

COLLEGE OF SCIENCES PLANS NON-MAJOR SYSTEM IN FRESHMAN YEAR

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College of Sciences is planning a non-major system in which freshmen are allowed to delay choosing their majors in math, physics or chemistry until sophomore or junior years to realize the educational ideal of “learning what you love and loving what you learn.” There will be a briefing on this new plan in the meeting on academic affairs on May 11th.

According to Dean of College of Science, Chien Fan-z, more than half of the students are not sure about their own dispositions when entering TKU, or they are not interested in their majors. In order to provide students with opportunities of testing their interest and enhance effects of learning, College of Sciences decides to break a new ground and allow one-sixth of freshmen of College of Sciences, namely, sixty students, to participate in the new project. These students are entitled to elect the courses in the three departments during freshman and sophomore year under the guidance of their class counselors, in order to test their interest and dispositions they may delay deciding their majors as late as in junior year. This new project will be put into practice in the 97th academic year and evaluated after two or three years.

Chien Fan-z recognized the feasibility of the new project, but he also saw some difficulties. One of the major difficulties is that different departments have their own regulations of course-taking the same course may have different contents and credits. For example, “Calculus” is offered in the three departments, but its credits in Department of Mathematics are more than those in the other two departments, and teachers’ requirements are also stricter. Basic courses like Calculus, General Physics and General Chemistry are required to have same credits and class time in consideration of students’ convenience. He pointed out the complicated work of negotiation among departments: “This is why although

Ministry of Education called for delaying the division of majors several years ago, only few schools have started.”

He emphasized that the whole school’ s delay of dividing majors is not feasible. For example, the difference between Department of Chinese and Department of Mathematics is too huge. However, the possibility of success in Department of Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry is higher, since they have similar resources and levels of students’ competence. If the trial is going well, the new project may be extended to all the students in the whole college. ” (~Han-yu Huang)