EVOLVING DISTANCE EDUCATION WITH MOODLE PLATFORM: THREE DEPARTMENTS TO OFFER NEW E-LEARNING PROGRAMS

To conform to the needs of the "digital generation" and to the situations of declining birthrate, TKU has encouraged every department and institute to organize E-Learning curriculums and programs. Dept. of Chinese, Dept. of Information and Library Science, and Dept. of Spanish are ready to offer E-Learning courses. In addition, Center for Learning and Teaching plans to convert the present teaching resources platform for distance education to Moodle teaching platform in the next (2010) academic year.

Dr. Shyu Hsin-yih, Director of Center for Learning and Teaching, indicates that since the available EMBA (Executive Master's Program of Business Administration) programs are almost congested in northern Taiwan, and the recruitment is getting more and more competitive, we have to explore the educational frontier and increase the income of continuing education. Our "Cyber Campus" can be used to attract students from central and southern Taiwan or to establish new market. Presently in our cyber campus, there are two programs, E-Learning EMBA in Global Chinese Management, and E-Learning Executive Master's Program in Educational Technology. We expect every college of TKU to establish one E-Learning Master's Program. We will develop in the following three directions: 1. In-school Education: to consolidate the local and international distance education 2. In-service Education: to develop web-based degrees and e-learning programs 3. Life-long Education: to expand extension education programs.

Dr. Chiu Jeong-yeou, Dean of College of Liberal Arts, indicates that to continue and elaborate the "cultural creativity curriculum" of the college, the five departments are working together to incorporate different specialties into one E-Learning master's program. The program will offer students a brand new way to appreciate cultural creativity and understand

cultural industry with the help of interdisciplinary expertise and digital technology. Presently Dept. of Chinese is organizing the "Chinese Language and Culture E-Learning Curriculum," which contains courses such as "Introduction to the Teaching of Chinese Language and Culture," "Materials and Methodology of Chinese Language Teaching," "Introduction to Linguistics," and "Language and Culture."

Dr. Wu Kuan, Chair of Dept. of Spanish, explains that the department is cooperating with College of International Studies to offer distance education courses for Ministry of Foreign Affairs to build more channels to Central and Southern Americas. Through video programs with Spanish subtitles, introduced either in Spanish or English oral language, students from that areas will be able to understand the cultures of Taiwan as well as the economical and political situations of the Asian Pacific areas.

In addition, TKU's Moodle Teaching platform is completed and the school will use this e-learning platform, which is authorized by MOE, for distance education since the 2010 academic year. Huang Ming-da, Director of Information Processing Center, explains that presently TKU uses Web CT (Course Tools) system for distance eduction. However, since WebCT is incorporated in to Blackboard Learning System of Blackboard Inc., TKU has to convert the present teaching platforms into new system. The school will replace it with Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) platform system, which is widely celebrated. Moodle is a free and open-source e-learning software platform. The new system will keep the WebCT functions of uploading resources, audio-visual interaction, test and feedback, and it is easier to manage and save a lot of money for school. With this platform, students may feel the presence of their teachers, even they are not in school. (~Chen Chi-szu)