

AWARDS FOR PASSING ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TESTS ARE UP FOR GRAB

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As a serious measure of encouraging students to improve their English proficiency, the university is using big money to lure the brave ones, the good ones, and even the timid ones who have hang-ups about learning English but would do it for money! The university is offering a total of NT\$ 300,000 of grant money to people who can pass English proficiency tests with respectable scores. Because of this monetary reward, over 300 students have already enrolled to apply for this grant by taking these tests. Dr. Chen Gan-nan, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who oversees this project, is very pleased with this number and pledged to find more money (up to NT\$ 1,000,000!) than the existing amount so that more people will follow suit.

This measure, which is under the “Teaching for Excellence” project, was a response to the lackluster enrollment of students registering for English proficiency tests in the past. Since its announcement, a surge in number of students taking these tests was very palpable. For instance, the TOEIC test that will take place on 4/19 at TKU has attracted over one thousand students taking the plunge. The university believes this upward trend will continue.

Various similar measures that involve training courses and rewards have been implemented in different colleges. Dr. Hu Yi-jen, the Dean of the College of Business, for instance, revealed that starting last semester onwards they have offered grant to students who pass certificate tests ranging from English to insurance to finance. Some students who had obtained several certificates only came forward after the implementation, informing the college of their achievement. Dr. Hu does not want this to be repeated. He wants students to actively involve the college in their qualifying tests so that mutual helps can be exchanged. It's important, he

emphasizes, that college can provide vital information to these students, and these students can share their experiences with others who have not considered taking these tests.

The college also provided a free English course in January this year for students to pass TOEIC test. It was met with great success. Thanks to this example, other colleges have followed their footsteps ever since. These classes proved to be extremely popular. For instance, the three 20-person free English conversation classes offered by the College of Science in April were booked out immediately after registration had been open. College of Engineering also offered ten TOEIC preparatory classes starting from the middle of March on every Wednesday and Friday to their students. (~Ying-hsueh Hu)