

FORUM TO DISCUSS SERVICE LEARNING AND HIGHER EDUCATION

The College of the Education of TKU, together with Chung-yuan Christian University and Shih-chien University, co-organized a forum, entitled: Beyond the Campus: Forum on Service Learning and Higher Education, on June 11, Taipei Campus. In this forum, the philosophy and applications of social and community service courses in the higher education in the US were examined. At the same time, the policy and implementation of such a philosophy by Taiwanese government at local universities were also discussed.

There is no doubt that the government of Taiwan has recognized the importance of implementing courses that emphasize on various social and community volunteerism and services at college level in an attempt to raise the quality of good citizenship and that of a civil society in Taiwan. Starting 2007 onward, the government has encouraged universities to offer service learning courses, so the aim of this forum is to find ways to ensure a thorough implementation of these courses.

The keynote speaker of the forum is Dr. Robert A. Corrigan, the President of the University of San Francisco who introduced the service learning courses in the higher education in the United States. More than 100 people attended and listened to the discussion panel that was joined by Mr. Wang Yu-qun, the Director from the Youth Travel and Voluntary Service Department of the National Youth Committee, Dr. Flora Chang, the President of TKU, Dr. Chang Kuang Cheng, the President of Shih-Chien University, and Dr. Chen Wan-li, the President of Chung-Yuan Christian University. Other participants also included the faculty members and students from the related departments and institutes of Fu-ren Catholic University, the National Hualien Teachers College, and the National Taiwan Normal University.

According to Chen Ying-hua, the Chair of the Student Association for Teacher Education Programs who gave a presentation on her experience in service learning courses and voluntary services, the forum was a successful one. During which, she discussed related issues with scholars and seasoned practitioners in this field, and learned about how social and community services have been taught and practiced abroad. This experience is invaluable to here as she has learned the true meaning of serving others.

(~Ying-hsueh Hu)

2010/09/27