

A SHANGRI-LA IN TAMKANG IS WITHIN REACH

The final speech of the "Welcoming Tamkang 4th Wave" lecture series was held last Thursday, Dec. 30 at the Ching Sheng International Conference Hall. The theme of this talk, "A New Shangri-La in Tamkang", dealt with the prospect of harmonizing four of TKU's campuses (Tamsui, Taipei, Lanyang and Cyber) so as to create a truly comprehensive university that is classic and modern at the same time. Tai Wan-chin, the Dean of the College of International Studies and Hsu Ting-chi, the Dean of the College of Technology were invited to be the discussants of this particular issue, whereas Feng Chao-kang, the Vice President of the Academic Affairs moderated the talk.

Professor Tai pointed out that the utopian world Tao Yuan-ming, an ancient Chinese hermit, had described was out of this world and out of reach; however, he proposed that if Tamkang wanted to create a new form of Shangri-la, it should be reachable when certain conditions were met. He believes the strength of TKU lies in its ability in balancing ideal and practicality nicely so it should use that strength in combining the intellect, manpower and material resources the four campuses are able to offer to create a 'well-integrated" entity, as espoused in the most avant garde international relations theory. In order to do that, TKU will need to establish an intimate link with its local communities, increase dynamism in all forms of collaboration and enhance its confidence as an international institution.

Following this thread of thought, Professor Hsu agreed with the importance of having an "integrated" front, but not at the expense of "diversity". He believes that all four campuses can be integrated without losing their own individuality by having a common goal, which is to become a competitive comprehensive university with a global vision. His road map to that goal

is to give clear tasks to each campus: Tamsui should specialize in research so it needs to strengthen its academic environment such as by hosting a minimum of 30 international conferences per year; Taipei campus should concentrate on in-service education; Lanyang campus, a first ever residential college of its kind in Taiwan, should and will provide an excellent learning environment; finally, the Cyber Campus of TKU, which has limitless potential, should strive for having on-line courses and degrees accredited eventually.

In the end, the moderator, Feng Chao-kang, remarked in his conclusion of the talk that the university already had a solid foundation for creating a Shangri-la due to the leadership of the Founder who had had the foresight in laying down the triple-objective (globalization, information-oriented education and future-oriented education) some years ago. As long as TKU does not detour from its goal, it will get there sooner than one thinks.
(~Ying-hsueh Hu)

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