

FOUNDER CLEMENT CHANG' S SPEECH— “DOING WITHOUT ARROGANCE AND REGRET TO CREATE A NEW PROSPECT”

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Founder Clement Chang' s Opening Address at the 2009 TKU Seminar on Instructional and Administrative Reforms

Tamkang University, after running for nearly six decades, has finally received national acclaim by winning the National Quality Award earlier this year. Over the years, with more than 200,000 TKU graduates are widely accepted by local enterprises, TKU has been ranked number one private universities for 12 consecutive years in the “1,000 Enterprises' Favorite College Graduates” survey TKU was listed as the first place in Taiwanese private universities in “Webometrics Ranking of World University,” and was designated by WHO as an International Safe School, the first among the world' s universities. In a recent survey the satisfaction rate of all local graduates with master's degree, Tamkang graduates again won high praise, ranking No.1 in all private universities in Taiwan. I believe all the above honors can serve as evidence that Tamkang has already become one of the best universities in Taiwan and moving the reputation of TKU to the top. However, we should not feel contented with these achievements.

In his newly-published book, How the Mighty Fall, Jim Collins, a famous American business consultant, examines how great companies in the U.S. fall. In the result of his five-year research project, Collins summarizes the five stages of decline. I only point out two stages that are related to the development of our university. One is “hubris of success.” Companies very often fail when they are complacent. Another is the “undisciplined pursuit of expansion.” Former MIT President Charles Vest also proposed similar warning that college development should avoid over-expansion that will ultimately put too much pressure on itself and finally ended in lack of funding.

As pointed out by these masters in management, we should, therefore, look back into ourselves to check if we are, first, too self-contented with our current status, second, if we have over-expanded by setting up too many new departments, and blurring our focus? The self-examination is especially important prior to the upcoming 60th anniversary celebration of Tamkang University.

On the eve of the school anniversary, we should reconsider if we have already reached the top of the S-Curve of our development among the highly changeable environment of higher education in Taiwan. If the answer is yes, then we need to put these glories behind as it shows that we are moving downward now. We should endeavor to create a new S curve before we have hit the bottom. By exercising the pioneer spirit when we first established the TKU nearly 60 years ago, we should jointly find a way to bring another sixty years of prosperity to the TKU. In Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything, Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams point out the importance of mass collaboration. We should reexamine our teaching methods that has been working for years and to revamp and accelerate administration and ultimately promote the organization reform of our university so that we can bravely face to the future challenges described in Mike Wallace' s 50 Years from Today.(~Yeh Yun-kai)

