

A NEW MILESTONE OF SISTER UNIVERSITY COOPERATION: SHENG-BIN LIN OBTAINED CHINESE-FRENCH DUAL PhD DEGREES

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Spanish Associate Prof. Sheng-bin Lin passed his dissertation defense and obtained his Chinese-French dual PhD degrees from TKU and University of Sorbonne (Paris IV). He is the first person to have obtained the dual degrees through the academic exchange programs between TKU and the sister universities. International Exchanges and International Education Director Pei-wa Lee, said, “Prof Lin’s dual PhD degrees are a milestone in TKU’s promotion for dual degrees with cooperating sister universities. I hope students will take advantage of the system, further their studies abroad, strengthen their foreign languages and academic knowledge, and broaden their international horizons. We will continue to explore more possibilities to help students.”

As a TKU PhD candidate in Chinese, Prof. Lin went to France to study for the dual degrees in Nov. 2005. He said that originally he went to the Department of Chinese to audit because of his teaching, but the Chinese courses inspired his interest in Chinese studies. So he passed the exams and again became a PhD candidate in Chinese. The former Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and the present Administrative Vice President Po-yuan Kao several times mentioned the dual degree system between TKU and University of Sorbonne (Paris IV), encouraging students to grasp the opportunity to study abroad. Prof. Lin himself often told his students to have their own dreams and try to make them come true, so he set an example for students, encouraging them to explore their own paths by going to France to make his own dream come true.

In France, Prof. Lin mainly studied the history of arts, focusing on Chinese aesthetics. He said, “Western scholars emphasize on the essence of beauty, pondering on the objective factors of beauty through rational

thinking, but in the Eastern countries such as China, during the Spring and Autumn period, people explored 'Beauty' through actual life, seeking the harmonious relationship between humans and the external world. Thus some Western scholars do not believe that aesthetics has ever existed in China." That was exactly why he had selected "On Confucius' Thoughts on Aesthetics" as the topic of his PhD dissertation, trying to respond to the current Western idea. Prof. Lin pointed out that France was a very free country and the research methodology there was quite different. "French professors emphasize on criticism and often attempt to correct the former scholars' shortcomings or supplement their insufficiency, but our traditional academic trainings often make us worship our ancient scholars' lifetime painstaking achievements," he added. At the beginning, the cultural differences had a great impact on his research, but gradually he realized that the two did not necessarily contradict each other, rather they could supplement each other although they were quite different. In addition, he mentioned that French students could enjoy abundant resources. With a student ID, one could audit in any universities. That helped his studies a great deal. Pei-wha Lee mentioned, "5 professors attended Prof. Lin' s dissertation defense and they highly praised his methodology."

To those students who wanted to apply for the dual degree program, Prof Lin recommended, "TKU has many agreements with sister universities to offer dual degrees. Never worry about spending too much time. If circumstances permit, take these good opportunities to broaden your visions and understand other countries and cultures." (~Dean X. Wang)

