

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

4 October 2005

(week 40)

Present: Said Irandoust (*Chair*)
Dennes T Bergado
Peter Haddawy
Nazrul Islam
Kamran Khowaja
Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai
Chainarong Na Lamphun
Matthew Laszewski
Kalchana Nettayawichit
Stephen Ogunlana
Chongrak Polprasert

Sudip K Rakshit
N Ramachandran
M Shrinivas Rao
Teresita del Rosario
Jonathan Shaw
Hoang Le Tien
Ng Eng Wan
Vilas Wuwongse

Secretaries: Karma Rana
Izel Ann M Dante

By invitation: Wannapa Pliansri

Apology: Nusrat Sharmin Huq

PROCEDURAL MATTERS AND FOLLOW-UP ISSUES

PAC 05.10.01 Welcome

The President welcomed Mr Kamran Khowaja, who is attending on behalf of the SU President, to his first PAC meeting.

PAC 05.10.02 Review of the Minutes of the PAC Meeting of 20 September 2005

The minutes of the 20 September 2005 PAC meeting were confirmed.

PAC 05.10.03 Matters Arising from the Minutes

1. Appointment of School Deans and AIT Extension Director

(The shortlisted candidates present were requested to leave the room at this point.) The President has completed his dialogues with the four current Schools and AIT Extension. The dialogues were well participated and achieved good discussions. Although there is some difficulty in differentiating among the candidates of one School, the President will make a decision on the School Deans, AIT Extension Director, as well as on the Heads of the central administration units within the week.

The concept of associate/assistant deanship will be pursued for all Schools with special consideration for women faculty for these positions.

2. School / Unit Visits on Institute's Financial Situation

The financial accounts for the period as of September 2005 will be closed within the week. The CFO suggested that the financial situation be presented

to the Schools/units during week 41 in conjunction with the budget (2006) review.

The CFO will prepare the agenda and schedule the School/unit visits during week 41.

3. Working Groups

(a) WG1

The WG1 Chair presented an analysis to determine the breakeven student FFE to sustain the Institute operations. The analysis will be useful to the Budget Committee. Based on the analysis, the following measures to achieve breakeven were proposed: (i) 10% reduction of the fixed cost, and (ii) 10% increase in tuition fees (or recovery of the 20% discount in tuition fees). Measure (ii) can be realized by restoring credit charging, or introducing professional degree programs (shortened periods), and not necessarily reverting to the term system. There should, however, be careful analysis on the possible implications and long-term effect of the proposed measures [e.g., if student-to-faculty ratios are significantly increased; maintaining quality of research guidance given to students; available faculty resource to develop programs and explore new revenue sources; AIT master graduates as feeder to the doctoral program in other universities, etc).

For planning purposes, the WG1 Chair was requested to make School-level analyses taking into consideration not only faculty strength but also School-wise revenue generated (including sponsored/contracted research grants), operation costs, and allocated costs. This might even result to varying tuition fees and/or budget allocation for each School.

Among the WG1 recommendations are: (i) the discontinuation of the current practice of allowing faculty to earn up to, but no more than, 33% of his/her salary from other approved revenue-generating Institute activities; (ii) reinstating a practice from the past of recovering the time of faculty/staff involved in sponsored/contracted projects from clients, which could also compensate for reduced overhead paid to the Institute (cash honorarium to be paid upon completion of the project and after recovery of all costs); (iii) delivery of degree programs (shortened on-campus stay; reduced supervision load); and (iv) reverting to the trimester system.

The WG1 Chair was requested to make School-level breakeven analyses. WG1 was requested to examine program development and tuition levels of comparator universities, as well as to make careful analysis on the possible implications and long-term effect of proposed measures.
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The WG1 final report will be ready in week 41.

(b) WG2

The WG2 Chair reported their progress in reviewing administrative structure/processes and budget procedures/processes, as well as institutional benchmarking of these processes. WG2 is yet to complete analysis of the administrative structure, staffing levels, and functional relationship among units.

The WG2 final report will be ready within this week (week 40).

(c) WG3

The WG3 final report has already been submitted to the President.

The WG final reports will be made available to Schools/units (week 41), which will be given two weeks to provide feedback (week 43). PAC will then analyze WG recommendations and Schools/units feedback (week 44), and finalize decisions and implementation plan (possibly by week 45).

4. PAC Composition

The new PAC composition will take effect at the next PAC meeting (week 42). The President's Senior Advisory Committee will eventually replace the Institute-wide advisory panels.

POLICY AND STRATEGY MATTERS

PAC 05.10.04 AIT Homepage / AIT Newsletter

The work of the WDTF has started prior to its first meeting scheduled for 6 October 2005. The first issue of the weekly e-Bulletin will be launched on 7 October 2005. The VP-External Relations encouraged PAC members to use the e-Bulletin for important announcements, such as the imminent decision on the School Deans, AIT Extension Director, and Heads of the central administration units. Submissions should be sent to pssu@ait.ac.th. The e-Bulletin will also be archived for future reference, and its frequency increased if necessary.

The TOR for the proposed information specialist/journalist still has not yet been finalized. It may be useful to consider ADPC's recent recruitment process for a communications expert, and the expert's TOR.

Another crucial priority is the identification of a full-time Webmaster who can both deal with contents and has authority to implement changes.

The recruitment of an information specialist/journalist and the identification of a full-time Webmaster should be expedited.
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PAC 05.10.05 Honorary Doctorate

A nomination for the conferment of the Institute's honorary doctorate degree was received by the President. In accordance with Institute policies, the request will be submitted to the Academic Senate, which is responsible for recommending through the President to the Board nominations for the honorary doctorate degree. A letter will also be sent to the nominator to inform him of the process.

<i>The nomination was already submitted to the Academic Senate and a letter sent to the nominator.</i>
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PAC 05.10.06 Cooperation with the University of Texas at Austin, USA

The Acting SOM Dean proposed a general *Academic and Scientific Cooperation and Exchange Agreement* and a specific *Program Agreement of Faculty and Staff Exchange* between AIT and the University of Texas at Austin (USA). The proposed agreements were endorsed with the inclusion of the AIT Schools of Engineering and Management, and Extension in the specific agreement to match the expertise of the LBJ School of Public Affairs in addressing the identified areas for collaborative research.

The VP-Research volunteered to visit the homepage of the University of Texas at Austin and to identify other possible areas for cooperation.

PAC 05.10.07 HRD for Rajamangala and Rajabhat Universities

The PAC endorsed the granting of assistantships (/fellowships) to eligible/qualified (GPA>2.75 for masters and GPA>3.5 for doctoral) applicants, utilizing first the RTG Agency Fund for the faculty from Rajamangala and Rajabhat universities. Admissions criteria should always be strictly enforced. Those recommended for admission to the Certificate of Advanced Studies cannot be offered assistantships (/fellowships).

PAC 05.10.08 Advertisement in Asia Inc's Annual MBA Focus

If it can still be accommodated, the PAC endorsed a ¼-page AIT advertisement at the October 2005 issue of Asia Inc that will run a special cover focus on MBA employers. The President will approve the final text of the advertisement, which will be charged against the SOM promotion budget.

PAC 05.10.09 UNEP Supported Scholarships for Environment and Sustainable Development Studies at AIT

The PAC endorsed the information sheet announcing five masters scholarships, targeted for the January 2006 Semester, provided by UNEP to AIT. To attract top students, the acceptable minimal English proficiency scores will be adjusted. This announcement will be disseminated as widely as possible by both AIT and UNEP to get enough candidates in the identified thematic areas.

The proposed changes made by the Language Center Director, after discussions with the Director of Admissions & Scholarships, were approved by the AIT-UNEP Joint Steering Committee.

FINANCE AND AUDIT

PAC 05.10.10 Financial Status as of September 2005

The financial accounts for the period as of September 2005 will be presented at the next PAC meeting (week 42).

PAC 05.10.11 2006 Budget

The submission of budget (2006) proposals from Schools/units is very slow. To date, only 20% of the unit budgets were received. PAC members were encouraged to send the required budget documents to the CFO within this week (week 40). The new School Deans can participate in the subsequent rounds of the budget process.

PAC 05.10.12 Budget Committee

The CFO will provide the President with the schedule of the Budget Committee's dialogues and reviews with Schools/units.

OPERATION

PAC 05.10.13 TU-NSTDA-AIT Tripartite Meeting

The proposed composition of the advisory, committee and secretariat groups of an Academic Cooperation Committee was received. The Dean of Management and ARCA should be added among the AIT representatives in the committee group. The first meeting of the Academic Cooperation Committee is scheduled for 6 October 2005. AIT faculty members identified for specific research areas are invited to attend the meeting but are not expected to make presentations. A smaller Executive Committee will be formed to receive research details.

PAC 05.10.14 Office of the National Education Standards & Quality Assessment: Evaluation of AIT

The RTG Relations Coordinator reported that the ONESQA has established a committee to evaluate AIT. It was pointed out that AIT is not under the National Education Act of Thailand and as such, it is not subject to the same assessment requirement that ONESQA conducts for universities in Thailand. However, ONESQA may be allowed to evaluate AIT "outside" the National Education Act requirement. AIT could respond to ONESQA indicating that since we are currently in the process of academic and administrative restructuring, such an evaluation could be considered at a later stage following mutual discussions.

<p><i>Professor Tabucanon was consulted and confirmed that no agreement was given by AIT to be evaluated by ONESQA.</i></p>

PAC 05.10.15 Appointment and Renewal/Reappointment Cases

The following cases were endorsed:

Faculty appointments/reappointments:

1. Prof Michiro Kusanagi, Visiting Professor, 1 year from 1 October 2005, SAT-RSGIS, No cost to AIT-Self support.
2. Prof Anand Ramachandra Bhalerao, Visiting Professor, 16 weeks from 11 January 2006, SCE-WEM, On secondment-India.

Staff renewals/reappointments:

1. Dr Pakkeerthamby Abdul Salam, Senior Research Specialist, 4 months from 1 September 2005, fixed-term, SERD-E, Fund 30.
2. Ms Maybel B Diopenes, HR Assistant (Recruitment & Placement), 2 years from 1 January 2006, HRO, Fund 10.
3. Ms Suchitra Piempinsest, Administrative Secretary I, 2 years from 1 January 2006, SERD, School Fund.
4. Ms Jitra Luckanapitak, Administrative Secretary I, 2 years from 1 January 2006, SERD, School Fund.
5. Mr Aung Myint Khaing, Laboratory Supervisor, 1 year from 1 January 2006, SERD, School Fund.
6. Mr Maung Tin Win, Research Laboratory Supervisor, 1 year from 1 January 2006, SERD, School Fund.

Senate-endorsed cases:

1. Regularization of Dr Mukand Singh Babel, Associate Professor, 4 years from 1 March 2005, SCE-WEM, School Fund.
2. Renewal of Dr Amaratne Yakupitiyage, Associate Professor, 4 years from 1 June 2005, SERD-AARM, School Fund.
3. Renewal of Dr Roberto S Clemente, Associate Professor, 4 years from 16 October 2005, SCE-WEM, School Fund.
4. Renewal of Dr Nguyen Thi Kim Oanh, Associate Professor, 4 years from 1 November 2005, SERD-EEM, School Fund.
5. Renewal of Dr Kyung-Ho Park, Assistant Professor, 2 years from 1 January 2006, SCE-GTE, School Fund.

Other Case:

The proposed appointment of Dr Assela Pathirana as Assistant Professor (SCE-WEM) was deferred to the next PAC meeting.

PAC 05.10.16 Cost Cutting Proposal from GRO

The proposed plan for cost-cutting activities from GRO was received. The GRO In-Charge was requested to quantify savings should the proposed options on visa service charges be implemented. The proposal to let the students (and their family members) share the transportation cost during trips to the Immigration Department was not found acceptable as the savings to the Institute was quite minimal.

PAC 05.10.17 Visiting Fellowship

The PAC endorsed a 6-month appointment of a Visiting Fellow to undertake research with SERD-NRM under the fellowship program administered by the Asian Scholarship Foundation.

PAC 05.10.18 WWF Office Space Rental at the AIT Clubhouse

A request was received from the WWF Thailand Country Representative to forego the office space rental for two rooms on the second floor of the AIT Clubhouse, which was endorsed by the Chairman of the Arboretum Working Group. Discussion on this request was deferred to the next PAC meeting. ARCA was requested to provide more details on the space and rental charges. The Chairman of the Arboretum Working Group will also be invited to the next PAC meeting to provide further explanation.

PAC 05.10.19 Improvement of Campus Security

As requested in the last PAC meeting, ARCA presented the security needs of the Institute and proposed new security measures, which include: (i) streamlined security force; and (ii) installation of a CCTV security system. He also reiterated the earlier proposal to: (iii) equip laboratories with electronic access control systems; and (iv) assign an authorized key-man to open classrooms. It may also be useful to enforce safety and security policies. The bidding of the outsourced security guards can proceed as scheduled.

ARCA was requested to review the return on investment of the proposed measures, report security problems (including crimes that occurred on campus) and propose other possible (low-cost) solutions.
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OTHER MATTERS

Next Meeting

The next PAC meeting, with the new composition, is scheduled for *Tuesday, 18 October 2005*, from 13.30 hours onwards, in the Board Room, Administration Building.