

## **CROSS-CULTURAL DISTANCE LEARNING IS TO START IN OCTOBER**

TKU made an agreement with Waseda University, Japan for a joint cross-cultural distance learning program (CCDL) sometime ago, with the Vice President for the Academic Affairs, Feng Chao Kang in attendance. A more general agreement between the two universities regarding academic and research cooperation in distance learning was signed by TKU President, Flora Chang and Waseda's President, Katsuhiko Shirai on April 13th this year. The Distance Education Center of the College of Education at TKU will be responsible for technical support

The first course that will be used as the bridge in this cross-cultural distance-learning program is "Oral Practice" led by Dr. Wible David S of the English Department. The link via Internet will begin in October, allowing students on both sides to have video conferencing, including e-mail communication. All procedures will be conducted in English, so whoever is interested and would like to try out this modern form of language education, should sign up quickly.

The seeds of this project were planted in September last year, when Michiko Nakano, the director of CCDL at Waseda visited TKU. She and her team of experts reached an initial agreement with Dr. Feng, who has dedicated time and resources in the past few months negotiating the course contents, technical feasibility, and a complete timetable so that the launch of the project could be materialized in the coming Fall semester.

The director of TKU's Distance Education Center, Kuo Chin-hwa, is also very proud of this joint venture, and sees this project as a best showcase for his center in the field of high-tech distance learning. It will also

push the center to expand into international technological exchange that will certainly benefit TKU in the long run in establishing a Cyber Campus.

CCDL will start with one class, but will definitely involve other courses in related fields at a later stage. On-line communication aside, traditional face-to-face contacts will still continue between these two institutes in order to broaden students' horizons by experiencing different cultures and customs. Therefore, the signing of such a joint-project has highlighted TKU's undivided efforts in becoming an institution with a global vision. (~ Ying-hsueh Hu )

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