

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

8 October 2008

(week 41)

(Confirmed)

Present:

Said Irandoust
Izel Ann Dante
Peter Haddawy
Sivannapan Kumar
Sudip Rakshit
Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai

Secretaries:

Karma Rana
Namita Sravat

Apologies:

Barbara Igel
Jayant Routray
Pakin Santanam
Jonathan Shaw
Ram Shrestha
Khin Ni Ni Thein
Vilas Wuwongse

Invitees:

Shawn Kelly

PAC 08.10.01 Welcome and Apologies

The President welcomed all present to the PAC meeting and apologies noted.

The newly appointed Head of Human Resources Office, Dr. Somkiert Kojchavivong was welcomed to the meeting and introduced to all the members. Dr. Somkiert mentioned that he looks forward to working in partnership with the schools and units, stressing the role of the HR Office being that of a facilitator and service provider.

PAC 08.10.02 Approval of the 8 October 2008 PAC Agenda and Review of the PAC Meeting Minutes of 17 September 2008

The meeting agenda was approved. Since the Academic Senate Chair was not able to attend the meeting, it was agreed to defer the academic issues to the next PAC meeting.

The minutes of the 17 September 2008 PAC meeting were **confirmed**.

Follow-up Issues:

1] Update on the AIT Center Vietnam (AITCV) Director Position

The President informed the meeting that Dr. Amrit Bart, who is being considered for the position, was requested to prepare a concept paper on how he could assume the directorship role as well as continue being involved in sponsored and contracted research projects. The President has now received the first draft on the roles and responsibilities of the AITCV Director position from Dr. Bart.

It was agreed that this draft be distributed to all the PAC members for further discussion at the next meeting.

2] Director Positions (previously proposed as Associate Vice President Positions)

The President informed the meeting that he has completed the appointment of all directors. For the Professional Programs, Dr. NickInnes-Taylor and Dr. Mark Neal, have been appointed as Co-Directors.

It was clarified that the six Director positions' duration will be time limited and flexible (none is a permanent position), depending on the particular implementation timeline. The position's workload is in addition to the normal faculty workload and they will receive a supplementary remuneration of 15,000 Baht per month, which is the same rate as that of field of study/program coordinators. However, if the School Deans find that

the faculty's activities at school decreases due to their engagement as Director, then the Deans could further discuss cost sharing arrangement with the administration.

It was agreed to invite the Directors to the PAC meetings from time-to-time in order to report updates on their plans, etc.

3] Progress on the New AIT Charter

The President informed the meeting that final draft of the new AIT Charter has been circulated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Thailand (MoFA) to all current partner countries and international organizations, and the countries have been invited to provide their feedback within three months. Two months after that MoFA will arrange a meeting for formal adoption and signing ceremony, most likely back-to-back. It would then be open for signatures for another 6 months.

The President further mentioned that the Charge d' Affaires, Embassy of Malaysia, Thailand is very supportive and is assisting with ministerial meetings in December 2008 to convince the Malaysian Government. On the same lines, Singapore and Brunei are also being approached. The aim is to try and have on board all 10 ASEAN countries in the new AIT Charter.

It was agreed that the finalized text of new AIT Charter would be distributed to the faculty members through their respective School Deans, in particular with a view of inviting inputs on ways and means through which AIT can capitalize on its international status under the new AIT Charter. A special brainstorming session of PAC will be held to further discuss it with these inputs. PAC members were also requested to propose names of external resource persons who are in strategic positions in international organizations, residing in Bangkok.

4] Collaboration with Fairview International School

A task force (TF) under the Chairmanship of the Vice President Research has now been constituted to oversee the possibility of outsourcing of AIT Community School (AITCS) which has met once. The first round of report will be submitted by next week. The TF has received a draft concept note from Fairview International School, and the TF will also be approaching other schools in seeking their interest.

The President explained that the concept of outsourcing, would be alongside the upgrading of the AITCS to Grade-12, also include 'teacher training' for international school teachers which is in demand in the region.

A request to appoint some more professionals from educational management background on this task force was made to the President.

A member noted that the AITCS main task is to provide service for the children of the AIT faculty, staff and student, and it should be ensured that the needs of these major stakeholder should not be neglected or jeopardized once outsourced. A professional lawyer dealing in such matters would be hired to look into the contract that covers all these issues at a later stage.

5] Outsourcing of Infrastructure, ITServ, HRO and Finance

The President informed the meeting that the Outsourcing Advisory Task Force, which included both internal members and outside professionals, has made their recommendation on the outsourcing of the infrastructure and related facilities. The possibility of outsourcing of ITServ is also under consideration and being explored, alongside similar outsourcing of the HR and Finance functions as well.

Comments from PAC members included, cautioning on outsourcing of these units due to confidentiality issues; that there be more detailed discussions prior to any decision being taken, examination of what is wrong with the existing system, and the possible detrimental effects of outsourcing etc.

The President clarified that outsourcing is not the same as passing responsibility, and the major reason must be to ensure that the Institute's focus is redirected to its core activities while the non-core functions can be 'sent out' or 'outsourced' to vendors specialized in that particular function. AIT will require the outsourcing companies to offer positions to all of AIT employees and the Institute will comply with all the necessary regulations if this scheme is to be implemented. One or two key persons from AIT will be there in the units outsourced to act as interface, to monitor and ensure quality, and that the agreement is respected. The reason for outsourcing of units mentioned is to have quality service, but the cost implications needs to be looked into. The references of the companies with whom AIT will enter agreements will be taken into consideration.

The VP-AA noted that software's used (such as SIS) have been developed internally and it should be ensured that the operations during transition period run smoothly.

In relation to outsourcing, it was informed that the discussions are also ongoing with ING Fund to set up an AIT Property Fund of 500 million Baht to upgrade the campus. The payback amount will be around 25 million baht per year. A member suggested as an option to go back to the governments which had provided grants for the construction of the buildings and equipments, to fund the renovation and upgrading of these, especially leading upto AIT's 50th Anniversary Celebrations.

Once the complete terms and conditions of the agreement with ING Fund are received, it will be circulated to the School Deans and Director/AIT Extension for discussion among their respective constituencies.

6] AIT Strategy 2013

A revised version of the AIT Strategy 2013 document with one short version for external purpose, and another longer version for internal use is being prepared. The feedback received from ASE, FEBT, GDS, NRM and RRDP fields of study in SERD and also Dean/SERD's feedback were received and noted.

It was suggested to include the key indicators. For each priority, there should be few goals with actions that could be many to achieve the goal. The innovative things AIT is doing, and the AIT's niche or major products in teaching and learning should be highlighted.

It was noted that the AIT Strategy 2013 documents would be discussed during Schools and AIT Extension retreats that are scheduled during month of October and November 2008.

7] Annual Report and New AIT Promotional Video (*Update*)

PAC was informed that the AIT 2007 Annual Report is ready for distributing to the Board members.

It was agreed that one copy each would be distributed to faculty members with a covering note from the President thanking them for their inputs, and requesting to provide list and details of external clients (to whom they would like it to sent) to Mr. Shawn Kelly.

New AIT Promotional Video is under preparation.

8] AIT City Campus

Feedback on specific space requirements from Schools and AIT Extension, and Dean/SOM feedback from EMBA students on various locations' accessibility and convenience was earlier requested, which has now been received. The SERD, as of now, has opted for not requesting any space requirements, and would later consider renting it from other two schools if needed.

The President will work together with Ms. Izel on the issues related to the AIT City Campus locations selection and other modalities.

9] Strategy for Scholarship and Fellowship Awards *(in follow-up to Discount on Tuition Fees to Children of AIT Employees)*

The inputs from School Deans (after discussion with their constituencies) on the concept paper on the Strategy for Scholarships and Fellowship Awards submitted by the Head of the External Relations and Communication Office, Dr. Pritam Shrestha, is awaited and once received will be further deliberated in PAC.

10] Guidelines on the use of AIT logo

A template for each School, Units and Centers is awaited. The PAC secretary will follow-up on this with the PSSU. Once templates are received, and following review and approval by PAC, these will be distributed along with guidelines on the use of AIT logo for strict implementation by December 2008.

11] AIT Academic Calendar 2009

PAC was informed that the holidays for the Year 2009 would be finalized soon. The suggestion for printing a pocket sized calendar was followed-up and it was found that Schools, including AIT Extension print their own planners/diaries/calendars. It was also informed that as a part of 50th Anniversary celebrations, ERCO is planning to prepare planners as gifts to external stakeholders.

It was agreed to request ERCO to check the existing versions of the calendars/planners/diaries in AIT, and finalize one common one for all based on price and design.

12] Budget Review and Investment Committee

The President informed that every three months the financial performance of the whole institute will be reviewed in the PAC.

It was suggested that the time frame to start the budget process should be June-July, and to breakdown the budgeting process, with fields requested not only to include the figures in the budget but also explain what new initiatives are planned in the budget. Thus, there is a need to have better guidelines for the budget preparation from administration which will be done next time. Also the issues related to infrastructure should be centralized, and the infrastructure unit should provide budget requirements for schools based on actual expense requirements.

The School Deans will also be members of the Investment Committee meetings in order to increase the quality of discussions.

Ms. Izel would plan 3 to 4 Investment Committee meetings in AIT academic calendar, and some follow-up meetings could be arranged when needed.

ISSUES FROM PRESIDENT**PAC 08.10.03 Financial Productivity**

Prof. Worsak opined that even if a FoS may opt to equally share the collective FoS financial productivity from teaching among its faculty members, with the agreement of all faculty members in a Field of Study (FoS), this average should only be used for the faculty evaluation on financial productivity. However, the actual financial productivity for individual faculty member should also be made available as information to the Faculty Evaluation Panel and the School Deans.

It was agreed that the FoS decision to share equally the financial productivity of teaching has to be reaffirmed formally by the FoS Coordinator to the administration, by the end of December month every year.

It was noted that a new faculty member appointed in the middle of the year would not have say in the decision. It was clarified that the sharing option should be based on the understanding that all FoS faculty members complied with the minimum teaching load normally set at 9 credits or 135 contact hours per year.

PAC 08.10.04 Institute Forum

As announced earlier, the Institute Forum will be held on 9 October 2008 in AIT Conference Center Auditorium from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. followed by tea reception. The school deans were encouraged to mobilize faculty, staff and students to attend the forum.

PAC 08.10.05 PAC Meeting on AITCV financial figures and AIT Strategies for using new AIT Charter

The PAC meeting on 19 November 2008 will specifically deliberate on issues regarding AITCV financial figures, and ways and means through which AIT can capitalize on its international status under the new AIT Charter.

PAC 08.10.06 Outstanding Payments

Ms. Izel would remind the Finance Office to actively work on the report on outstanding payments and its status in order to be ready for the Executive Committee and AIT Board of Trustees meetings, which will be held on 4 and 20 November 2008 respectively.

The report should highlight that there have been no more bad debts this year due to enforcement of strict policies and the ones reported are from previous years. There may be some cases of students' dismissal without completion of the degree, from whom it may not be possible anymore to collect the outstanding payments.

PAC 08.10.07 Institute-Level Advisory Board

PAC was informed that the first meeting of the Institute-Level Advisory Board will be held on 20 November 2008, the same day as the Board of Trustees meeting.

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION**PAC 08.10.08 Faculty Recognition**

Prof. Kumar mentioned that the reason to bring this issue to PAC was that the faculty has not seen any salary increase and/or recognition in terms of promotion since last 2 years. In terms of promotion, it was suggested that the timing for the call for promotion application should be the month of January; and the promotion procedure needs to be compressed, especially the 2nd step of sending back to the schools for recommendation on promotion in light of additional inputs from external peer reviewers.

The President clarified that for the year 2008, 4% to 5% bonus has been budgeted. Also for year 2009, he has proposed a bonus budget of 5%. The administration is working with HR on the bonus, and changes done will be retroactive from July 2008.

On the promotion procedures following key point were suggested which would be brought to the attention of the Faculty Evaluation Panel (FEP) to accordingly revise the procedures:

- FEP recommendation to be copied to the concerned School Deans.
- Flexibility to replace one member (including the FEP Chair) in FEP, if candidate has strong objection to particular FEP member.
- If both concerned school and external peer reviewers recommends positively for the candidate, then there is no need for 2nd step of sending back to Schools for recommendation in light of external reviewers recommendations.
- In case the external reviewers recommend negatively for the candidate's promotion, the 2nd step of sending back to Schools for recommendation in light of external reviewer's recommendations should be followed.
- When FEP recommendation on candidate's promotion is negative, opportunity should be given to the candidate to respond and present his/her case.
- External reviewers name should be deleted when sending the feedback to the schools for information. However, on request of concerned school dean, they could be verbally informed on the names of the external reviewers.
- For the promotion from Assistant to Associate Professor rank, the external reviewers could be reduced from 4 to 2.

PAC 08.10.09 Next Meeting

The meeting was adjourned with the rest of the agenda issues deferred for the next PAC meeting scheduled on Wednesday, 15 October 2008.

KR/IMD/ns 14 October 2008