PAC members the unaudited Institute financial results for 2005 which was presented to the on 27 April 2006 meeting of the Board;
- send the revised budget for 2006 to schools and units;
- provide a monthly cash flow report to PAC;
- provide a financial analysis before the next FoS visits, to include a verification and comparison of financial results for 2005 and 2006 by period (e.g. quarterly), identification of reasons why AIT did better during the end of 2005 and first quarter of 2006, and to identify where efforts on cost reduction done so far have shown results and provide recommendations;
- make plans towards the direction of clearing past accounts, particularly important would be the restatement of accounts, in order to have a correct comparison for each year or period, for example the removal of UNEP accounts;
- provide update on engagement of external auditor to review fund accounts in deficit;

Head, Finance Office reported that the audited financial results will be ready by the end of May 2006.

PAC 06.04.13 Action Plans in Response to FY 2005 Results

The President remarked that this is a timely opportunity for the Schools and Administrative Units to consider the capacity, background, efficiency and competency profiles of staff members especially in light of the needs and orientation of the Schools and Administrative Units both in the short and long term with the aim of attaining an optimal staff balance. The President informed the meeting that he has already received the Action Plans in response to the FY 2005 Results from the Administrative Office Heads. A similar plan was requested from the School Deans to be submitted to the President by 10 May 2006. The President stressed that this exercise should not be taken as an arbitrary exercise but rather be viewed in terms of their overall long-term impact to the efficiency and sustainability of the Institute.

OPERATION**PAC 06.04.14 Appointment and Renewal / Re-appointment Cases**

The following cases were endorsed:

1. Prof. Shunji Murai, Adjunct Professor, 1 year, SET/RS&GIS, No Cost to AIT.
2. Prof. Yoshifumi Yasuoka, Adjunct Professor, 1 year, SET/RS&GIS, No Cost to AIT.

3. Prof. Akinori Nishihara, Adjunct Professor, 3 & ½ months, SET/Microelectronics, Fund 10.

OTHER MATTERS

PAC 06.04.15 Payment of Honorarium

Dean, SERD brought to PAC the issue on payment of honorarium following request from project investigators from SERD who are engaged in long-term projects running for over two years or more. The policy on honorarium is that payment was to be made only upon the completion of the project after the accounts are closed. The President explained that this is to ensure that sufficient funds are available. A number of suggestions were put forward by PAC members, as follows:

- An arrangement in that a fraction of payment is given during the implementation of the project and the remaining at the end of the project.
- Alternatively, faculty could sign a promissory note, and pay in the event the project runs into deficit. However, the question as to what happens if a particular faculty is paid and leaves in advance of the project closure would arise.
- Credit honorarium on an annual basis, which handles the issue of cap on faculty earning of 33% of salary through activities aside from teaching. Projects for longer term duration could build in incentive mechanisms.
- It is important to take into account in taking up this issue the new policy that honorarium is paid only after the faculty buys back the time or the faculty members' salary.

VP Research is planning a series of meetings through the SCPU, during the semester break, to address the issue of honorarium and other pending matters.

PAC 06.04.16 Outcomes of PAC

Mr. Ralf Kircher, News and Media Specialist, was requested to make available issues discussed at PAC, which could be of interest the members of the AIT Community on a regular basis, without having to wait for the confirmed official minutes.

PAC 06.04.17 Next Meeting

The next PAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 30 May 2006, at 1:30 hours, in the Board Room, Administration Building.