

PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

MINUTES 18 August 2010 (week 33)

Present :

Said Irandoust
Nitin Afzulpurkar
Izel Ann Dante
Joydeep Dutta
Barbara Igel
Sudip Rakshit
Weerakorn Ongsakul
Noppadon Phien-wej (*representing D/SET*)
Jonathan Shaw
Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai
Amrit Bart (thro' video-con.)
Worawaj Onnom

Secretariat :

Karma Rana
Namita Sravat

Apologies :

Kazi M. Ahmed
Manukid Parnichkun

PAC 10.08.01 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The President welcomed the members attending the PAC meeting and noted the apologies.

PAC 10.08.02 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the PAC meeting held on 21 July 2010 were **confirmed**, with following corrections to be incorporated:

- 3rd last bullet on page 2 under point 2 to read as *The VPAA noted that the root problem is due to the fact that in some cases.....Thailand.*
- 4th bullet on page 3 to read as *There is a need to discuss the English language requirement in the Academic Senate with possibility to include 2-credits elective English course to be offered to all students in the first semester.*
- 8th bullet on page 3 to read as *The VPAA, as requested by the VPR, would provide the systematic view on research quality.*
- Last line on page 3 to read as *that the current system allows hiring of Visiting/Adjunct Faculty for such purpose.*

Follow-up Issues**1] Appointment and Evaluation Policy for Faculty with Professional & Industry Experience**

It was informed that the draft P&P on "*Procedure for Recruitment and Appointment of Direct-Hire Faculty of the Practice/Industry Fellow*" will be submitted to the Academic Senate meeting on 25 August for its inputs/feedback, after which it will be brought back to PAC for approval.

2] Merit Payments for Administration/Vice Presidents and how they are compensated

The Head-Administration was requested to come up with system for the next year in consultation with HRO (on their feedback on benchmarking with other universities)

considering the comments made in the last PAC meeting. This new system could be adopted for Vice Presidents this year itself, and for School Deans (who have already been paid merit bonus) the new system would be adopted next year onwards.

3] Scholarship from ICT Surplus

The use of ICT surplus would be allowed for only tuition fees scholarship and not for living expenses. The President would send a formal memorandum informing this decision to Dean/SET.

The Dean/SET informed that a brainstorming meeting is being organized in SET with regards to equipments and face-lifting of the ICT and TC labs.

4] Use of Surplus from F30 Academic Program in Vietnam

The Dean/SET informed that in the school it has been agreed that the surplus will be used on collective basis rather particular FoS.

It was opined that to create incentive for the FoS making surplus, the funds generated should be put in the operational budget which can be used as per policy, but if it is accounted as surplus then it becomes part of the institute.

PAC 10.08.03 ISSUES FROM THE PRESIDENT

1] Agenda of the Executive Committee Meeting

The agenda of the Executive Committee Meeting was circulated to the PAC members for information and comments.

2] Updates on new AIT Charter

The President provided updates on the new AIT Charter and informed that as of then 7 countries and 1 international organization have been given full powers to sign the Charter on 25 August 2010; 7 other countries have confirmed and are waiting for full powers; and 10 other countries (including 1 international organization) are awaiting feedback from their Headquarters. He clarified that the countries that sign it within one year of adoption of Charter would be called Founding Members, but there would be no difference in benefits and privileges for the ones which would join later.

3] Updates on Satellite Model

The President informed that the first Reference Group meeting was held on 22 July where it was agreed that initially two pilot projects will be considered, one in Vietnam (as AIT already had campus there) and other in Nepal (as AIT has already received a proposal). The draft letter enquiring potential partners to indicate their interest was circulated for member's feedback, which would be sent by that evening by the President (feedback received during the meeting and later through email would be considered while finalizing the letter).

PAC 10.08.04 PRESENTATION ON “TOWARDS AIT OUTREACH STRATEGY”

The Coordinator of the Wetland Alliance Partnership, Dr. Theo Ebbers gave presentation on “Towards AIT Outreach Strategy”. He noted that in the AIT context *Outreach is engaging AIT faculty and students with external constituencies through teaching, research and service activities. Outreach activities generate knowledge, share resources, and apply AIT’s expertise connecting AIT in mutually beneficial relationships with its wider community. AIT outreach is the integration of faculty research and student learning into the life of communities outside AIT’s walls.* He stressed that there is a need to recognize those who are doing research activities. He then presented a matrix through which impact and quality of engagement of faculty in the outreach activities could be evaluated and measured.

The Vice President Research, Prof. Rakshit informed that the Outreach Council Board (OCB) that was established to advise on outreach related issues has met once and will be soon meeting again where one topic of discussion “How to have impact of outreach activities” could be further explored, and they further need advice on what the OCB should be focusing on.

The key points made during the discussion that followed were:

- It is important to clearly define ‘Outreach’.
- How much faculty time should be allowed by school for outreach activities?
- Why is it difficult to publish if there is significant new knowledge created through Outreach activities?
- In addition to teaching, research, and community service; outreach is important which needs to be integrated into classroom teaching etc.
- The outreach aspect of academic teaching should be part of AIT system which should be duly credited and given more meaningful engagement.

It was concluded that the document needs further refining and building up considering the comments made and feedback from the OCB that will meet soon. It will then be presented to the PAC again for reconsideration.

PAC 10.08.05 CAPITALIZATION OF FIXED ASSETS

The Head of Finance, Dr. Noppadon had in one of the previous PAC meetings presented a proposal to adjust the cap value for fixed assets from 15,000 baht to 5,000 baht per item, and he was requested to check and report change in spending behavior after the minimum capitalization of fixed assets was changed from 2,000 baht to 15,000 baht since January 2007.

It was opined that the cap value for fixed assets should be either 15,000 baht or for the assests lower than 15,000 baht the shelf life to be more than 3 years. The PAC **agreed** *that the cap value of minimum capitalization of fixed assets would be retained to 15,000 baht. A list of fixed assets above 15,000 baht is already available, and for fixed assets below 15,000 baht (with shelf life of more than 3 years) the Schools/Units would prepare their own list.*

PAC 10.08.05 ACADEMIC ISSUES**1] Academic Degree Title**

The Academic Degree Title was **deferred** for the next PAC meeting in order to have ample time for discussion, and in the presence of the Academic Senate Chair.

2] Student Faculty Evaluation

In PAC meeting held on 24 March 2010, the then Student Union President, Ms. Tasnuva Ahmed had informed that the students had noted that even if a faculty is poorly rated in the student faculty evaluation, he/she continues to teach next semester too, and that they are not aware what follow-up actions are taken after this extensive exercise is conducted.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) was **requested** to come up with a system whereby the results of the Student Faculty Evaluation Forms are considered and appropriate actions taken accordingly. It was **suggested** that meetings for problem cases should be arranged between the student representative not belonging to that particular school, the School Dean and VPAA. Also that the dissemination of the problem cases identified would be done by the VPAA office.

3] Faculty-Student Advisee ratio

The VPAA recalled that in the previous PAC meeting, in response to complaints received from students with regards to availability of faculty advisors, a list of faculty and their number of advisees (only for doctoral students) was circulated to the members to reflect on it. The School Deans were **requested** to put this issue on table in their school meetings and inform that the administration is thinking of putting a cap on the number of student advisees, and report their reaction. **The feedback is awaited on this.**

PAC 10.08.06 RECOGNITION OF AIT/AIT DEGREE

The PAC members **agreed** to recommend that AIT also apply for membership to the Institute of International Education (IIE), and the External Relations and Communications Office (ERCO) was requested to do the needful. Currently AIT is member of the Association of the Southeast Asian Institutions of Higher Learning (ASAHL), Association of Universities of Asia and the Pacific (AUAP), and the Greater Mekong Sub-region Academic and Research Network (GMSARN).

The ERCO was also **requested** to check for the top 10 countries (w.r.t. number of AIT alumni) whether the AIT degree is recognized.

PAC 10.08.07 STUDENT INTERNSHIP DESK

The presentation made by Ms. Carla from the Career Center with updates on the progress on Internship Desk was received well by the PAC members. The suggestions given were as follows:

- Identify the problems faced by company which interns could aid in addressing through the preparation of case study and short-term research works.

- Assign a faculty advisor to each intern who needs to submit report on work done during internship.
- Career Center can utilize the list of alumni and the commitment for providing access to internship opportunities could be created through national chapters of alumni.
- Industrial mentorship and alumni mentorship for group of students could be looked into.
- When the institute hires professionals engaged for consultancy, they should be informed that as much as possible they should use AIT students as interns.
- The Career Center could collect the visitor cards with the President's Office to track and follow up with various companies/consultants that visit AIT.

**PAC 10.08.08 PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT -
AIT ACCOMODATION COMPLEX**

Dr. Nitin Afzulpurkar presented the updated proposal including the analysis of student accommodation requirements and the developments identified for inclusion in the master plan. It was informed that the proposal is at conceptual level and one company has shown interest which commits to make 100 new dorms within 2010. The student dormitory is one aspect of the master plan of campus development, which needs to be first initiated for open bidding.

Following were the suggestions made:

- An 'Alumni House' be included in the Master Plan.
- Since the master plan envisaged is zonal based, the institute needs to be careful in the way it proceeds.
- Renovation of old dorms and construction of new dorms should be done in parallel.
- Acquiring some land outside campus could also be looked into.
- The endowment fund being raised could be used in investing for the new dorms.

It was agreed that an advisory committee (with members to be identified by Dr. Afzulpurkar) appointed by the President would closely work on this proposal. The CMO would be asked to open bidding for this proposed residential development.

PAC 10.08.08 OTHER BUSINESS

To respond to the devastating floods in Pakistan, it was recommended that as a first step AIT could approach ADB and WB who are involved in mapping the damage through district-level assessments that AIT could also assist them and be part of their team in this work. The donation boxes have been placed in campus at various locations and an account with SCB has also been opened to collect donations.

PAC 10.08.09 ISSUES DEFERRED FOR NEXT MEETING

The next PAC meeting will be held on 15 September 201 morning.