

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

1 April 2009

(week 14)

(Confirmed)

Present:

Said Irandoust
Izel Ann Dante
Peter Haddawy
Barbara Igel
Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai
Mr. Akhtar Nawaz Khan
Sivanappan Kumar
Sudip Rakshit

Jayant Routray
Jonathan Shaw
Ram Shrestha
Vilas Wuwongse

Secretariat:

Karma Rana
Namita Sravat

Apologies:

Khin Ni Ni Thein

PAC 09.04.01 Welcome and Apologies

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

PAC 09.04.02 Approval and Review of the Minutes of the PAC meeting – 24 February 2009

The minutes of the PAC meeting held on 24 February 2009 were **approved** with title of the P&P in section 'PAC 09.02.17' to read as 'P&P on Ethical Behavior and Grievances'.

Follow up Issues:

1] **Graduation Speakers:** It was recommended that the institute be more proactive in inviting graduation speakers. It was agreed that ERCO be requested to prepare a list of potential candidates for graduation speakers. A back-up list of speakers residing in Thailand will also be drawn up who could be approached in case there are last moment cancellations. ERCO should send this list to School Deans and faculty members for their feedback on it.

2] **Updates on AIT Charter:** The President informed the meeting that Dr. Roland Amoussou-Guenou. Adjunct Faculty in the School of Management, who has a legal background is assisting in the drafting of the new bye-laws, incorporating the academic elements, which will be further reviewed by the AIT Legal Advisor, prior to it being submitted as input from AIT, to the "Friends of Chair" which would work on the new bye-laws, under the coordinatorship of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Thailand (the first meeting of the "Friends of Chair" has now been confirmed for 24 April 2009 and will be held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Thailand).

3] **Visit to Korea, China and Europe:** The President reported that he along with the Chair of the Board of Trustees will be visiting China and Korea in May 2009, and will combine his annual leave to visit some European countries in June 2009.

4] **Updates on Dean-SET and Dean SERD Position:** As of the time of the meeting, there were in total 6 nominations and applications received for the Dean/SET position, and a total of 7 for the Dean/SERD position. The President noted that upon receiving the names for the search panel members for the respective schools, he would then consider and confirm them.

5] **January 2009 Student Enrollment:** The President emphasized the importance and need to proactively address the shortfalls in the student enrolment numbers. The global and regional economic crisis is also likely to have an adverse impact on the education sector for the region and also result in the lowering of overseas development aid money. It was noted that one possible reason for the low number of applications at AIT, and other universities in the region, could be due to the drop in the value of the Sterling Pound, which is making UK universities more attractive financially. The School Deans were requested to ensure that the FoS Coordinators are aware of the status, and all efforts are made to try and

meet the targets. Income projections and sensitivity analysis should be also be conducted. The President reported that a co-branding partnership with group of banks is also being explored in India for the provision of study loans, and that such a scheme could also be expanded to other countries if successful.

PAC 09.04.03 Issues from the President

1] Executive Committee Meeting Report: The draft report of the Executive Committee meeting held on 25 March 2009 was circulated for member's information. The President briefed the members on the issues related to the appointments of faculty / staff beyond the retirement age of 60 which was recommended must be at the discretion of the administration, on a case-by-case basis taking into account criteria such as financial productivity, research productivity, health conditions amongst others, and to be maximum for one year; proposal on restructuring of administration by integrating and merging the two current positions of Vice President for External Relations and Vice President for Development and Resources into one full-time Vice President for Resource Development (VP-RD); agreement with Sodexo on provision of integrated facilities management services to be signed on 2 April 2009 and a small team to be appointed from administration to do initial implementation; and special Executive Committee meeting to be held on 21 May to discuss the Salary Rationalization.

The President further clarified that the Vice President Academic Affairs and Vice President Research position will remain part-time as it helps in maintaining interactions and linkages with schools, its faculty and students. Regarding the VP-RD position, at this point he is not thinking of advertising the position externally and that it would likely be a direct appointment.

Regarding the appointment extension beyond age of 60, it was agreed that the current P&P on 'Engagement of Faculty beyond the Retirement Age of 60' will be discussed during next PAC meeting to amend it according to the key points of discussion as given below and the suggestions made by the Executive Committee members.

- Faculty appointment on a yearly basis will have impact on thesis supervision, and the faculty could only be used for teaching.
- Need for fair procedures and announcing it internally to all faculty members.
- Application to be made one year in advance of the retirement.
- Administration to identify the individuals who could be appointed for extended time.
- Option for schools to consider hiring a new person instead.
- Possibility of hampering the proper faculty recruitment planning.
- Such flexibility is advantageous in cases where due to the long process of hiring a new faculty, void can easily be filled.
- Increase retirement age as a standard.

The VP-AA reported the updates on the possible outsourcing of IT with expression of interest received from 5 companies including IBM and HP. The President requested the VP-AA to also approach the concerned FoS to come up with business plan on this, and make MIS more systematic.

2] Task Force on AIT Center in Indonesia: The President stated that he will be appointing a task force to evaluate the AIT Center in Indonesia. The financial support from Ministry of Public Works will end in June 2009, which has been extended until December 2009.

PAC 09.04.04 Academic Issues

The President noted the Academic Senate (AS) recommendation on the "Offering of Selected Topics Courses" which before being offered should be reported to the AS for information along with their course outlines in the standard AIT format through ADRC; and on the "Grading for Seminar Courses" grades not to be based on the attendance only. The VP-AA informed that the IEC is also working on broad guidelines for the Seminar Courses that will be soon reported to the AS.

1] **Financial Productivity:** Substantive discussions were held on the P&P on Faculty Financial Productivity that was prepared and revised taking into consideration inputs from the various Faculty, Academic Senate and PAC meetings. It was approved for implementation once the inputs/suggestions provided during the PAC meeting are further incorporated by the Head of Administration. Some key points discussed and were agreed upon as follows:

- There was long deliberation on the Sabbatical Leave (SL) clause that states that *“A faculty member is not required to cover his/her salary during the period he/she is on approved sabbatical leave”* with the key points as follows:
 - The President was of the view that the individual faculty’s financial productivity for the immediate previous two years should not be in deficit in order to get approval of the SL. Furthermore, the faculty would have an option to either include or exclude the period of SL for the financial productivity.
 - Since the President has the right to approve the SL of an individual faculty, there is no need to link it with financial productivity.
 - The pre-condition for approval of the SL should be that the FoS can afford it.
 - The criteria for eligibility for SL should be specified and once SL is approved based on them; the period should not be counted for the financial productivity.

The President **concluded** that SL period will be excluded for the financial productivity, but option to include it will be with the individual faculty. The **eligibility criteria for SL approval** will be **discussed in the next PAC meeting**, with the financial productivity of the immediate previous two years be among them.

- It was agreed that for the Project-purchased equipment, the PIs will be credited the full amount (including the applied levy) of equipment purchased from project grants for Fund 10 activities, subject to the endorsement of the FoS Coordinator, School Dean and the VP-R.
 - Furthermore, Crediting shall be made when project-purchased equipments are handed over for Fund 10 activities. The PIs will be credited the full amount (including the applied levy) if the hand-over is made soon after the purchase, otherwise, the PIs will be credited the book value of the project-purchased equipment at the time of hand-over.
 - To credit the full amount of equipment purchased from project grants for all activities, it will be subject to verification. The assistance of the Finance Office will be sought in outlining the verification to be done by FoS Coordinator and School Deans prior to providing their endorsement that the project purchased equipment indeed lowers the cost from central funds.
 - The financial productivity will be accordingly counted from the date of implementation of the “P&P on Faculty Financial Productivity”.
- It was clarified that for Project-supported scholarships, crediting the amount to the financial productivity will be done for very clear-cut direct cases only.
- It was noted that the allocated cost is different for each school. Only the Deans can streamline this as School allocated costs cover the expenses of the Deans offices. The Dean SERD already did this for SERD in 2008, which reduced the SERD allocated costs in 2008 from 12.68 to 4.4%.
- Regarding the Professional Development Fund (PDF) which is an indirect incentive, it was **noted** that the PDF has to be used to cover deficit, and only then it can be allocated for use. It was also **agreed** that the Guidelines on the use of PDF should not be part of the “P&P on Faculty Financial Productivity” and only link to these guidelines can be provided in the P&P.

PAC 09.04.05 Updates on Student Enrollment for August 2009

The VP-AA presented the updates on student enrollment for August 2009 and noted that overall it is 25% down. The School Deans were requested to ask the Fields of Study Coordinators in their respective schools to closely monitor the progress to take necessary timely actions.

PAC 09.04.06 Case of forged AIT Degree Certificate

The Head-ERCO reported a case of forged AIT degree certificate, which was found out upon request of an NGO to verifying the degree certificate submitted by one of their employee. It was **agreed** that Head-

ERCO can reply back by simply stating that "Upon checking with AIT Registry Office, it has been found that the person mentioned in the degree certificate has not been conferred AIT degree".

Furthermore, the suggestion to have tracking numbers for the degree certificate was **agreed** upon and the Registry Office was requested to implement it from the May 2009 Graduation.

PAC 09.04.07 Policy on AIT Scholarships and Fellowships

It was **agreed** to implement effective August 2009, the policy of providing at least 25% guaranteed discount to the children of current AIT employees, Board of Trustees (BoT) and Executive Committee of the BoT members, Institute-Level Advisory Board members, School Board members, and AIT alumni.

The Head-ERCO was requested to provide to the School Deans to disseminate amongst their constituencies the guidelines for scholarship and fellowship awards to be used by the Schools that promotes gender equality, attracts applications from good students, increase number of students from countries less represented, and to foster fruitful collaboration with partner institutions. Annual feedback will then be reported by the FoS/Schools to the PAC on the allocation of scholarships/fellowships as per the guidelines.

Professor Worsak mentioned that he will request Ms. Wanappa to summarize the data on Call for nominations for HM King's and HM Queen's Scholarship and will report the outcomes to the next PAC meeting.

PAC 09.04.08 Other Business

Due to the time constraints it was agreed to defer rest of the agenda items for the next PAC meeting that will be held on 22 April 2009.