Comments by Faculty on White Paper

RK Ghosh – CSE

I have some suggestions on the document. I think a lot of problems are kind of interlinked and we are not talking about reforms in structure. So I have many suggestions and comments on the document. Some of these are listed below.

1. I don't think there should be need to bypass dept's suggestions. However, there are occasions where the same proposal with cosmetic changes keep coming again and again these days till such time dept views are in synch with views of administration.

2. Most of the time, as in case of HG, there was no proposal on the table and IAC debates the proposal on the fly and recommends implementation. I think is part is not mentioned any where in the document.

3. Sometimes totally ill-advised proposal, such as change in email ID, keep coming again and again when it was shot down unanimously by all users. However, things like setting up LDAP, using encryption for passwords, allowing ssh to outside, etc are not high in the agenda of CC or administrators.

4. There is a need to have evolve a procedure which can ensure that administrators are not chosen only on CV but they must have passions for the job they are selected. Consultative mechanism for the appointment of administrators is poor. This needs to be revamped.

5. I think there is a need also to have an appraisal system for administrators and the result of the appraisal should be sent to MHRD and appointing authorities like IIT council.

6. Director's appointment is a big issue, because ultimately, the institute's major problem arise due to mishandling or handling by the chief administrator. So, there is a reason to develop a proposal for appointment of director. The stake holders must be consulted. The consultation process has to be elaborate like prospective directorial candidates must make presentation to faculty and students. He/she should stay for a week at the institute prior to formal interview for the post. Some senior members of faculty should also be members of the selection board for director's appointment.

7. I think there is also a need to bifurcate the academic administration from rest of the daily routine administration. May be director should be only external interface while senate should have a different head (academic provost).

N Kaistha – ChE

The document is pretty good. A copy should be sent to BoG Chairman Visitor and MHRD.

S A Ramakrishna – PhY

At least one of the things we can implement immediately through FF is about point -4 of Prof. Ghosh's email: to demand a NEW SYSTEM for the appoiintment of Institute functionaries like Dean, DD, SUGC and SPGC Chairs, wardens etc., as the consultative mechanism has not been doing well.

There should be a call for appointment for these positions where the candidates apply for the positions and are evaluated for the position in an objective manner using their CVs, their achievements, passion for the work, their vision for the work, aptitude etc.
I request you to form a group to work on a document towards this.

Anurag Tripathi – ChE

Thanks for the great effort. Just noticed that the sentence before section 3 **Fund and resource generation** on page 6 is incomplete.

Naren Naik – EE

In the research section, I am having the feeling that we are going back (or forward!) to the numbers game by asking for a candidate to have similar average rate as "top" univs overseas. Also, without defining satisfactory we are only defining an excellent norm, that too in terms of numbers again. On the side, numbers of citations are perhaps sufficient but not necessary. There are usual cases of references being uncited by authors.

There were the following few suggestions of note during the discussion to avoid an altogether number-game model, and on the other hand to avoid some kind of an industry type annual appraisal in a basically longer-term environment:

1. A few key publications are to be evaluated by subject experts if necessary. 2. The time duration of the appraisal be about 3 years to allow for the times of execution.

K Muralidhar – ME

Three points -

I]
The credibility of FF depends not on what it demands but what it can offer. In this context, I suggest we as faculty guarantee
a. regular engagement of classes
b. close guidance of projects and PhD dissertation including prompt submission
c. a positive environment for students including counseling on discipline
d. guarded language on email
e. civic sense in terms of vehicular traffic, smoking, holding seminars, and the rest
f. a best effort (clean and positive) attitude towards all our activities.

II]
The document attaches great importance to the response/assessment/ feedback received from elsewhere. If I understand this Institute correctly, it is that the faculty 'knows best' and is driven by its own insight. Hence, sections of the text that demand an explanation as to 'why a person did not make it' do not appeal to me.

III]
Our profession is intellectually demanding. FF can demand non-interference in faculty time in the form of meetings and events.

Suchitra Mathur – HSS

Since the mail specifically asked that the responses to the documents uploaded should be sent to you, I am not addressing this mail to the entire faculty list. However, I would like to know how / if such comments received by you will be shared with the rest of the faculty and/or be responded to in a different manner.

My concerns are all related to the 'Multi-Point Evaluation of Faculty Activities' document:

Overall, I am very concerned by the philosophy of quantification that appears to be guiding this entire document where most criteria are being measured by numbers (how many of various things, measured against various averages). Much of the work that we do, in teaching, research, and other activities, is qualitative and not always amenable to quantification. Completely ignoring this aspect of our work is, I think, a dangerous trend, and I would like to register my deep reservations in this regard.

1) Under Teaching, I have fundamental objections to completely excluding student feedback in any form in an evaluation of teaching. This, to me, would be equivalent to taking away peer evaluation for research, since students are the ones we try to reach through our teaching, just as our peers are the ones with whom we share collective knowledge generation through research. So it is imperative that a reasonable format be found to include student feedback in teaching evaluation. This is NOT a recommendation to accept the numbers

generated by the current (or even any future) SRS forms, though I do find it interesting that this is the ONLY place where quantitative data is seen to be suspect as being 'prejudiced'! However, there are numerous methods of collating feedback from students that do NOT involve such purely quantitative data. I think this possibility should be discussed seriously instead of simply being deemed impossible.

(a) Under UG teaching, the criteria listed leave little leeway for non-Economics HSS faculty who have no 'departmental core' courses to teach, and whose class sizes are determined by the number of available faculty in any given semester rather than any pre-determined curricular requirement. In certain 'core' courses, such as language teaching, the most intense and effective teaching REQUIRES smaller class sizes, and yet now that seems to be something that such faculty members would be penalised for. And not all disciplines allow for the development of new teaching laboratories (I have never heard of one in literature and philosophy; I would like to learn of these from my more knowledgable colleagues in the Institute). So 'three of the four' is a relative impossibility for at least some faculty members, making this criteria 'closed' to them!

(b) Why are projects (at the undergraduate level, during internships, as working with post-docs) not included anywhere under 'teaching'?

2) Under Research, there is no place for book chapters ANYWHERE, and research output as categorised through patents/technologies/products leaves no scope for creative work such as art, literature, etc. Are these completely outside the purview of 'research' as defined by the faculty of this institute?

3) The criteria of Institute Service does not appear on the list at all. I find this in contradiction to the first document on transparency that stresses on greater participation of the faculty in decision making. From my experience, it is often hard to find faculty to agree to take up positions such as SUGC, SPGC, etc. which involve a lot of thankless work, and yet, is essential to the smooth functioning of the institute. And service, in fact, extends to beyond recognised official positions in senate committees; it includes involvement with various activities (student organisations, faculty forum, counseling service, etc.) which helps to make this institute function as a community. To provide no recognition for service work bodes ill not only for the future of participative governance in this Institute, but also for the healthy sustenance of the campus community.

I hope that the above comments will be taken into consideration if/when this document is revised.

Sumit Basu, ME

i have three suggestions:

1. modification of the policy for acquiring high end equipments: the calculation of "cost" of equipments worth more than 50 lakhs should be modified and the following should be calculated
   a) the projected life time of the equipment
   b) cost of site preparation, energy consumption and space requirement,
   c) cost of operating the machine including the cost of an expert operator over the lifetime of the equipment
   d) AMC for the lifetime of the equipment
   e) projected requirements from institute contingency fund (explained below) over and above the AMC

  the sanctioned cost should cover all of (a)-(d). that is the actual cost incurred by the institute. the cost of the machine should not be merely the cost of procuring it. eg. a 300 node cluster without a dedicated and competent team to nurture it or without adequate air-conditioning or power back-up, is a recipe for disaster and a waste of public money.

  based on (e), an institute contingency fund should be set up which will have enough money to fund repairs and consumables for all equipments covered under it. this is like an insurance policy for every expensive equipment.

2. funding of internal proposals: internal research grants to groups of faculty members should be given in two stages.
   a) a small seed grant over a period of 1-2 years to prove collaborative intent
   b) large equipment grant should be given after and if collaborative intent is proved and collaboration produces some tangible results.

 the way care proposals are handled is clearly wrong.

3. complete revamp of the e-journal section of the library:
   a) a complete reliable journal by journal list containing journals whose electronic versions are subscribed by us should be made. it should be accessible from ALL proxies.
   b) journal renewal policy should change. journals should be renewed by publishers and not department wise. in today's interdisciplinary world, department wise renewal is incorrect.