

GRADUATE STUDENTS AND TWO ALUMNI OF INSTITUTE OF THE AMERICAS PASS THE EXAM FOR DIPLOMATIC OFFICIALS

In the 2009 academic year Exam for Diplomatic Officials, students and alumni of Institute of the Americas had a bright performance. In the Spanish section, only six among the 130 participants were selected. Among the six winners, three were from Institute of the Americas, including Liu Hsiao-ju (fourth year graduate) and two alumni, Chang Hsiang-ju and Yeh Jen-chieh. Dr. Chen Hsiao-chuan, Chair of the Institute, remarks that most of Taiwan's diplomatic relations are in Latin America, hence, a Spanish language proficiency and specialized knowledge of Latin America are the keys to the success in exams for diplomatic officials.

Liu Hsiao-ju, who will graduate from Institute of the Americas this year, indicates that she studied in the Spanish department, TKU, when she was a undergraduate. After she graduated, she engaged in the Collegiate Practice Project and practiced in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. To fulfill her dream to work as a diplomatic official, she joined the Institute of the Americas. In Prof Hsiu-chi Wang's class "Diplomatic Policies of Latin America," she learned about relations among Latin American countries, whereas in Prof Yea-hong Chen's "Spanish Economical, Political, and Law Terminology," she learned those important Spanish keywords. These two classes help her greatly during the exam. This is her third time to take the diplomatic exam. She reflected on her failure in the previous exams and improved herself. "I prepare for the exam in the school library, making good uses of the recourses for specialized knowledge and current news, for the scope of the exam is very wide and not limited in textbooks" Liu added.

Chang Hsiang-ju has worked for four months in trade after he graduated. He took the exam for the second time with the encouragement of his family. He attributed his success to the classes he took in the institute, including Prof Yea-hong Chen's "Common Knowledge in International Laws" and and

Prof Hsiu-chi Wang' s “Political System of Latin America.” Chang emphasizes the importance of regular life and persistent preparation. For the past six months, he has done preparation from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. everyday.

Yeh Jen-chieh explained that the course conducted by his thesis advisor Prof. Chen I-hsin, “Diplomacy and International Relations” was thought-provoking and challenging the problem-solving ability. In addition, Professor Emeritus, Dr. Thomas B. Lee, who has participated in the oral interview of the diplomatic exam, often encourages students to take part in the exams and informs them related grading criteria. Yeh expresses his feeling about the coming diplomatic works that “though I am very happy about the success, at the same time I sense the challenge and responsibility of my future works.”

For the three winners, the key to the success lies in persistence and faith. Liu encourages those who are interested in diplomatic works to join the Institute of the Americas, for though the diplomatic works do not recruit people of specific academic background, familiarity with related field knowledge will certainly benefit the success in the exam. (~Chen Chi-szu)

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