

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

14 September 2005
(week 37)

Present: Said Irandoust (*Chair*)
Nazrul Islam
Kalchana Nettayawichit
Chongrak Polprasert
Sudip K Rakshit
N Ramachandran
Teresita del Rosario

Hoang Le Tien
Ng Eng Wan
Vilas Wuwongse

Secretaries: Karma Rana
Izel Ann M Dante

By invitation: Nusrat Sharmin Huq
Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai
Matthew Laszewski

Stephen Ogunlana
Jonathan Shaw

Apologies: Dennes T Bergado
Peter Haddawy

Chainarong Na Lamphun

PROCEDURAL MATTERS AND FOLLOW-UP ISSUES

PAC 05.09.01 Welcome

The President welcomed Professor Sudip K Rakshit, VP (Research), to his first PAC meeting.

PAC 05.09.02 Review of the Minutes of the PAC Meeting of 23 August 2005

The minutes of the 23 August 2005 PAC meeting were confirmed.

PAC 05.09.03 Matters Arising from the Minutes

1. Appointment of School Deans and AIT Extension Director

The President thanked everyone for their participation in the open hearings for the Dean (Management and Development) positions, as well as invited PAC reflections of the process and the candidates' presentations. (*The shortlisted candidates present were requested to leave the room at this point.*) Any additional comments can also be sent to the President by email.

The President restated the central administration's support to the Schools in implementing the academic reform process and in building new structures.

The possibility of having seconded faculty to fill up the posts that will partly be vacated by the VPs and School Deans will be explored.

The President will make a decision and will finalize the appointments possibly within the month.
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2. School / Unit Visits on Institute's Financial Situation

The CFO will circulate the revised 2005 forecasts after the first round of identifying cost cutting and revenue generating measures, and the monthly financial reports to date. The Audit Committee, in its most recent meeting, also requested for 6-month and 1-year forecasts from Schools/units.

The School/unit visits will resume soon after the revised forecasts are issued. A uniform/common set of figures (headcounts and finances) will also be provided. A common student figure, for example, can be achieved if student registration is activated only after the clearance of fees. And this requires a close working relationship between finance and admission/registry units. Finance personnel may even have to be provided to these units, including Schools. The WGs should look into resolving discrepancies in figures. Although real-time financial information in the Oracle/ERP system is available and readily accessible, there is need to review and improve delays caused by administrative processes (e.g. in data entry, etc). School committees are also free to monitor financial results and to actively dialogue with the finance unit. The Institute should consider having a Chief Information Officer to make comprehensive analysis of all available information for the perusal of its administrators and unit heads.

The CFO will circulate the revised 2005 forecasts and monthly financial reports (January to August) within week 37.

3. Working Groups

(a) WG1

The WG1 Chair presented the: (i) Academic Revenues and Expenditures (Unrestricted Operating Fund) from FY 1989-90 to 2004; (ii) preliminary findings on why deficits took 2.5 years to be noticed; and (iii) Revenues and Expenditures 2002-05, summarizing administrative costs breakdown for the purpose of identifying areas where cost cutting measures can be implemented.

There is distinction in the format of financial reports for the purpose of either analyzing the efficiency of the Institute's operations or determining the Institute's overall financial status. To make comparisons, however, both formats should be generated, starting from FY 2004, since they do not share the same structure. The Institute does not have an in-house expert to carry out managerial financial analysis.

The next task of WG1 is to make further analysis on the administrative support and services with the largest percent increases in annual expenditures from 2002 to 2004, and from 2004 to the 2005 forecast, and will recommend mechanisms to curtail expenses in the last quarter of 2005 and in subsequent years.

(b) WG2

A WG2 member reported that two sub-groups were formed to look into: (i) (short-term) internal administrative structure/processes and budget procedures/processes, and (ii) (long-term) benchmarking the internal

administrative structure/processes and budget procedures/processes with comparable or peer institutions.

(c) WG3

The WG3 Chair reported that three sub-groups were formed to look into the Institute's: (i) governance and accountability, (ii) internationality and identity; and (iii) competitive advantages. These sub-groups were given guide questions to address.

Sida has now confirmed its support (up to 1 MSEK) for an external finance expert, although it prefers a finance company over an individual consultant. The President invited PAC members to identify names of experts (or companies) with academic accounting experience and familiar with administrative processes. The developers of the Responsibility Center Management (RCM) model can also be considered.

Among the reports of similar past exercises at AIT, which may be useful for the WGs to review in order to identify and address gaps, are those done by Deloitte, Helsinki, and GTZ.

PAC members will identify finance experts (or companies) for the President's consideration. The CFO will draft the TOR of the finance expert (or company) for the President's review.

The CFO/CIA will provide the WGs with the Deloitte report.

POLICY AND STRATEGY MATTERS

PAC 05.09.04 Brief on 12 September 2005 Executive Committee Meeting

The draft summary report of the 12 September 2005 meeting of the Executive Committee was received for information. The summary report and all related documents submitted to the meeting will be disseminated to the AIT community.

The Executive Committee recommended the President's proposal that all International Advisory Panel meetings be scheduled at AIT, and that overseas members of the Board of Trustees, its Committees and International Advisory Panels be requested to explore external support to cover their return airfare. If they are unable to do so, the Institute would reimburse the airfare as per AIT travel policy and procedures.

It was pointed out that several of the International Advisory Panels are inactive. It could be that the Institute does not have the capacity to use the competency of these Panels (or its members), and it may be necessary to identify new concepts/mechanisms to address issues. Inactive Panels may be replaced with individual resident senior advisers to work closely with and provide advice to implementing units (e.g. Schools). Panels can also be formed on an ad hoc basis to address specific tasks.

PAC 05.09.05 Report on AITCV Activities by AITCV Director

The AITCV Director's report to the 12 September 2005 meeting of the Executive Committee was received for information.

Along with the monthly financial reports received from AITCV, the AITCV Director should also regularly submit a report of AITCV activities.

PAC 05.09.06 President's Meeting with Academic Senate

The President reported issues taken up in the 31 August 2005 meeting of the Academic Senate.

PAC 05.09.07 AIT Homepage / AIT Newsletter

Among the immediate plans to aggressively market AIT especially to attract non-Thai students, is the publication and wide distribution of an e-bulletin covering the Institute's achievements and developments. The publication of e-articles, e-magazines, and an internal daily e-bulletin (of activities/events, visitors, travel details, etc) will also be pursued.

To speed up the recruitment of an information (news and content) specialist, the HRD should be provided with the position's scope of responsibilities.

The President will formalize the appointment of a Web Development Task Force, which will be chaired by the VP (External Relations), to carry out the re-design and re-development of the AIT website. The President will also attend the first meeting, which will be called soon after the appointments are made.

PAC 05.09.08 Working Group for Student Issues

PAC members were invited and encouraged to extend the invitation to their faculty and staff to participate in an open forum for students to interact with the WGs, as well as to receive feedback and suggestions from the students on academic, administrative and other related issues.

A Working Group will be formed to provide an avenue to address and resolve student-related issues and challenges, and where necessary, make recommendations to the administration related to the resolution process. The WG, which will be chaired by the VP (Education), will have the following members: CFO, ARCA, ARSA, SU President, Dr Bernadette Resurreccion, Dr B H W Hadikusumo, Dr Roland Amoussou-Guenou, Dr Jonathan L Shaw, and Mr Matthew Laszewski.

The President will formalize the appointment of a WG for Student Issues.

FINANCE AND AUDIT

PAC 05.09.09 Financial Status as of mid-September 2005

The CFO will circulate the monthly financial reports (January to August), with the revised 2005 forecasts, within week 37.

PAC 05.09.10 Budget Committee and 2006 Budget

The Budget Committee had its first meeting and only defined the strategies and financial targets for the 2006 budget considering the ongoing academic restructuring process and WG exercises. The general guideline for the 2006 budget process is that the 2006 expenditures cannot exceed the 2005 revenues. Schools/units will also be required to draw up academic/business plan to support their budget proposal. The expenditures will be constantly monitored and financial analyses made.

Negotiations are underway with the Labor Union to set up day and night shifts of Motorpool drivers to control overtime costs. Compensatory leave should also be acceptable in lieu of overtime pay.

It was suggested to split the salary structure into fixed and variable parts, with the variable part contingent upon the Institute's and the employee's performance.

The CIA will review the budget instructions, which will be sent out with the Budget Committee's TOR within week 37.

Considering the current financial situation of the Institute, the HRD will investigate the legal implications if a freeze in current salaries (including the granting of the cost of living allowance) is applied in 2006.

OPERATION

PAC 05.09.12 AIT Calendar 2006

The PAC endorsed the AIT Calendar for 2006, which introduced an advance registration period for continuing students that would facilitate the invoicing of tuition and fees.

The Deans were requested to identify and mobilize Fields of Study that can admit new students in the January 2006 Semester and to report them to the next PAC meeting. The admissions and promotions offices will also be requested to identify corresponding activities.

PAC 05.09.13 Collection of Alumni Deposit as AITAA Membership Fee

It was generally felt that AITAA membership should be optional.

ARCA was requested to arrange a meeting among AIT, AITAA and SU representatives to look into this issue.

PAC 05.09.14 Improvement of Campus Security

ARCA proposed the following recommendations for the improvement of campus safety and security: (i) reduce outsourced security guards and non-replacement of security guards retiring in 2005 and 2006; (ii) using the savings in (i), install CCTV at strategic points; (iii) equip laboratories with electronic access control systems; and (iv) assign an authorized key-man to open classrooms.

ARCA was requested to first define the Institute's security needs and identify an acceptable level of security to match these needs. The revised proposal, which can be submitted at the next PAC meeting, should include other details such as investment and maintenance costs, and other appropriate options (e.g. Internet-based CCTV integrated with smart cards, etc).

PAC 05.09.15 Appointment and Renewal/Reappointment Cases

The following cases were endorsed:

Faculty Appointments

1. Dr Hathairatana Garivait, Adjunct Lecturer, 3.5 months from 15 August 2005, SERD-EEM, Fund 50.
2. Dr Prapaisri Sudasna-na-Ayudthaya, Adjunct Assistant Professor, 3 months from 1 September 2005, SERD-EEM, Fund 50.
3. Dr Pasin Israsena, Adjunct Lecturer, 1 year from 1 September 2005, SAT-Mic, School Fund.
4. Dr Michita Champathes Rodsutti, Adjunct Lecturer, 10 days from 23 September 2005, SOM-IEMBA VN, Fund 30.
5. Dr Raktipong Sahamitmongkol, Visiting Researcher, 1.5 year from 1 October 2005, SCE-SE-RNUS, on secondment – University of Tokyo.
6. Dr Peter Oksen, Visiting Associate Professor, 1 month from 20 October 2005, SERD-RRDP, no cost to AIT.
7. Prof Wail Nourildean Al-Rifaie, Visiting Professor, 1 year from 1 November 2005, SCE-SE, no cost to AIT.
8. Dr Ravi Shanker, Visiting Associate Professor, 16 weeks from 11 January 2006, SAT-IEM, on secondment – India.
9. Dr Krishna Prasad Sundarraj, Visiting Lecturer, 16 weeks from 11 January 2006, SCE-GTE, on secondment – India.
10. Dr Ravande Kishore, Visiting Associate Professor, 16 weeks from 11 January 2006, SCE-SE, on secondment – India.
11. Prof Vedula Shekhar, Visiting Professor, 16 weeks from 11 January 2006, SOM-SMT, on secondment – India.
12. Dr Janakiraman Moorthy, Visiting Associate Professor, 16 weeks from 11 January 2006, SOM-SMT, on secondment – India.

Staff Appointments

13. Dr (Ms) Aida Karazhanova, Programme Officer, 26 September 2005 – 31 December 2006, UNEP-RRC.AP, Fund 30 (*after revision of project budget*).
14. Mr Batyr Hadjiyev, Programme Officer, 2 years from 3 October 2005, UNEP-RRC.AP, Fund 21.

Staff Renewals/Reappointments

15. Mr Md Anisuzzaman, Research Associate, 4.5 months from 16 August 2005, fixed-term, SERD-E, Fund 30.
16. Mr Keerati Tunthasuwatana, Research Associate, 1 year from 7 September 2005, SCE-ACECOMS, Fund 21.
17. Ms Marie-France Champagne, Language Specialist II, 2 years from 1 April 2006 (80%), Language Center, Fund 10.

Senate-endorsed Faculty Appointment

18. Dr Mokbul Morshed Ahmad, Assistant Professor, 2 years from 1 October 2005, SERD-RRDP, School Fund.

Senate-endorsed Faculty Renewal/Reappointment

19. Dr Pannapa Herabat, Assistant Professor, 2 years from 1 January 2006, SCE-CEIM, School Fund.
20. Dr Bernadette Resurreccion, Assistant Professor, 2 years from 1 January 2006, SERD-GDS, School Fund.

OTHER MATTERS

1. Pending Issue

The proposed cost-cutting activities of GRO will be discussed at the next PAC meeting.

2. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for *Tuesday, 20 September 2005*, 13.30-15.30 hours, in the Board Room, Administration Building.