

YOU CAN COUNT ON US, SAY TKU TEACHERS

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The names of 2007 The Best Student Adviser have just emerged. There are 52 of them from the eight colleges of TKU, who have dedicated themselves to the welfare of their students. Dr. Flora Chang, the President of TKU, will present them with awards at the Ching-sheng International Conference Hall on April 24.

At universities in Taiwan, apart from student counseling centers, students can go to their class advisor, who is usually a faculty member of their discipline, for consultations either on academic or emotional affairs. Oftentimes, these class advisors provide a great deal of psychological comfort to them and act as a reliable mediator to other forms of assistance they may need. For instance, Dr. Wang Ai-ling, the class advisor of the first year English majors in the evening program, keeps a close contact with her students, proactively monitoring them for any possibly sign of trouble. When she realized one of her students who had missed too many classes due to some degree of depression, she talked to her as well as her parents and immediately referred the student to professionals at university counseling service. Thanks to her prompt response, this student is now recovering slowly but steadily.

To be students' friends is an important way of gaining their trust, so when they're in some sort of trouble, they will turn to you, said Tsou Chang-ta, the class advisor for the first year students of the Department of Software Engineering. Although this is his first experience as a class advisor, he intuitively knows that trust building is best through "casual" conversations rather than anything too formal. To set up a casual atmosphere, he often eats out with students to chat over daily issues. "I feel greatly responsible for them, as they are just like a part of my family," he said.

Apparently, what these teachers have in common is their care to their students, particular to those who have a certain disadvantage. Liao Kuo Wei, the class advisor for the second year students of the Department of Civil Engineering, and Sun Chien-yu, the class advisor for the first year students of the Department of Information and Communication, pay particular attention to the overseas Chinese and international students in their classes as they are far away from home. They make sure that these students feel at home at TKU. Fan Chun-hai, the class advisor for the second year students of the Department of Transportation Management, similarly, makes sure the hearing impaired student in his class get necessary academic help from the department. At the same time, Yang Li-ren, the class advisor for the second year evening program students of the Department of Business Management, helps to deal with the emotional issues of one student in his class who suffers from epileptics.

Apart from psychological and emotional support, advisors also render professional and practical assistance to their proteges. Li Ching-lun, the advisor for the fourth year students of the Department of Mechanical and Electro-mechanical Engineering, would not only offer useful career advice but also find internship and even work for his graduating students.

For the full list of these dedicating teachers, please visit the Tamkang Times website. (~Ying-hsueh Hu)