

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

21 February 2007

(week 08)

Present: Said Irandoust (*Chair*) Udaya Rathnayaka (*SU President*)
 Peter Haddawy Jonathan Shaw
 Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai Khin Ni Ni Thein
 Sivanappan Kumar Hoang Le Tien (*AOH Coordinator*)
 Stephen Ogunlana Vilas Wuwongse
 I M Pandey
 Sudip K Rakshit *Secretaries:* Karma Rana
 Renedith Calabdan

Apologies: Dennes T Bergado

Invited: Patcharee Wangsakan

PAC 07.02.16 Welcome and Apologies

The President welcomed all present to the PAC meeting. Professor Indra M Pandey, Dean, SOM, as host also welcomed the PAC members to the School of Management. The President on behalf of PAC, offered a vote of thanks to Dean, SOM and to the staff members who made necessary arrangements in preparation of the meeting.

PAC 07.02.17 Review of the Minutes of the PAC Meeting of 23 January 2007.

The minutes of the 23 January 2007 PAC meeting were confirmed.

ISSUES FOR DECISION

PAC 07.02.18 Partnership Agreements

PAC endorsed the following partnership agreements:

- 1] **Chiang Mai University**
- 2] **Center for Informatics, University of Salzburg, Austria**

The MoA with CIUS was endorsed in principle with the following comments/suggestions:
 1] In Article III, Item 1 (a), include a clause indicating that AIT shall have the copyright on any course material developed by AIT and joint copyright on course material(s) jointly developed with the centre (CG, University of Salzburg); 2] In Article II, item (d), replace "non-exclusive" with "exclusive".

The President remarked that the agreement is endorsed in principle on the assumption that this initiative entails $\frac{1}{4}$ of the normal teaching load of faculty in AIT per semester. Professor Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai, Dean, SET will convey PAC comments to the concerned faculty/initiator. The President designated Dean, SET to sign the agreement on behalf of AIT when it is finalized taking into account comments received from PAC.

- 3] **European Business School, International University Schloss Reichartshausen Oestrich-Winkel, Germany**

The following revisions were proposed 1] Item 13 – add the phrase "[political beliefs and affiliation etc.](#)" 2] Item 16 - to include a clause on fulfillment of obligation by both parties in case of termination.

4] The International Fellowship Fund, Inc.

The agreement was endorsed with the following suggested revisions: 1] not to include "Exhibit B", the attachment on FoS; 2] to make explicit that AIT admission requirements must be met by candidates, criteria are subject to change thus should not be enumerated in the document.

**5] Katholischer Akademischer Ausländer-Dienst (KAAD)
(Catholic Academic Support Program for Foreigners)**

The agreement was endorsed with the following suggested revisions: 1] to make explicit that AIT admission requirements must be met by candidates, criteria are subject to change thus should not be enumerated in the document; Article V-1 should then read "The applicants must satisfy the general qualifications required for admission by AIT."; 2] article III.2 should also mention that AIT will provide partners of KAAD information pertaining to AIT.

It was agreed that information on agreements signed with other institutions be made available online to AIT stakeholders including students, particularly agreements with dual degree and student exchange components. The VPAA informed the meeting that work is being done towards provision of comprehensive information relevant to students such as partnerships with dual degree, student exchange, internship programs etc., which will soon be made available.

ERCO will be requested to work on the agreed action to be taken of putting online highlighted information on partnership agreements in general.

PAC members also provided comments on the agreement with the University of Arkansas Fort Smith as follows:

- the status of UAFS in terms of their postgraduate programs must be verified;
- if UAFS does not offer postgraduate programs, the draft agreement must be revised to indicate clear terms of collaboration;
- as much as possible tailor-make the presentations to the needs of the donor community
- include student life in the AIT presentation

VPDR will revise the agreement for circulation to PAC members.

PAC 07.02.19 Executive Summary-Final Report of HR Task Force

The 3-page executive summary of the final report of the HR task force, which was chaired by Dr. Jonathan Shaw was provided to PAC members. Dr. Shaw provided an overview of the salient features of the report and main recommendations. It was agreed to send the executive summary to the AIT community for feedback. The announcement should include a short introduction about the task force and the plan of action to be taken.

Action Plan (tentative)

Schedule	Action to be taken	Responsible person /office
• week 9 (26 Feb – 02 March2007)	• Executive Summary to be sent out to AIT community for feedback	• President's Office
• week 9 (26 Feb – 02 March2007)	• Executive Summary to be presented at the 02 March 2007 Executive Committee meeting;	• Dr. Shaw will attend and present the report.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • week 11 – 13 (12 - 30 March 2007) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • task force led meetings with constituencies in schools and units in order to facilitate internal discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TF members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • week 15 (9-10 April 2007) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • half-day workshop at the AIT Conference Center *the new HR head to attend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TF to lead; logistics to be facilitated by President's Office

The TF final report had already been shared by the chair of HR task force with the designated HR-head who will be joining AIT middle of March 2007. It is expected that the implementation of the TF recommendations will be accelerated once the new HR-Head takes office.

It was agreed that the final report of the task force will be sent to the legal adviser for review and comments. (c/o HRO)

On a relevant matter, PAC took note of the issues raised by the AOH coordinator concerning the employment conditions of long-serving daily hire staff which is not addressed in the work of the HR task force.

ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

Finance Issues

PAC 07.02.20 Per Diem and Hotel Rates

It was agreed that traveling allowance will be comprised of per diem and hotel allowance. It was also agreed that meals or hotel accommodation expenses covered in the conference or sponsored by company/agency, should not be charged by faculty or staff against the travel allowance provided by the institute. This guideline will be based on the professionalism and integrity of the faculty/staff.

The President requested each PAC member to study the proposed per diem and hotel rates per country. To provide feedback whether the rates are too high, too low or reasonable for every item in the table of rates prepared by the Finance Office, based on their personal travel experiences. Feedback must be sent as soon as possible to the Head, Finance Office.

The President requested Head-FO to simulate the cost implication of the proposed travel rates to determine its impact to the Institute's finances. It was also suggested that the Finance Office categorize countries into 4-5 groupings according to level of rates, for easy reference.

PAC 07.02.21 Follow-up Actions for Finance Office

- 1] In line with the instruction from the Audit Committee, the President requested Head-FO to provide PAC with monthly financial performance monitoring report which could be generated from the ERP. Dr. Harianto, ITServ Coordinator, will be requested to assist Head-FO in this work. The report should include comparison of the current and last year's data generated for the same period. The President specifically requested the assistance of Head-FO in monitoring and providing input on financial deviation(s) from the trend or from budget earlier set, so appropriate corrective measures could be taken if needed in a timely manner. It was suggested that monthly financial reports of schools and units be provided in hard copies by the

Finance Office until such time that offices are more comfortable in generating these reports themselves through ERP.

- 2] The President requested Finance Office to introduce a system aimed at developing competence of members of administration, faculty & staff etc. (principal investigators, FoS coordinators, office heads), on financial issues, by conducting trainings. This is in line with the KPMG recommendation and for AIT leaders to be more professional in interpreting and presenting financial matters. The President wishes to delegate this specific task to Mr. Patel in coordination with the Finance Office.
- 3] 2006 performance reports of schools and units for circulation to PAC members and deliberation at the next PAC meeting.
- 4] Expenditure report of all units/offices under central administration will be provided to PAC members at the next meeting.
- 5] Follow-up action previously agreed at PAC regarding opening of PDF accounts for all faculty was raised. This will be looked into by Head-Finance Office.
- 6] The President requested that the 2006 AIT audited financial report should be ready in time for the Board meeting on 28 March 2007. The audited financial report is also needed in publishing the 2006 Annual Report of AIT.

ERCO will be requested to expedite publication of the 2006 AIT Annual Report for submission to the Board Meeting on 28 March 2007.

- 7] The President reported that the Executive Committee has granted interim approval to a 6-month budget for 2007 therefore adjustment of the 6-month budget based on requirements for certain specific/limited items (e.g. promotion) could be prepared and submitted for approval.

PAC 07.02.22 Infrastructure Office

On issues concerning the Infrastructure Office (IO), PAC agreed on the following:

- 1] All units in IO will be under Fund 21;
- 2] Expenses on services rendered by IO to clearly identified users should be charged to users accordingly. Other common infrastructure expenses of the Institute will be charged against a special "Infrastructure Fund" comprising of allocated costs.
- 3] An "Infrastructure Fund" will be set up which will be administered by an Infrastructure Committee comprising of current RCM task force members with other relevant members to be added as necessary including the Head-IO. Budget (contributed by schools and units) for the Infrastructure Fund will be requested and defended before the budget team at the beginning of every year. Infrastructure fund will be in Fund 10.
- 4] The Infrastructure Committee will be asked to formulate guidelines on how the Infrastructure Fund will be used.

PAC 07.02.23 Issues from the President

1] Executive Committee Meeting

The agenda of the Executive Committee meeting scheduled for 02 March 2007 were received by PAC members. The President informed the meeting that the current Chairman of the Executive Committee, H.E. Mr. Laurent Aublin has expressed his wish to step down from chairmanship.

2] Actions Resulting from Review of FoS with Financial Problems

The President received a lot of comments and feedback on 19 February 2007 issue of the weekly letter of the President particularly with regard to the discussions conducted with the fields of study which are facing financial challenges and the manner in which the outcomes have been communicated. PAC members openly shared their views on the topic including constructive suggestions and feedback received from the SU President, Mr. Udaya Rathnayaka, who remarked that sharing such communications with students would also help mobilize students in promotional, recruitment efforts and other initiatives.

The President emphasized the importance of honest and transparent communications at all times both within the community and to AIT's external stakeholders. The intention was not to undermine what have been achieved so far and the hard work and sacrifices made by all members of the community. He opined that it always pays to be honest and upfront about problems and challenges. Last year's situation was pointed out as a perfect example wherein AIT has been able to mobilize support by sharing the full information on the financial health of the Institute in an open and transparent manner to members of the AIT community as well as alumni and other external stakeholders. It not only helped generate awareness but also in creating a strong sense of solidarity among community members which helped us in rapidly mobilizing support from all quarters and in taking timely corrective measures.

The current process of scrutinizing AIT's current academic offerings for their relevance to prospective students and their financial viability is an important part of AIT's overall reorganization and consolidation process towards further strengthening AIT. The criteria used for the review of fields of study facing financial challenges were that the fields were in deficit in 2006 and that they either had a history of deficits over the past several years or a pattern of dropping enrolments. It is hoped that FoS currently facing financial challenges will view this exercise as an opportunity to rejuvenate themselves and emerge stronger.

The importance of new means of revenue generation and the development of new educational products for the reinvigoration and long term sustainability of AIT were highlighted by the President. AIT must continuously change and adapt and come up with innovative offerings geared to the demands of the higher educational market based on the needs of both the public and private sectors. Under the changing landscape of higher education and donor support, such review and changes must be viewed as an ongoing evolutionary process. It is equally important for those fields which are currently strong and doing well to also plan ahead into the future so that they continue to remain viable and sustainable in the long run.

The President concurred with the sentiments expressed that communications of this nature could be made more balanced and portrayed in an encouraging and positive light. The President in his weekly letters had continuously highlighted the positive initiatives that have been taken, significant achievements made together with the challenges and difficulties faced. Moreover, further efforts in balancing such communications will be made.

<p>The President underscored the importance of focusing on the August 2007 intake. All necessary changes must be implemented. One clear message that should be out is that for FoS on negative trend for some time, radical changes and concrete actions must be made in order not to lose the opportunity for the August 2007 intake.</p>
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<p>VAA will look into feedback concerning the way the admissions office staff are providing information to prospective candidates of FoS no longer admitting students for August 2007.</p>
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3] AIT Landmark

Leading up to the 50th anniversary celebrations of AIT in the year 2009 the AIT Alumni Association (AITAA) would like to make a concrete contribution to the Institute by way of sponsoring the construction of an AIT landmark which should be ready in time for the golden jubilee.

At the 35th AITAA Governing Board Meeting held in Vientiane last year, the general assembly unanimously approved the conceptual design of the landmark as well as the funding for this project which will be supported by the AITAA Mother, National Chapters, as well as the generous contribution by individual alumni. The plan is to complete the first phase in year 2007 and the second phase in 2008. The letter from General Dr. Boonsrang Niumpradit, President of the AITAA Mother Chapter together with the conceptual design of the landmark will be provided to PAC members.

PAC agreed that the AITAA will be invited to present the proposal to the AIT community.

Dr. Tien will send the AITAA proposal to the President and convey PAC deliberation on this matter to officers of AITAA.

4] Reopening of Golf Course Supported by the Alumni

There is general consensus among the alumni towards the reopening of the AIT Golf Course which should be considered as an important and integral part of the AIT education facilities, student recreation and gathering place for the AIT community including its alumni, neighbors, partners and guests. The support by the alumni could be in the form of providing free training and classes on how to play golf with alumni donated training equipment as well as in assisting AIT in fund raising activities such as organization of golf tournaments in the AIT Golf Course once it is in operation.

5] Engagement of Faculty beyond the Retirement Age of 60

The President requested the school deans to clarify to faculty colleagues that this option is not permanent rather a temporary/transitional solution to address academic needs of the schools based on the recommendation and request by the School and approved by the administration. It was pointed out that caution should be taken in utilizing this scheme, ensuring that it will not be at the expense of current faculty members in the fields and that available expertise are first maximized before considering this option.

6] Weekly Letter of the President

The weekly letter of the President will be regularly sent as well to the members of the Board of Trustees starting from next week (26 February) in addition to the current readership which includes the AIT community, AITAA national chapter presidents and executive committee members. The President asked the PAC to encourage colleagues in schools and AIT Extension to send contributions, achievements, initiatives etc. that merits inclusion in the President's weekly letter.

7] CoLA (Cost of Living Allowance)

The official Nationwide Consumer Price Index figures from the Ministry of Commerce of the Royal Thai Government up to January 2007 determine a CoLA adjustment of 4.66% for the year 2007.

Since the Institute has not yet fully recovered from its current financial crisis, no CoLA adjustments can be made to Institute employees this year. The voluntary salary reduction will continue until 31 December 2007 or earlier should there be any significant favorable changes in the Institute's financial situation, which is closely monitored.

Legal advise will be sought on the CoLA Committee's recommendation. Consultations with the AIT Labor Union will be made. c/o HRO.

8] Meeting with AITAA

The President reported that in his recent meeting with the AITAA Advisory committee, he had an opportunity to present the current financial standing of AIT. AITAA continually expressed strong support for AIT.

9] Institute Advisory Board

The President provided an update on the proposed members of the Institute Advisory Board.

The President requested respective Deans of SERD and SET to convene as soon as possible their School Boards meetings.

10] AIT Conference Center (AITCC)

The President encouraged the schools and AIT extension to continually support AITCC in generating income by holding at least two international conferences in AITCC in a year. This will also help promote branding of AIT.

11] Partnership / Areas of Cooperation with the Prince of Songkla University (PSU)

In line with the memorandum sent by the President to the School Deans and AITE Director dated 7 February 2007, the President requested that these collaboration be discussed within schools and extension to find ways of pursuing partnership in the identified areas of possible collaboration with PSU.

PAC 07.02.24 Update on the Draft Charter of AIT

PAC received the latest version of the draft AIT charter provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) Thailand which also took into account most recent comments from the AIT community. VPAA explained the proposed revision in article 5(iv) on accreditation of certificates, diplomas and degrees. The draft charter will be deliberated at the 02 March 2007 meeting of the Executive Committee. Sending in of additional comments is still encouraged. The final draft will later be made available to the AIT community.

In line with efforts of obtaining the international status of AIT, the President informed that corresponding immunities and privileges are being negotiated with concerned offices by VPER.

Academic Issues

PAC 07.02.25 Coordination of Student Recruitment

Towards increasing effectiveness, and better coordination and utilization of resources of the Institute, the President has requested Head-ERCO to structure experiences of the schools in terms of student recruitment for the overall benefit of the Institute. This can be used as reference for the schools and Institute's promotional strategies. The meeting was informed that Head-ERCO has already initiated discussions with the promotion committees of the schools. The President remarked that AIT should have at least four kinds of promotional materials depending on the target groups or clients (e.g. donor agencies, prospective students, private sector, governments etc.). Apart from the dynamic information included in the promotional materials, depending on the different target clients of the schools, information common to all schools could be standardized to develop materials that could be shared.

In preparation of AIT promotional materials deadlines must be agreed and standardized by schools.

PAC 07.02.26 Policy on Grades for Repeated Courses

The proposed policy on grades for repeated courses was circulated to PAC members. The President requested the Deans to discuss further this issue with faculty members in their respective schools. In particular to help explain that the motivation behind the proposed policy of recording in the transcript only the grade of the most recent attempt (repeated course) while annotating the number of attempts made by the student, is towards helping AIT graduates increase their employability in the job market. The policy provides students with incentive to improve and to increase their level of competence. The President felt that the proposed policy is fair and an honest reflection of the individual's latest competency on the subject at the same time will increase his/her chances of employment.

PAC 07.02.27 Removal of 1/3 Ceiling, Honorarium Criteria and Fund Allocation

The updated version of the document on the removal of 1/3 ceiling, honorarium criteria and fund allocation was further deliberated by PAC members. Taking into account comments received from faculty and PAC members, changes in the draft were made by VPR in consultation with the President. Comments have been noted and the final draft of the document to be forwarded to the decision meeting will be provided by VPR.

The final draft will be taken to the Decision Meeting set during the first week of March.

PAC 07.02.28 Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, 06 March 2007, starting from 8 a.m. The Dean, SERD Professor Sivanappan Kumar offered to host the next meeting of PAC in SERD.