PRESIDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

MINUTES
13 October 2010
(*week 41*)

Present :	Secretariat :	Invitees:
Said Irandoust	Karma Rana	Pritam Shrestha
Nitin Afzulpurkar	Namita Sravat	Ashish Sitoula
Kazi M. Ahmed		P V Gopi Krishna
Amrit Bart		Benjamin Gargabite
Izel Ann Dante		Tony Guernela
Joydeep Dutta		Viraaphan Samadhi
Barbara Igel		
Weerakorn Ongsakul		
Manukid Parnichkun		
Sudip K Rakshit		
Jonathan Shaw		
Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai		
Worawaj Onnom		

PAC 10.10.01　　　　WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The President welcomed the members and the invitees attending the PAC meeting.

PAC 10.10.02　　　　CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the PAC meeting held on 15 September 2010 were **confirmed** with minor editorial revisions on page 3, noted by the secretary.

PAC 10.10.03　　　　MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

1] Appointment and Evaluation Policy for Faculty with Professional & Industry Experience

The committee is further revising the draft P&P *"Recruitment and Appointment of Direct-hire Professor of Practice"* incorporating comments/suggestions made by the Academic Senate.

VPAA to report in next PAC meeting

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

Response from Human Resource Office is awaited

3] Student Faculty Evaluation

The VPAA informed that Student Union Academic Affairs committee and Dr. Winai are working on improvising the questionnaire in the Student Evaluation Forms. It was clarified

that there would be no change in the current policy, but more on developing the mechanism to respond to the outcomes of the student evaluation of faculty through concerned School Dean.

VPAA will follow-up on this and report in next PAC meeting

4]   Student Advisee Distribution

The VPAA presented the updated version of the statistics on Student Advisee Distribution by School and Faculty rank/status member's review and to reflect on the figures. The breakdown of number of faculty supervising less than 5 , between 5-10 and more than 10 was indicated for each faculty rank; and also the breakdown of number of students per program (CAS, Masters, Doctoral, and Committees Membership) was also indicated. The data shows that instead of having equal distribution (which ideally should be achieved) it is either extremely high or low in many of the cases.

The Dean/SET referred to an example of Dr. Hadikusumo for whom 73 Master advisees are recorded, however most of them are from Professional Masters Program in Vietnam who are not required to do research thesis. Thus, this kind of bundling creates confusion. Furthermore, there are less number of specialists/senior faculty available while students feel that they should be allowed to decide their advisors. To address this issue the fields in high demand with greater number of students enrolling should be identified, and as a priority more faculty should be recruited in them.

The President stated that it's especially good for School Deans to reflect on the numbers indicated in the data. In response to comment made regarding less number of, the President mentioned that plans should be in place to recruit new faculty, and if for any reason it is not possible then it might be better to go slowly in admitting doctoral students for a while.

The VPR mentioned that the average of 6-7 students per faculty is still bad for quality purpose. In relation to this issue, he also suggested that while requesting for the funding, it should be negotiated for 4 years instead of 3 years for doctoral students, as in AIT it gets delayed most of the time since doctoral students are required to do coursework also which usually takes one year to complete. The President responded that instead, reducing coursework could be an option; especially in light of students complaint that we do not have doctoral level advanced courses (except few such courses offered by SOM), and since this is additional requirement which is not there in the European system.

The issue would be discussed in the next Academic Senate meeting. The VPAA would write to School Deans to reflect on the data and take necessary steps.

6]   Recognition of AIT / AIT Degree

As per PAC's agreement, through the assistance of External Relations and Communications Office (ERCO), process is underway for getting membership of Institute of International Education (IIE) by paying the membership fees.

7] Review of External Cooperation Agreements

The Head-ERCO, Dr. Pritam Shrestha reflected upon the AIT's external cooperation agreements and that there already exists a P&P on 'Partnership Agreement Definitions, Processing and Finalization' since 1 March 2009 along with templates for MoU and MoA, and all were requested to follow this P&P in processing partnership agreements, and from proponents are reminded to discuss the proposed MoU/MoA at the school level and that President would consider it upon concerned School Dean's endorsement only. The partnership agreements provide scholarships/fellowships, faculty/staff secondment, student exchange/dual degree, and feeding students to AIT.

It was clarified that since a couple of years, open-ended agreements are no more signed. Also a termination clause is put into partnership agreements, and in some cases it explicitly states that the agreement would be automatically terminated should no activities take place within a specified time (e.g., 1 year) although the agreement validity may be longer. The legal review is also done while processing partnership agreements, however, where a new agreement is similar to previously signed agreements (which were already legally reviewed), legal review is not required.

The ERCO proposed to write to universities (mainly those of good standing) requesting information on how they categorize partnerships (partners above AIT, partners at par with AIT, and partners below AIT), and how they manage them. It was suggested that categorizing in this way is not desirable and should be avoided.

It was noted that many universities are cautious and sign only implementable MoUs/MoAs; and some even cancel their partnership agreements that stay dormant with no activities being done for some time. It was agreed that those MoUs/MoAs that are open-ended and have been dormant for some years now could be cancelled by sending a letter, but the ones having contractual deadline they automatically get cancelled if not renewed. Furthermore, for renewal of active contracts, the request should be made by the faculty involved through concerned School Dean, along with submission of the information on past activities.

The President stated that at times requests are received to sign an MoU in order to make it convenient for visitors of AIT, which should be avoided and this aspect should be included in the P&P. For monitoring and evaluation of partnership agreements, the ERCO was requested to prepare a searchable database that is available through intranet on the AIT website. This would allow faculty/staff to see if they could contribute in any activities of their interest.

> The Head-ERCO was requested to consider all the suggestions while revising P&P, and prepare presentation on this for the Executive Committee Meeting.

8] Liability Insurance Coverage of Board and Executive Committee members

The Head-Administration informed that the Purchasing Unit was in communication with the Client Executive on FINPRO Practice of Marsh PB Co., Ltd. (the company recommended by Executive Committee member Mr. John Hancock). Marsh had provided the product sheet for D&O Liability Insurance; the D&O application and EPL application

forms for completion, which had been submitted together with a copy of AIT's latest audited Financial Statement. Marsh has already obtained quotations from some insurance companies and is preparing a comparison matrix for AIT. The report is expected to be received soon.

> Further updates on this will be provided to the Executive Committee Meeting.

9] Development of KPIs

The Head-Finance, Khun Noppadon presented the financial ratios of some selected universities. It was suggested that at least one Thai university should be included, and Khun Noppadon could approach Prof. Worsak who has Sirinthorn Univeristy's KPIs of last 2 years. Also other universities such as Royal Institute of Technology and Chalmers University in Sweden, ITC Netherlands, etc. should be included to benchmark with comparable universities.

> The Head-Finance will further work on this together with the VPRD, and prepare the report for the Executive Committee Meeting

10. New Online Student's Application Tracking System

Mr. Tony Guernela gave presentation on the new online student's application tracking system. It is planned to be implemented for the January 2011 to see any hick-ups in the system, and to be ready for the major August semester intake at AIT HQ. Later it could also be implemented for AIT Vietnam and other Centers of AIT. It was emphasized that there is no deviation from the current system but upon using this online tracking system, the bottlenecks or time lags could be identified.

It was suggested that the system should create report on number of times any candidate is tracking his/her application, so that candidate's interest could be judged. The system should also allow applicant to track the status indicating that the file is under review at FoS level, School Level etc. Also the check list of documents received, documents awaited, or additional supporting documents needed should be indicated by the system, when student tracks his application.

> The system would be further improved based on the comments made during the meeting under the guidance of the VPAA.

PAC 10.10.04   ISSUES FROM AIT VIETNAM

1] Internationalization of AITVN Staff

The Director of AIT in Vietnam (AITVN), Dr. Amrit Bart informed that currently AITVN has 53 staff under AITVN payroll. The staff category includes program and training facilitation staff, which would be expanded by hiring admission and administration staff. Except for the Director, all employees are Vietnamese nationals, which does not project the international (or even regional) profile. Since recruiting a foreign employee is cost prohibitive given AITVN current income, he would like to receive guidance/

recommendation from PAC members on the suggested exchange of staff from AIT to Vietnam, and other ways and means for internationalization of AITVN Staff.

Following were the key points of discussions:
- It was felt that a suggestion to include condition in the contract of AIT employees that they might be transferred to Satellite Centers of AIT cannot be enforced and initially it can be on voluntary basis for a short period (1-3 months).
- Some kind of incentives at fairly reasonable scale (that includes promotion/bonus possibility) would make the exchange of staff an attractive scheme.
- AITVN should consider recruiting new staff from other countries.
- During inter-semester period student interns could be recruited from AIT HQ.
- When AITVN sets up admission office, the AIT admission officer could be hauled for a week or so in assisting with homogenizing the system.

> Dr. Bart would consider the suggestions.

2] Use of School generated reserve funds held in AITVN

Dr. Bart briefed the PAC members on the number of projects related to expansion of facilities and programs in AITVN (as mentioned in Paper 5.2 of the meeting). While AITVN has some of its own reserve for investing in these initiatives, Schools (both, SET and SoM) have also built-up some of their own reserves for investments. He requested for an open discussion about how to effectively utilize AITVN-based reserve funds for further growth and development of AITVN.

> The SET and SOM Deans would together with AITVN Director propose initiatives, future developments, improvements etc. where these funds could be invested in.

3] AIT Policy on AITVN Owned Academic Programs

A proposal for Professional Masters Program in Finance, Business and Information Management was submitted for Academic Senate's (AS) endorsement through the President. Although AS tried to assist with evaluation of the academic content of the program, it noted that this would be first instance of program being offered independently by a Center in Vietnam for which there is currently no mechanism. Thus, the administration was requested to consider the policy issue. As per the existing P&P *AA-2-2-2: Introduction of New Programs* the proposals for all new programs must first be approved by the School in which the program reside, followed by Academic Senate through its concerned standing committee.

It was agreed that in principal the AITVN should have no limitation on offering its own programs in knowledge areas other than the ones offered at AIT. There could however be a two-phased program offered in similar knowledge areas. These programs should be offered with proper coordination between AIT and AITVN, and AIT having academic quality control through its Academic Senate. It was also suggested that an upfront fee could be levied to the center proposing the program. In case the proposed program is outside AIT's knowledge area, then an ad-hoc external committee could be set up to work together with AS through its standing committees, with payment for such services be made by the Center proposing the program.

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> The VPAA agreed to prepare and present guidelines on offering of academic programs by the AIT Centers in the next PAC meeting.

PAC 10.10.05   FINANCIAL DATA OWNERSHIP – MINIMIZE ERP/SIS VARIANCE

The Head-Finance, Mr. Noppadon informed that there are three financial data figures that are recorded through School's, SIS and ERP System, which do not coincide with each other due to many factors. Prof. Dutta mentioned that former VPAA, Prof. Peter Haddawy had suggested that by using Oracle the ERP and SIS could be integrated. Prof. Worsak suggested that apart from having proper infrastructure like using Oracle, it might also be useful to have a unit with Chief Information Officer (CIO) who works together with NetLink, and then CIO would be responsible for all financial data.

> The possible integration of SIS into ERP system would be looked into by the President together with the Vice President of Academic Affairs to minimize ERP/SIS variance.

PAC 10.10.06   AIT RESEARCH STRATEGY

The Vice President Research, Prof. Sudip K Rakshit gave presentation on the AIT Research Study which follows the Results Based Management (RBM) Framework, and which was arrived at the through two RBM Workshops sponsored by Sida. Based on these RBM workshops the proposal was sent to Sida, which approved the funding for AIT Research Strategy Development Project. By end of October 2010, a result based AIT Research Strategy (2011 – 2015) would be established, that is focused on conducting quality applied research in select areas through collaboration with relevant partners in support of AIT's mission of sustainable development in the Asian region and its integration into the global economy. The strategy would be dynamic enough to adapt to the changing resource environment and also the needs of Asian countries. An RBM logframe will be developed through a workshop from November 11-14 to guide the implementation of the research strategy, followed by submission of draft research strategy to Sida during the 3rd week of November.

It was clarified that the research strategy would not be a limiting factor to what an individual faculty member wants to do or is doing.

The President mentioned that to have more research focus it is necessary to put resources in it, and thus the recruitment of faculty/staff could be guided by it. But Dean/SET opined that from wholistic point of view the faculty recruitment is guided by teaching as the revenue comes from that.

The VPR noted that for the time being the thematic areas have been identified, but the research document would include the mechanism and a template for deciding the next thematic area.

A suggestion was put forward to include renewable energy technology and Environmental research for which AIT is known. With regards to knowledge repository of research collaborations, it was suggested to make it mandatory to deposit final report of projects in the

Library; and VPR informed that the Form-E is being improvised for this purpose, and executive summary could be made available online.

PAC 10.10.08   OTHER MATTERS

Professor Worsak Kanok-Nukulchai, Vice President for Resource Development updated the members on the Royal Thai Government (RTG) scholarship funds approved for the next five years, which would be communicated upon receiving formal communication from the RTG.

Due to time constraints the following agenda items were deferred for the next PAC meeting:
-    Merit Payments for Administration/Vice Presidents (Head-HRO)
-    Faculty Work Load and Honorarium Rates (Head-Administration)
-    Academic Senate Reports (based on 25 August 2010)
-    SET's Faculty Position and Salary Placement Exercise Outcome

The **next PAC meeting** shall be held on **17 November 2010**.

/ns 28 October 2010