

## **ALL CLASSES OF FRESHMAN ENGLISH WILL BE REDUCED TO 70 STUDENTS**

From the summer semester of 2004 onwards, all Freshman English classes will be limited to 70 students instead of over one hundred, as it is run currently. The resulting small class size is expected to raise the teaching quality as well as improving the students' overall learning capacity.

At TKU, Freshman English is compulsory and accounts for 6 credits (2 semesters). However, in recent years, due to a shortage of teaching staff and classrooms, it has always been taught to over one hundred students in one class across all faculties. Some classes consist of nearly 150 students that has made it difficult for teachers to maintain a high standard. Those teachers have repeatedly expressed the desire and necessity for the implementation of small class size to the university authorities over the past few years. Hence, after a period of careful consultation with the Office of Academic Affairs and faculty of the College of Foreign Languages and Literature, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Feng Chao-kang has decided to introduce this small class size.

He concedes that it has taken several years' of preparation to make this major step in contributing significantly to improve the quality of teaching. This decision is revolutionary in the sense that it will boost teachers' energy, which in turn will be devoted to better class preparation, exam paper correction and to facilitating more class discussions. Once the quality of teaching has been increased, he believes, the competitiveness of TKU's students will heighten as well. He reminds everyone concerned to appreciate this change which should serve as an incentive in futhering students' interest in learning English.

After adjusting the class size, there will be 31 new classes, which pose some problems in terms of availability of classrooms and teaching staff. In the former case, the university still needs to find six more classrooms and expand the number of multimedia classrooms during the coming summer break. In the latter case, it is clear that current number of staff is not able to cover the increased demand. According to a preliminary estimation, since the total teaching hours will increase from the original 132 to 225 hours, the university will need to hire 7.75 full-time assistant professors, or alternatively, 15.5 part-time teaching staff to cover these extra 93 hours. As the hiring quota for 2004 academic year has been met, the Personnel Office sees hiring part-time teachers as a more doable solution for relieving the shortage.

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