

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

20 March 2007

(week 12)

Present: Said Irandoust (*Chair*)
Dennes T Bergado
Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai
Peter Haddawy
Sivanappan Kumar
Stephen Ogunlana
I M Pandey

Sudip K Rakshit
Jonathan Shaw
Khin Ni Ni Thein
Hoang Le Tien (*AOH Coordinator*)
Vilas Wuwongse
Secretaries: Karma Rana
Renedith Calabdan

Apologies: Udaya Rathnayaka
(*SU President*)

Invited: Patcharee Wangsakan
Benjamin Gargabite

Teerapan Satagowit
Mr. Wikum Hettiarachchi
(*on behalf of SU President*)

PAC 07.03.14 Welcome and Apologies

The President welcomed all present to the PAC meeting. Professor Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai, Dean SET, as host also welcomed the PAC members to the School of Engineering and Technologies. The President on behalf of PAC, offered a vote of thanks to Dean, SET and to the staff members who made necessary arrangements in preparation of the meeting.

PAC 07.03.15 Review of the Minutes of the PAC Meeting of 06 March 2007.

The minutes of the 06 March 2007 PAC meeting were confirmed.

ISSUES FOR DECISION

PAC 07.03.16 Partnership Agreements

The President has reminded that all memorandum of understanding (MoU) and memorandum of agreements must fall under the broad framework of AIT regulations.

PAC deliberated and endorsed the following partnership agreements:

1] Chia Nan University of Pharmacy and Science (CNU)

The general MoU presented by VPER was endorsed in principle with the main comment on the need to reformat the document following AIT standard. It was agreed that concerned schools and FoS should be informed and involved in the early stage of the negotiation on the potential areas of collaboration that are being explored such as 2-step masters program, unified program etc.

2] NECTEC/NSTDA MoA

Dean, SET presented the revised MOU based on comments made by PAC members at the previous meeting. PAC endorsed the signing of the agreement which is scheduled on 23 March 2007.

3] Ruamrudee International School (RIS)

Endorsed by PAC with suggested revisions as follows:

On staff development, (a) item 2 – Study visits to laboratories in AIT will be facilitated upon request from RIS under terms and conditions agreed in advance, (2) item 3 – RIS faculty and staff may participate in trainings and conference conducted at AIT that may be of interest to them, on special discount rate.

4] Technische Unviersität München (TUM)

Endorsed in principle with the following comments under student exchange:

- (a) Item 5 – clearly indicate that tuition and fees will be paid by students in their respective home institutions.
- (b) Include a general statement that academic credit transfer will be agreed upon separately. It was suggested that based on the umbrella MoU, schools could directly explore specific areas of collaboration with counterpart departments/units of TUM.

5] Pearl School of Business, India

The revised MoU based on some suggestions from PAC will be circulated to PAC members by email for final endorsement. Any additional comments should be sent to the PAC secretariat within the week (20-23 March) in time for sending to India by Monday, 26 March 2007.

The following agreements will be further discussed at the next PAC meetings:

1] Department of Livestock and Fisheries Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, Lao PDR on “Implementation Arrangements for the Wetlands Alliance Program (WAP) in the Lao PDR”. The following comments were put forward:

- (a) Separate contents that need to be included in the main MoU while other supporting information could be included as annexes;
- (b) Page 3, under Collaboration, “From Regional Institutions”, item 1, change “staff” to “personnel from AIT”;
- (c) Page 4, paragraph 3, clarify “...to recruit one full-time person (ex-patriate)...”
- (d) Financial contributions, reformulate paragraph 1 to reflect appropriate source of funding;
- (e) Page 9, Budget Table, VPR to discuss details with the WAP Coordinator.

VPR will further discuss with Dr. Håkan Berg, WAP Coordinator to clarify some issues raised at PAC. The revised version will be taken up at the next PAC meeting.

2] Iranian Research Organization for Science and Technology

Comments made by PAC are as follows:

- (a) Item 3.2 – reformulate, delete “Islamic Studies”, and replace “exchange of experiences” with “ethnic and cultural exchange”.
- (b) 3.5 – Administrative cost in running the center should be covered by IROST. The President also clarified that at this stage, there should be no financial risk on the part of AIT.
- (c) 3.7 should read, “Financial conditions should be negotiated separately. AIT and IROST will carry out exchange of academic staff upon mutual agreement.”
- (d) 3.9 should read “The degree for postgraduate and different training programs will be provided by AIT and IROST.”

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

Finance

PAC 07.03.17 Finance

1] Monthly Financial Performance Monitoring – January 2007 Results

Based on PAC discussions, the President requested Head, Finance Office to carry out the following actions to identify the factors that contributed to low tuition and fee revenue for January 2007:

- 1] Provide clarification on the Baht 4 million difference between the revenue of January 2006 and January 2007 whether it is (a) the effect of currency exchange loss, (b) non implementation of the new policy on awarding of fellowships, (c) effect of accumulated fellowship which was generously given earlier.
- 2] By fixing the dollar on a constant rate, calculate whether the adjusted tuition and fee could theoretically compensate for less students.
- 3] As January 2008 results will reflect the effect of the new policy on fellowship which was implemented starting from January 2006, simulate the revenue for that period and compare the significant differences with results of January 2007.
- 4] Budgeted revenues on tuition and fees should be compared with the actual revenue / results during the same period. Budgets may need to be revised if there is a gap between the revenue forecast and actual revenue.

2] **Long Overdue Account Receivables**

The memorandum dated 8 March 2007 from the Head, Finance Office addressed to VPAA and VPR on the outstanding account receivables expected from students (some already graduated), sponsors, and donors, was received by PAC members.

The PAC advised the following actions to be taken:

- 1] PAC members are to go through the initial list provided to verify the correctness of the information. Corrections from PAC members should be sent to Head, Finance Office (FO).
- 2] Categorize students on the list by schools, amount of outstanding balance, and status. (*c/o Head, Finance Office*)
- 4] Separate the list of students who may have been dismissed or deceased. Finance Office to collaborate with the Student Office to ensure correctness of information.
- 5] Finance Office to follow-up cases (i.e. collection of outstanding balance) at school and unit levels (some of those who have graduated may be working in AIT.)
- 6] Discuss possibilities / ways and means of collecting money from students who are currently enrolled.
- 7] Work on an effective mechanism to control and completely eliminate situations where students with outstanding balance are able to graduate and receive degrees from the Institute without fulfilling his/her financial obligations.

PAC 07.03.18 Issues from the President

1] **Two-stage Masters Program in Transportation Engineering in AIT Center in Indonesia**

PAC *recommended* that the School of Engineering and Technology (SET) should continue on the plan to launch the two-stage masters program in Transportation Engineering, in August 2007, at the AIT Center in Indonesia to fulfill prior (June 2006)

commitment made by AIT. The President agreed on the recruitment of a fixed-term faculty in the Transportation FoS as soon as possible.

As an additional support, engagement of a Swedish expert for possible secondment by Sida to AIT, will be pursued by the President.

2] AIT Charter

The need to develop concrete formula with regard to the financial contribution that could be expected from members at the time of ratification or accession to the new charter, was raised. AIT would like to have committed owners and contributions could be in the form of cash or could also be accounted through assets donated, grants provided, sponsored projects, secondments etc. It was recommended that in article 3, 2nd sentence, the word : initial contribution" be replaced with "minimum annual".

A formula from UNITAR (based on function of GDP and population) will be looked into as reference in drafting the membership fee structure to be included in the draft AIT Charter. The draft formula will be presented at the next PAC meeting.

3] Blacklisted Hotel and Travel Policy

The President has sent an email (20 March 2007) to the community regarding the blacklisted hotel in Sri Lanka as well as relevant travel policy. The following reminders were issued:

- For all official travels, faculty, staff, and students should always use their AIT official affiliation and contact details wherever registration is required.
- For reimbursement of official hotel accommodation, official receipt and daily folio, which shows room rate, telephone numbers called, service charge and tax, are required.
- Conscious effort to protect the Institute's resources should continuously be made, ensuring the most economical options appropriate to the purpose of the travel are used.

4] Open Recruitment Process

The President stressed the importance of maintaining a transparent/open process of recruitment of faculty and staff, across the Institute. It was opined that adherence to open recruitment policy would result to the appointment of the most competent individual/s for advertised positions. Deans and Administrative Office Heads are also encouraged by the President to welcome inquiries regarding the recruitment process undergone for faculty or staff positions.

A clear procedure for recruitment will be developed and issued in due course.
c/o HRO

5] Freeze Hiring of Personnel under all funds

The President reminded PAC members of the policy prohibiting the hiring of personnel under all funds as a general rule, which should be maintained even at this time. Special requests for personnel hiring in fund 30 will be taken on a cases by case basis in consultation with the HRO. All constituencies in schools and units should be reminded and be guided accordingly.

6] Faculty / Staff Ratio

The President remarked that the faculty to staff ratio of 1:1 should be maintained in all schools. The faculty in this ratio refers to faculty under all funds (all full-time regular, seconded and visiting faculty) while staff in this context refers to all staff under Fund 10.

7] Deadline of Admissions

VPAA was requested by the President to address the issue on the deadline of submission of applications for admission. Feedback from the faculty was received suggesting the need to have a consistent application deadline to be posted online.

8] Budget for Centers

Issues were raised concerning the budget needed by centers anchored in schools to be able to operate during the initial period in cases where anticipated revenue comes at the later part of the year. The President remarked that the expenditure budget earlier allocated may need to be adjusted during the year based on the actual results of budgeted revenues or the revenue forecast given by schools and units.

9] Proposal to Re-open the AIT Golf Course

Professor Pandey, Chair of the Institute Task Force looking into the possible reopening of the golf course reported the progress in the selection of the company that would develop and operate it. There were two short listed groups out of 3 proponents (which include one group from the alumni and one professional company). All parties were evaluated and ranked according to the criteria set by the committee, which among others indicate that the arboretum should co-exist with the golf course, and that there should be no financial risk on the part of AIT from reopening of the golf course.

The detailed report and recommendation of the committee will be submitted to the President shortly, in time for the Board meeting on 28 March 2007.

10] Consultancy

The President reiterated the need of ensuring that grants and consultancy works are given to internal AIT resources / experts, as much as it is possible. Appropriateness of the common practice of giving most of the consultancy works to former students / AIT alumni should be thoroughly discussed.

The new Human Resources Head was requested to work out a scheme in addressing the issue, for discussion at the next PAC meeting.

11] Landmark of the Knowledge City

The Head, Infrastructure Office presented to PAC two (2) proposed designs for the landmark of the proposed Knowledge City which is being negotiated with Thammasat University and the Science Park. PAC recommended that only the first proposal be presented in the discussions with TU. (See *Annex 1* for the recommended design.)

Other Matters

PAC 07.03.19 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 09 April 2007, starting from 8 a.m. As agreed the next PAC meeting will be hosted by the AIT Extension. The venue is **Room B144, AIT Conference Center.**