

FRESHMEN' S MOST FAVORITE: VISUAL LEARNING STYLE

To help students understand their suitable learning style, TKU' s Center for Learning and Teaching held "The 2008 Freshmen Learning Style Survey" and the results were just out. Most of the freshmen (89%) favored the "Visual Scale." This means most of them believed it was better to learn by photos, diagrams, flow charts, time tables, movies and related practice. Student Learning Support Section Chief Chia-ling Hsu said the survey result could provide student with useful suggestions for learning improvement; on the other hand, it could provide faculty with useful information for teaching planning.

The survey was conducted from Nov. 24 to Dec. 5, 2008, and 4394 freshmen responded (77.76%). The survey was authorized by Professors Richard M. Felder and Barbara A. Soloman from the North Carolina State University and translated into Chinese by TKU' s Center for Learning and Teaching for research purposes. The survey divided learning into 4 general categories and 8 kinds, including "Active Scale vs. Reflective Scale," "Sensing Scale vs. Intuitive Scale," "Visual Scale vs. Verbal Scale," "Sequential Scale vs. Global Scale."

On the whole, the ratio of the students favoring "Visual Scale" was 78% higher than that of the ones favoring "Verbal Scale" while the ratio of the students (72%) favoring "Sensing Scale" was 44% higher than that of the ones for "Intuitive Scale." The ratio of the students (58%) favoring "Global Scale" was 16% higher than that of the ones for "Sequential Scale."

The statistics indicated that most students belonged to the "Visual

Scale,” “Sensing Scale,” and “Global Scale” types. In other words learners were not able to accept that learning content had no connection with reality in the real world. They absorbed knowledge by a capering manner. For this, the analyses of the survey pointed out that teachers should find out related diagrams, photos, tapes, DVD etc. as references, or make concept charts, mark out key point with highlighter, and provide students with concrete examples, explain how to apply the knowledge in real life. In reading, teachers should survey the content first, and then try to link the subject with some existing knowledge.

In addition, Colleges of Liberal Arts, Science, Engineering, Business and Foreign Languages and Literature had more students favoring “Reflective Scale,” intending to finish their studies by themselves. But Colleges of Management, Education, and Entrepreneurial Development had more “Active Scale” type students, favoring team cooperation and group studies. Nevertheless, some students in various departments were different from the majorities. For example, Departments of Mass Communication, Architecture, Chemical Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Insurance had some “Active Scale” type students, while Departments of Mathematics, Business Administration and Linguistics Studies had some “Sequential Scale” type students. Student Learning Support Assistant, Shin-yi Liu expressed that the students in those departments could be influenced by their curriculum designs or their professors’ different teaching styles so that they have unique learning styles.

Mass Communication Freshman Xin-zi Zhang said, “I feel the survey result is quite accurate, but every category has only two extreme opposite points which are a bit too general. That is a slight pity.” Some students responded that they could not categorize themselves in the survey. Shin-yi Liu replied, “Those students are in the middle, thus have no extreme attitude in their studies. If anyone has puzzles in understanding their learning styles, one is welcome to the Center. We’ ll arrange specialists

to provide deeper analysis!” (~Dean X. Wang)

2010/09/27



FRESHMEN' S MOST FAVORITE: VISUAL LEARNING STYLE