

TAMKANG' S LEGACY—CHANGE AND INNOVATION

Shyu Hsin Yih, the Director of the Learning and Teaching Center, was the moderator for this year' s TKU The Seminar in Instructional and Administrative Reforms. In her opening speech, she pointed out the importance of this conference in pushing changes in the campus in the past 17 year. This year, there is no exception, with themes addressing “Wikinomics,” “Global Warming,” and “Colleges and Universities as Organizations,” TKU places itself once again in the middle of change, embracing it rather than avoiding it.

“Change and innovation are our tradition,” she added and praised Dr. Clement Chang' s, the Founder, efforts in upholding the legacy. He does it by selecting some books with cutting edge ideas for his senior administrators to read and discuss with staff and faculty members each year. This time, the Vice President for the Academic Affairs read about global warming, on which he gave a presentation at the conference, whereas the Vice President for Administrative Affairs presented on universities as organizations based on a book of similar title that was assigned by him by the Founder. Last but not least, the Vice President for International Affairs presented a new concept known as the “peer economics” from a recent book entitled “Wikinomics.” Presentations as such and discussions that ensue in the afternoon of the conference are meant to stimulate creativity that will help turn the wheel of change needed for bringing TKU to the next level. The other aim of this conference, Shyu reiterated, is to involve as many people as possible so as to instigate a team spirit. Hence, the conference ensures participation from all levels of the university organization. Apart from senior administrator, deans and heads of departments, faculty representatives and new faculty members were also invited for discussion. Furthermore, the organization of the conference, from poster design to conference proceedings, was taken care of by various units of the university.

TKU has its unique way of dealing with changes. The evolution of the university can be divided into four stages that are known as the “Four Waves,” with each wave marked with the establishment of a new campus. Two years ago, with the completion and the first student recruitment of Lanyang Campus, the fourth campus of the university, Tamkang officially stepped into its “Fourth Wave” era. The challenge of this era is to integrate the distinct feature each of these four campuses embodies: Research orientation of the Tamsui Campus, life long learning with continuing education of the Taipei Campus, Oxbridge-style whole person education of Lanyang Campus, and a no border Cyber Campus. A successful integration will create, under the tutelage of Dr. Flora Chang, the President of TKU, a “House of Quality.”

Yet, building and maintaining such a house of quality, Shyu mentioned, the university needs to be vigilant and reinvent itself constantly. This is the only way, she emphasized, for TKU to thrive in a competitive environment such as the higher education in Taiwan. This conference, she concluded, is proactively posing the university for any change or turmoil it may face in the future. (~Ying-hsueh Hu)

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