

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES ARE IN

This year's Academic Affairs Meeting that was held on 25, October, passed new regulations that require colleges and departments to establish interdisciplinary courses or programs. These courses/programs should be designed allowing students to study in various departments or colleges in order to complete a degree. These studies are expected to be ready next year for internal application and external recruitment in another year. Approval of the university suffices for the establishment of Interdisciplinary courses, while programs demands approval from the Ministry of Education.

For students there are two choices. First, they can take interdisciplinary courses on top of their own majors. Or, they can enroll on a complete program with a degree awarded upon graduation. In the former case, students are required to complete a minimum of 20 credits in interdisciplinary courses, whereas in the latter case, the credits requirements are the same as other existing regular programs. However, courses are only for TKU students and programs are open to both Tku and non-TKU students.

As for interdisciplinary courses, some faculty and staff questioned whether the minimum of 20 credits was compatible with existing regulations? Dean Keh Huan-chao of Academic Affairs assured that his section will be in charge of issuing the certification and diploma of these courses/programs, so he does not see any conflict.

Dr. Feng Chao-kang, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, has emphasized in several occasions that it is a must for TKU to establish

these courses or programs as soon as possible as some other universities in Taiwan will set up at least 13 degree programs of such nature next year. If Tamkang does not act now, it will be left behind. He also points out that TKU can offer three combinations of interdisciplinary programs: 1). Liberal Arts and Foreign Languages, 2). Foreign Languages and International Studies, 3). Business and Management or alternatively, Science and Engineering. He requests every college “to pull all their resources together” to offer at least one degree program. He also urges colleges to have these programs in English so as to attract international students. He sees no problem of achieving that as the Department of International Trade and Lanyang Campus have demonstrated. Next year, he said, TKU can start recruitment.

The College of Business, whose planning is in charged by the Department of Economics, is planning an English only Masters’ program. Liao Huei chu, the Chair of the department, believes that they have a good chance of recruiting students successfully as there are no competitors yet. So far this program is designed for Business courses only, but she added, it is possible that courses in other disciplines will be incorporated in the future. The minimum required credits for graduation are 27.

The College of Management has already some interdisciplinary courses in the pipeline. They will launch an English only MBA program in 2008. (~ Ying-hsueh Hu)

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