

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

18 October 2005

(week 42)

Present: Said Irandoust (*Chair*)
Nusrat Sharmin Huq
Nazrul Islam
Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai
Sivanappan Kumar
Stephen Ogunlana
Chongrak Polprasert
Sudip K Rakshit

M Shrinivas Rao
Jonathan Shaw
Ng Eng Wan
Vilas Wuwongse

Secretaries: Karma Rana
Renedith A Calabdan

By invitation: Matthew Laszewski

Apology: Dennes T Bergado
Peter Haddawy
Chainarong Na Lamphun

PROCEDURAL MATTERS AND FOLLOW-UP ISSUES

PAC 05.10.20 Welcome

The President welcomed Prof S Kumar, Dean-designate of the School of the Sustainable Development, to his the first PAC meeting under its new composition. Mr. Eng Wan attended the PAC meeting in his capacity as the current Coordinator of the Administrative Unit Heads (AUH) effective until the end of December 2005 (for 3 months). The subsequent Coordinators of the AUH will be invited to the PAC meetings during the period of their service.

PAC 05.10.21 Review of the Minutes of the PAC Meeting of 20 September 2005

The minutes of the 04 October 2005 PAC meeting were confirmed.

PAC 05.10.22 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Institute-level Working Groups

The Chairs of the three Institute Working Groups provided a brief on the outcome and recommendations of their respective groups. The respective Chairs will further revise their respective reports taking into comments and suggestions made at PAC. The full reports once complete will be made available to the Schools and Units for comments. Once the comments and suggestions have been received the implementation aspects will then be further considered. The full reports will also be submitted to the Executive Committee at its 9 December 2005 meeting and subsequently to the Board of Trustees.

POLICY AND STRATEGY MATTERS

PAC 05.10.23 AIT Homepage / AIT Newsletter

The new AIT homepage (main page) will be operational soon while a more comprehensive overhaul of the homepage will be simultaneously conducted.

PAC 05.10.24 Academic Restructuring Working Group

The President informed the meeting of the composition of the Working Group on Academic Restructuring which was established following the meeting of Executive Committee of the Board on 12 September 2005. The working group will be requested to complete the exercise at the earliest with the focus more on the content-related development and quality issues within the schools. The newly appointed Deans shall play a key role in further overseeing the formation of the new schools including the setting up of its governance structure and strategic directions.

PAC 05.10.25 Central Administration Structure

The newly appointed Administrative Unit Heads, whose appointments will take effect on 1 November 2005, will be formally introduced in a meeting scheduled for Thursday, 3 November 2005, to be attended by all staff. During this meeting the President will present the final central administration (CA) organizational structure and outline the rationale of the restructuring. The AOHs will be invited to describe their plans and strategies in line with the objective of increasing efficiency, working methodologies, priority issues intended to be tackled in the first year of office, as well as receive questions from staff. Collaboration within bigger units is encouraged with integrated work methods that cross the boundaries between offices, while formation of sub-units ought to be avoided. The President favors giving AUHs with the prerogative to design their activities. It was decided that the name "Student Union" under Unit 4 of the draft organizational structure will be changed to "SU Affairs" as the unit will deal with the affairs of SU which is an independent body. The CA organizational structure will be finalized at the next PAC meeting to be presented at the 3 November meeting.

As communicated by the President to the AIT community on several occasions, the main task of offices in the central administration is not controlling, rather supporting in nature that emphasizes on developing a culture of service making it crucial for AUHs to work closely with and have an active presence in schools and units.

CFO will convey the details pertaining to the 3 November meeting of the AUHs with affected staff.

The President requested to expedite the hiring of an Information Specialist/Journalist who would be able to assist in the overall marketing/promotional efforts of the Institute. Suggested competencies and functions to be included in the TOR were noted as follows: assist in developing marketing strategy for communication with private and public sector etc, provide support to faculty in editing/re-writing/translating scientific papers and reports (to be initially drafted by the faculty) into easily understood articles with accurate technical content and with the aim of publishing in magazines and newspapers; should be versatile in utilizing various media equipments

VP-ER to provide the TOR of the Communication Expert/Journalist at the next PAC meeting.

It is a common understanding that AIT needs to increase its visibility in a proactive manner in strategic places and through various media e.g. the local and international newspapers/journals/magazines. There should be clear set of objectives e.g. target for

2006, to publish at least 20 articles in journals and newspapers in Asia, Europe, America etc. Other suggested steps towards this end were to set-up AIT sign boards by the highways which are visually attractive, feature prominent alumni in AIT advertisements, capitalize on accomplishments of AIT through its alumni e.g “half of economic miracle in Taiwan due to AIT alumni” and build industrial relations through MOUs, internships, and employment. The priority focus of the major campaign for next year’s intake will be students from overseas for which preparations should start at the earliest. VP-ER pointed out that there should be enough high quality scientific materials at AIT worthy to be published to sustain a large media campaign.

The PAC agreed to establish an Institute-level External Relations Committee (ERC) which will function, among others, to ensure a coordinated response to opportunities of schools and units. The composition of the ERC will be discussed in consultation with the Deans. Each School can have an external relations/marketing component provided that there is a proper coordination between schools and units. The Communications/External relations office should indicate to the Schools and Units support/services that are available. Priority focus areas should be included in Schools and Units’ business plans. Likewise, the President explores the idea of conducting study visits by the administration to prominent newspaper companies such as Bangkok Post or arrange courses for President’s Office, Deans etc. in meeting media people.

The Staff Representative offered to arrange an interview by local newspaper to the President, the details of which will be further discussed. A documentation on post tsunami work was received from Prof Bergado. The President’s Office Retreat will be held on 29-30 October 2005 after which a similar retreat is planned to be held with the Deans and Administrative Unit Heads in mid-November 2005.

PAC 05.10.26 Administrative Allowance

The PAC endorsed a system of compensation to School Deans whereby a fixed and uniform amount of supplementary allowance will be provided on top of Schools Deans respective salaries. Although it is expected for the Deans to be fully dedicated to their positions, the idea of taking on teaching loads is welcomed in view of the planned appointments of associate deans. AUHs will not be provided with supplementary allowance but will receive fixed salary which will be discussed together with HRD.

The President’s Office will get back and negotiate the supplementary allowance with School Deans.

The PAC is of the view that the faculty promotion process should be simplified. The recommendation of the Academic Senate, which assigned a Task Force to look into this matter, will be reviewed once received.

A need for a standard guideline on the payment of honorarium that could be enforced uniformly across the Institute was raised and will be looked into. Compensation for the FoS coordinator will be further discussed in the light of the new school structure.

The concept of non-confidential disclosure of salaries of all AIT employees is being carefully considered. The President personally supports the idea as this is viewed as a good mechanism to prevent misuse of the system. Review of the salary structure in general (both for the academic and administrative salary scales) is deemed necessary including assessment of the competitiveness of AIT salaries, in line with tuition and fees, which may require adjustment of salaries (both up or downwards).

FINANCE AND AUDIT

PAC 05.10.27 FY 2005 First Nine-months Financial Results and FY 2006 Budget

The CFO provided a brief on the 3 quarters (first 9 months) financial results for 2005, according to which the Institute recorded a net deficit of about Baht 1 million. Given the semester school system, the Institute will not receive any tuition fees in the last quarter of the year. Other operating income is not expected to be sufficient to cover the operating costs and depreciation in the last quarter of 2005.

In view of the projected unfavourable financial results, the President urged that it is important that everyone continues to be careful and modest in all expenditures and continue to explore other ways to save money such as not hiring new personnel and control overtime payment, defer planned investments and travel plans as well as reduce office costs and utilities consumption.

The CFO also reported progress on the budget preparation for FY 2006 and brief on the meetings of the Budget Committee.

OPERATION

PAC 05.10.28 Appointment and Renewal / Re-appointment Cases

The following cases were endorsed:

Staff renewals/reappointments:

1. Dr Ram C Bhujel, Senior Research Scientist, 1 year from 1 October 2005, fixed-term, SERD-AARM, Fund 30.
2. Ms AMAK Abeygunawardana, Research Associate, 1 month from 1 October 2005, SERD-Energy, Fund 30.
3. Ms Vantana Pattanakul, Administrative Secretary I, 2 years from 1 January 2006, SERD, Fund 10.
4. Mr Maung Maung Tar, Computer Laboratory Supervisor, 1 year from 1 January 2006, SCE, Fund 10.

Renewal cases from ITServ were deferred to the next PAC meeting pending result of the meeting of the AUHs.

Endorsed Faculty Appointments:

1. Professor Dr. Somsak Ruchurawat, Adjunct Professor, 1 year, SERD-EEM, no cost to AIT
2. Professor Shinichi Okamoto, Visiting Professor, 6 months, SERD-EEM, no cost to AIT

Senate-endorsed cases:

1. Dr Nowarat Coowanitwong, Assistant Professor, 2 years from 1 July 2006, SERD-UEM, Fund 10.
2. Dr. Marian Beise, Assistant Professor, 2 years from 1 January 2006, SOM, Fund 10.

The endorsement of the appointment of Dr Assela Pathirana, Assistant Professor, 2 years from 1 January 2006, SCE-WEM was deferred. The Dean-designate of the School of

Engineering & Technology indicated that he would discuss this further with WEM faculty.

PAC 05.10.29 WWF Office Space Rental

The request received from the WWF Thailand Country Representative to forego the office space rental for two rooms on the second floor of the AIT Clubhouse will be further discussed upon receipt of the cost calculations from ARCA.

PAC 05.10.30 President's Trips

The President briefed the meeting regarding his recent trips to Indonesia, Singapore and China.

A mission visit to Indonesia undertaken in partnership with the Indonesian Embassy and alumni has resulted in interest on the part of the Ministry of Public Works to establish a joint AIT Center in Bandung. There is also a similar expression of interest by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan, Government of Sri Lanka and university partners in China and India. Promotional visits were also made to China, Korea, Singapore and Sri Lanka to meet key persons in the government, research and academic institutions and the private sector. In Sri Lanka, a project proposal on "*AIT Post Tsunami Sustainable Communities Programme*" has been submitted to the Minister of Urban Development and Water Supply. This is a mega project with a budget of over US\$5.2 million which if accepted by the Government of Sri Lanka will be implemented at two sites in the southern part of Sri Lanka over a 3-year period. The AIT delegation held meetings with the Secretary, Ministry of Education and CEO of Commercial Bank of Ceylon. Discussions in Sri Lanka centered about short-term training programs and the possibility of establishing an AIT Center in Sri Lanka in partnership with the University Grants Commissions and two of the premier national universities.

In China, meetings were held with the Minister of Science and Technology; Deputy Director General of International Cooperation Division, Ministry of Education; Vice-President of Chinese Academic of Surveying and Mapping; Secretary General, China Education Association for International Exchange; Director General of State Bureau of Surveying and Mapping; and President of Peking University Resource College. The visit resulted in the possibility of increasing the number of Chinese seconded faculty members, students and a number of joint research and exchange programs as well as short- and long-term training programs in AIT.

New and potential countries as target markets are being explored which include Central Asia, China, India, Indonesia, Middle East, and Russia. Special Institute-level Task Forces for China, Indonesia and Taiwan have been formed while Task Forces for India and the Middle East are being formed.

PAC 05.10.31 Board of Trustees Meeting

The agenda of the Board of Trustees meeting on 2 November 2005 was circulated to PAC members. The main items in the President's report will be on the financial matters, the outcomes of the Working Groups as well as the strategy outlines of the VPs.

The proposal to re-establish the Staff Relations Committee was put forward for consideration. The President asked VP-R and the Dr. Rao as representative of the Employees Committee were requested to consider combining the Faculty Relations Committee and Staff Relations Committee into Employees Committee. To report back to PAC after consultation with respective constituencies.

PAC 05.10.32 Forgery Case

A document on a case of forgery committed by an AIT Alumni which was brought to the attention of the PAC by Prof. Haddawy was decided to be referred to the AITAA.

Next Meeting

The next PAC meeting, is scheduled for *Tuesday, 15 November 2005*, from 13.30 hours onwards, in the Board Room, Administration Building.