

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

07 March 2006

(week 10)

Present:	Said Irandoust (<i>Chair</i>) Peter Haddawy Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai Sivanappan Kumar Stephen Ogunlana I M Pandey	Jonathan Shaw Sudip K Rakshit Vilas Wuwongse Ann Lopez-Fontanilla <i>Secretaries:</i> Karma Rana Renedith Calabdan
Apology:	Dennes T Bergado Nisha Onta	
Invited:	Ng Eng Wan Ralf Kircher	

PAC 06.03.01 Welcome and Apologies

The President welcomed all present to the PAC meeting.

PAC 06.03.02 Review of the Minutes of the PAC Meeting of 07 March 2006.

The minutes of the 10 February 2006 PAC meeting were *confirmed*. Comments from PAC members will be incorporated in the revised minutes of 10 February 2006.

PAC 06.03.03 Follow-up on Actions Taken

1. P&P Statements

P&P on Credit Policy

The comments from PAC members were noted and will be incorporated in the revised version which shall be reviewed at the next PAC meeting for final endorsement. Comments made by PAC members are reflected in Annex 1.

The following P&P Statements were confirmed as endorsed by PAC:

(i) Power, Authority and Delegation, (ii) Delegation of Authority, and (iii) Policy, Preparation and Compliance'.

2. Application Processing Fee

PAC endorsed the request to maintain total reciprocity between AIT and partner institutions on all associated fees of programs under the Exchange/Special/Dual Degree. It was decided that students under these programs will pay tuition and associated fees to their home institutions to avoid complications in the payment arrangements in the future. It was also decided that the processing of applications under these programs by the admissions office will remain unchanged for the time being. However, the Head, Student Office will monitor the expenses borne by Admissions Office on transactions directly

related to it. These data will be used as reference for possible provision of additional fund if deemed appropriate.

VPAA will issue a revised memorandum to reflect the decision of PAC on payment of application processing fee under the Exchange/Special/Dual Degree Programs.

3. Faculty Salary Recovery / Faculty Financial Productivity

The VP(AA) and Dean, SET are working to develop a suitable model of the faculty financial productivity with the assistance of Head, Research and Education Support (RES) Office and ITServ.

4. Investment Committee

The draft ToR was received on which comments made by PAC were noted and integrated in the draft as indicated in Annex 2. The AOH Coordinator was requested to convey to the H/Finance changes made by PAC.

5. Updates on WG 1 Task Forces

TF I - Task Force to Review the Terms of Employment, Compensation System and Development of Standard Career Path for Staff (Task Force to Rationalize Payroll Costs). The TF Chair, Dr. Shaw has updated PAC of the group's progress after convening two meetings to date. Although 30 April 2006 was the deadline set for submission of its report the TF intends to continue until completion of designated tasks.

TF IV - Task Force to Review the Semester System to Maximize Resources. As the TF to review the Semester system and how to maximize resources has not yet met, the VPAA had made initial research and analysis of which the group could use as reference in its future deliberations.

TF V - Task Force to Improve Financial Management and Accountability.

The KPMG consultant will be invited to provide a two-hour seminar on the outcome of the Institutional Assessment he has conducted on AIT and the resultant recommendations. It was felt that this approach will convey the consultant's findings to the community in the right perspective. The consultant's report, which for the time being serves as an internal reference for the community, will be made available through the AIT web.

Prof. Worsak and Prof. Ogunlana have volunteered to serve as members of TF 5 and TF 4 respectively, a gesture welcomed and appreciated by PAC.

KPMG consultant to be invited to deliver a two-hour seminar on the outcome of the institutional assessment he has conducted on AIT.

6. Infrastructure Issues

PAC commended the Head of the Infrastructure Office for initiating visits to schools and units in order to better know and respond to their needs. President will follow-up with the H/Infrastructure Office the pressing concerns conveyed by schools and units that are awaiting actions (e.g. ventilation problem of PPT FoS' laboratory, pending works requested by SOM and AIT Extension etc.) Establishment of an Advisory Committee for Infrastructure Issues which will address and carefully deliberate pertinent issues to the Institute's infrastructure is being considered.

7. Country Specific Promotions

It was agreed that there will be a weekly web-posting / announcement on the planned travels of President and VPs, and that of Deans and faculty which should include information such as dates, place and aim of travel/mission. This will be made available to all faculty, through the Deans in order to obtain all information available about and initiatives made with that particular partner institution, government agencies etc. The President upon suggestion by VP (ER) requested the ERCO Office coordinate (jointly with VP-ER) with faculty from schools who will be involved in these efforts.

The News and Media Specialist, Mr. Ralf Kircher informed the meeting of one of ERCO's ongoing initiatives whereby country-specific information sheets are currently posted on the web and are being updated which can be useful and readily available to those faculty going on missions. Mr. Kircher agreed to set up a special webpage where information on ERCO activities are posted for Deans/faculty's feedback and support by provision of inputs.

8. Gallery of Former Faculty and Professional Staff

PAC endorsed the creation of the gallery for former faculty and professional staff, on the web, as a gesture on the part of AIT to convey that their contributions are still very much welcomed and appreciated. Information on the individual's previous activities at AIT and current activities and affiliations will be included.

The initial list will be provided by HRO for confirmation of the schools, following which it will be reviewed and endorsed of the PAC.

9. AIT Web

Follow-up on when the enhanced AIT web can be uploaded was raised. Mr. Kircher has given the PAC updates of initiatives taken towards having an enhanced AIT Web and requested active participation from school webmasters.

PAC 06.03.04 Issues from the President

1. Undergraduate Programs at AIT

The President expressed a different opinion on the suggestion raised by some faculty members who perceive the offering of undergraduate degrees at AIT as one of the main solutions to the current financial situation of AIT. To him, this direction is against the idea of good branding which AIT has somehow achieved as a research-oriented post graduate institution which distinguishes itself from other institutions. Likewise, there is no evidence supporting the view that AIT will be successful in entering this venture. On the contrary, AIT must focus in addressing its quality problems at the moment. One possibility being looked into is to embark on partnerships with the best, the leading and well-known undergraduate universities of countries in the region who will see AIT as a complementary partner in achieving their educational goals.

2. Trip to Central Asia

The President briefed PAC of the ministerial meeting of 5 environmental ministers of Central Asia which the President has attended in Turkmenistan upon the invitation of the Minister of Nature Protection of Turkmenistan. There was a formal agreement by the

ministers which now recognizes AIT as a formal partner. The development of proposals which are to be funded by Central Asia are under discussion with UNEP.

POLICY AND STRATEGY MATTERS

PAC 06.03.05 Proposed Agenda – 27 March 2006 Executive Committee Meeting

The report of the President will comprise of reports from the VPs as well as inputs by the school deans and AE Director on new and ongoing initiatives being undertaken. Deans will be invited to attend the meeting as the need arises.

PAC 06.03.06 Strategic Development Plan (2005-2010)

The President emphasized that it is important for the schools to identify their focus areas, the definition of which was clarified by the President on several occasions as to refer to and mean - the knowledge/teaching and research areas. The conclusion arrived at by the Academic Restructuring Group that AIT's strengths are not evident only affirms this need. The President reiterated that the process towards finalizing the SDP will be iterative in nature with the following tentative schedule for plan of action:

- 10 March 2006 – sending in of inputs by the schools
- 20 March 2006 – submission of the first draft to the Executive Committee of the Board and in parallel will be sent to the community, alumni & partners etc.
- 20 March to 20 April – refine the document and make needed improvements taking into account comments received during the first round of the consultation process.
- 27 April 2006 – improved SDP will be submitted to the Board of Trustees, following which will be brought back again to the schools for further enhancement based on the Board's feedback.

PAC 06.03.07 Thailand : Partnership for Development (Mega-projects) World Class University (Mega Project)

The deadline for submission of proposals was postponed to 31 May 2006. The President informed the meeting of the involvement of Dr. Roger Johanssen, (senior adviser to the former President of Chalmers), in the development of the concept and facilitation of processes on AIT's bid for the World Class University (Mega Projects). Dr. Johanssen had an initial meeting with NSTDA and the Thammasat University, institutions identified to be potential partners of AIT on this project proposal. It was pointed out that while it is vital for AIT to have a strong integrated institute proposal, it is equally important for AIT to be seen as an active player in various research areas, by submitting concrete research proposals.

VP(ER) and VP(R) were requested to communicate with faculty and encourage the active participation of all faculty and in particular contribution of the Thai faculty.

PAC 06.03.08 School Board

The PAC members endorsed the ToR of the School/AIT Extension Boards and agreed that the list of proposed school and AE Board members should be finalized in the month of March 2006 as the aim is to convene the first meeting by May 2006 to coincide around AIT graduation schedule. The School Deans and AE Director have provided updates on their progress and informed the meeting of the initial list of proposed members some of whom have already been approached and have made informal acceptance to the invitation.

The President informed that majority of the members of the Institute-wide Panel, will come from the School/AE Boards on which Deans and AE director will serve as ex-officio members.

President will send formal invitation letters together with the ToR to those individuals who have confirmed.

PAC 06.03.09 Issues from the Administrative Office Heads Coordinator

1. AIT Official Working Hours and AIT Official Holidays

The PAC endorsed the implementation of the 8 hours/day working policy excluding one hour lunch break (i.e. start of work is 7:30 a.m. and ends at 4:30 p.m.). Departure of AIT buses from AIT will be at 4:45 p.m. instead of the earlier schedule. This will also require appropriate arrangement of staff for lunch break. The Head of HR was requested to seek the counsel of the AIT legal advisor and the confirmation of the Employees Committee on this matter.

AIT as an academic institution should not completely cease operation at any given period, and the current practice is not seen as being conducive in the effective delivery of Institute's services and in the overall operations of AIT. In view of this, there was a decision made by the administration in November 2004 that the Institute would not close during the year-end break, however there was a delay in its implementation. Therefore the PAC has endorsed that effective from January 2007, the year-end break, observed in the past years as official Institute holiday, will be discontinued and will be treated as a regular working period. Faculty and staff are still entitled to take leave during the year-end period by making use of their accumulated annual leave. However, all schools, units and offices must ensure that the operations of their respective offices still continue to function albeit possibly with a lower number of staff. As required by the Thai law, the Institute will continue to designate at least 13 official public holidays each year which will be announced in advance to the community. It was also pointed out that summer break is only for students and is treated as a regular working period for faculty and staff.

HR/Head was requested to draft an announcement concerning the official working hours linked with the memorandum earlier issued by the President on flexi time, and concerning the official Institute holidays. Clarification should also be made by the HRO regarding year-end and summer breaks. These important announcements should be sent to the community not later than June 2006.

2. AIT Job Fair

A "Job Fair" scheduled for 28 March 2006 is being organized by the Student Office on which some 10 multinational companies in Thailand will participate. It was suggested that international companies outside Thailand could be invited in such activities in the future.

PAC 06.03.10 Visit of President and Vice Presidents to Fields of Study in 2006

The administration has visited four FoS to date, which resulted to fruitful discussions. The FoS visited were encouraged to develop action plans for the challenges identified after which follow-up meetings with the administration will be arranged in order to evaluate the impact of the changes implemented by the FoS with reference to their own action plans.

PAC 06.03.11 Academic Matters

1. Professional Master of Engineering in Offshore Technology and Management (PME)

The PAC endorsed in principle the proposal to establish a 1 year Professional Master of Engineering (PME) in Offshore Technology and Management (OTM) which was presented by Dean, SET (Please see annex 3). OTM is an interdisciplinary and application-oriented program specifically set up to serve the needs of staff from oil and gas industries. It was agreed that PAC members will further review and send additional comments to Dean, SET. The proposal was commended as innovative and an excellent concept in providing a close link to the industry sector. The suggestion of giving an entrance examination (which will be later credited to the student) to evaluate an applicant's knowledge and experience in the field, will be explored as this is seen as a good way to distinguish OTM as a unique program with an identity of its own, from that of the regular 2-year master program offered in AIT. This proposal will also be submitted to Academic Senate for review and endorsement.

PAC members to provide additional comments, if any, through email. The suggestion on provision of entrance examination will be further worked out.

2. Faculty Evaluation

The school deans agreed to take the responsibility of communicating to the concerned faculty members regarding the results of the course evaluation conducted by the students. VP(AA) will also address this issue through the Education Council in order to create mechanisms needed in strengthening the effectiveness of the evaluation system and as a tool for improvement on teaching by faculty.

3. New Professional Programs

The President commended the idea of developing professional programs, currently pursued by SOM, which will integrate credited internship that can be done during summer or inter-semester breaks. It was clarified that internship will not substitute for institute-wide course (IWC) and seminars.

FINANCE AND AUDIT

PAC 06.03.12 FY 2005 Financial Results

The H/Finance informed the meeting that the overall financial picture of the Institute is serious and that immediate actions should be made. He also reported that the Finance Office has completed a review and cleanup of all Institute funds in an effort to improve the accuracy and reliability of the Institute's financial statements which has revealed deficits amounting to 66 million baht in the agency accounts, accumulated since the 1990's. The following documents were also provided to PAC members as tabled papers:

- Proposed Financial Action Plans Arising from 2005 Results
- Report on FY 2005 Unaudited Financial Results
- Unaudited Consolidated Operating Summary for Jan-Dec 2005, 2005 Budget & Forecast by year-to-date, by quarter, by month, by fund.
- Consolidated Balance Sheet as of Dec 2005 and 2004
- Consolidated Balance Sheet as of Dec 2005 by fund
- Consolidated Cash Flow Statements for the period Jan-Dec 2005& 2004
- Actual performance of the schools for FY 2004 and 2005

OPERATION

PAC 06.03.13 Appointment and Renewal / Re-appointment Cases

The following cases were endorsed:

Faculty

1. Dr. Surat Lertlum, Adjunct Assistant Professor, 1 year, RS&GIS, Fund 10.
2. Dr. Srisaang Kaojarern, Adjunct Faculty, 1 year, SET/RS&GIS, No cost to AIT.
3. Dr. Taravudh Tipdecho, Adjunct Faculty, 1 year, SET/RS&GIS, No cost to AIT.
4. Dr. Venkatesh Raghavan, Adjunct Faculty, 1 year, SET/RS&GIS, No cost to AIT.
5. Prof. Freek van der Meer, Adjunct Professor, 1 year, SET/GTE-GEPG, seconded by ITC 2006, Asia Link.
6. Dr. Sutat Weesakul, Adjunct Faculty, 1 year, SET/WEM, No cost to AIT.
7. Dr. Chanchana Thanachayanont, Adjunct Researcher, 1 year, SET/Micro, Fund 10.
8. Mr. Chumnarn Punyasai, Adjunct Research Engineer, 1 year, SET/Micro, Fund 10.
9. Dr. Elias Retulainen, Visiting Lecturer, 2 months, SERD/PPT, seconded by the Government of Finland.
10. Dr. Vilas Nitvattananon, Assistant Professor, 2 years, SERD/UEM, Fund 30.
11. Mrs. Pensri Arunwatanamongkol, Adjunct Researcher, 6 months, No cost to AIT.

Staff

12. Dr. Maheswar Rupakheti, Senior Programme Officer, 2 years, UNEP RRC.AP, fund 30.
13. Ms. Wanna Pliansiri, RTG Relations Coordinator, 2 years, ERCO, Fund 10.

OTHER MATTERS

PAC 06.03.14 Partnership Agreements

It was agreed that proposed partnership agreements submitted for PAC endorsement will now be approved via email since there seem to be not enough time to reach the agenda item on MoUs. Points raised concerning a particular MoU, which could not be resolved through email exchange will be brought to the next PAC meeting for discussion.

VP(ER) reported the outcome of the visit of the delegation from the Japan Chamber of Commerce to AIT, as the result of ongoing efforts being made towards enhancing relations with the industry and business sector by assessing the training needs of potential partner companies, with the HR managers as contact points. JCC delegation's main observation was on the need to upgrade laboratory equipments of AIT.

PAC 06.03.15 Proposed Water Charging System for the Residential Areas

PAC members requested the Head of Infrastructure Office to provide more information on the basis used in calculating the proposed flat rates for faculty/staff and student accommodation. Dr. Tien may be invited at the next PAC meeting to explain more on this issue. It was noted that the proposed water charging system will be the very first to be implemented since the inception of AIT.

PAC 06.03.16 Next Meeting

The next PAC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, *21 March 2006*, at 08:30 hours, in the Board Room, Administration Building.