

COLLEGE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES SETS TO HOLD A LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY TEST AS A PREREQUISITE

TKU' s College of Foreign Languages and Literature (CFLL) will hold a foreign language proficiency test as part of a graduation requirement beginning this academic year (2004). It is a trial project that will hold such a test once a year for three years consecutively. After three years, there will be an evaluation on the validity of the test and should the result prove to be successful, the college will go ahead to devise the level of grades to qualify for graduation. The decision of implementing this test, according to Sung Mei-hua, Dean of CFLL, demonstrates not only TKU' s devotion to learning, but also its determination to promote studying languages and self-initiated learning. If everything goes well, CFLL will add the feature of the proficiency test in its prospectus as a major attraction in recruiting new students in the future.

The first foreign language proficiency test is scheduled to take place in March 2004. It aims at seniors at the Departments of English, Spanish, French, German, Japanese and Russian. The contents of the test are decided by each individual language department, for example, the English Department will model after TOFEL test, the French Department will follow the standard DELF format, whereas the Japanese Department will choose between the first and second levels of proficiency test set up by the Association of International Education, Japan. On the other hand, the German Department, although there are no particular existing tests it intends to model on, will design a well-balanced content to reflect the true ability of the students.

All tests will last one hour and 40 minutes and will be graded according to Outstanding, Good, and Pass. In students' report card (both Chinese and English), it will state "A" for Outstanding that is above 80 per-

cent of the total score, “B” for Good that is over 70 per-cent; and “C” for Pass when lower than 70 per-cent.

The response to the implementation of the test has been overall very positive, even though some of the students concerned feel a mixture of high expectation and fear of the unknown. The view of Hsieh Bo-wei, a senior of the English Department may best represent them. He believes that having this language proficiency test in place, Tamkang is following the footsteps of those internationally renowned universities such as Oxford and Cambridge who have their own well-established tests. Therefore, through the establishment of such a system, TKU is making a major step in making a name on its own merit, which will benefit every student participating in the test such as opening some doors in job-seeking later on.

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