

TUITION TO RISE BY 3%

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In an adjustment to inflation, TKU has raised its tuition by 3%. If approved by the MOE, it will be effective from the summer semester, 2007. And in accordance with the guideline provided by the Ministry of Education (MOE), the university set up a special committee to assess and regulate necessary terms involved in this raise. The committee met on May 2 to draw up an initial plan. Details of it will be announced and explained today (May 7) at a presentation held by the Office of Student Affairs and Office of the Comptroller (OCT) and is open to all students. The plan will be finalized next day in a strategic meeting presided by Dr. Kao Pao-yuan, the Vice President for Administrative Affairs, through votes cast by the Dean of the OCT, deans of all colleges and student representatives.

Mr. Yen Hsin-Hui, the Dean of the OCT, made it clear at the meeting on May 2 that the raise was in line with the adjustment index set by the MOE. The last time TKU had raised its fee was in 2004, argued Mr. Yen, so he believes the raise this time is necessary in safeguarding a top quality of learning environment for our students. He also presented well documented development plans that had been proposed in the past two years which require future funding to make his case. In addition to that, he showed data on other universities, arguing that TKU's tuition was in fact in the middle range comparing with similar private universities in Taiwan. With the 3% adjustment, each student will have to pay an extra amount ranging from NT\$ 1,360 to 1,600, he said.

His suggestion was endorsed by Mr. Keh Huan-chao, the Dean of the Office of Academic Affairs, who is one of the members on the committee. Mr. Keh does not think that this new adjustment will hurt less affluent students, as the adjustment will also increase the total amount of student aid up to NT\$ 18,000,000. Hence, students from lower-income families should not feel

alarmed by the decision on the contrary, the raise, he asserted, is to ensure that a proportionate number of better-off people can help out those who are less fortunate. It is in line with our sense of social justice, he concluded.

Mr. Chiang Ding An, the Dean of the Office of Student Affairs, also supports Mr. Keh' s rationalization. Mr. Chang pointed out at the meeting that since the stipends from the government had been shrinking in recent years, the university had been shouldering most of the aid given out to needy students. For instance, in 2007 academic year, the aid the university set aside accounts for 2.76% of the university' s total income from tuition, a 0.76% higher than the number recommended by the government. Thus, the increase this time is indeed necessary to address the balance.

On the other hand, Hsieh Kun-lin, the Chair of the Departmental Student Association of the Accounting Department, urged the committee to think about the responsibility of raising tuition. It would be senseless to raise fee, he maintained, when university did not curb unnecessary spending and waste. To counter that, he suggested that the university should be vigilant, for instance, how it uses energy and water. The university should ensure the shutdown of air conditioners and lights when no one is in the classrooms or study rooms. The use of water, he added, should also be controlled. When all these measures have been carried out thoroughly, he believes a handsome sum of money can be saved.

The minutes of the meeting and relevant information regarding the raise will be posted on TKU webpage (<http://foreign.tku.edu.tw/acc>). (~Ying-hsueh Hu)