

LONG-DISTANCE FOR IN-SERVICE

The Center for Distance Education at the College of Education is currently planning in opening more long-distance courses for the In-service Masters Programs. It is projected that there will at least one course taught long-distance in each class. Concurrently, the Center is working on the possibility of offering more undergraduate courses on the Intranet. Both plans attempt to comply with the most recent guidelines revised by the MOE regarding distance-learning teaching in higher education that was announced in August. According to this revision, the total credits of students awarded from long-distance courses can account for half of the required credits required for graduation, rather than one third of the total required credits. This revision also allows faculties in higher educational institutes to offer half of their courses in each semester on line, provided the MOE has agreed in advance.

If more courses can be offered on line, students will have greater flexibility in terms of place and time of learning. Both the MOE and universities see this as a positive development. Furthermore, cross-border and cross-cultural learning can benefit from such a development most, when our students are also to "hook" up with universities in foreign countries. TKU can certainly begin with its wide and far-reaching network that includes a minimum of 82 partner universities!

As for long-distance learning for in-service programs, the MOE is drafting a workable guideline and will be announced at the end of the year. Universities can apply for a trial running starting from August next year. In this trial, programs concerned can award degrees but must specify "long-distance" learning in the diploma. (~Ying-hsueh Hu)

