

Honors Program ‘Sustainable Design and Innovation’ Guides Students in Social Practice, Wins Global Views USR Award

Campus focus

The winners of the 2026 Global Views Monthly University Social Responsibility Awards were recently announced, with Tamkang University receiving the Excellence Award in the “Sustainable Curriculum” category for its Honors Program course “Sustainable Design and Innovation.” The award ceremony was held on April 9 and was attended by Chief Sustainability Officer Ruey-Shiang Shaw, Professor Min-Fen Tu of the Department of Business Administration, and alumnus Cheng-Min Hsu, with Shaw accepting the award on behalf of the university from Minister of Education Ying-Yao Cheng.

Professor Ruey-Hsiang Shaw noted that Tamkang’s Honors Program has been implemented for many years, and this recognition highlights the university’s achievements in advancing its development vision of “AI+SDGs= ∞ ” and “ESG+AI= ∞ .” He added that the university will continue to deepen interdisciplinary collaboration and sustainability education, integrating AI and sustainability concepts into the curriculum to cultivate talent with both technological expertise and a commitment to social responsibility, while steadily advancing curricular innovation and social engagement.

Professor Min-Fen Tu, who won the same category last year for her “Strategic Management” course, was again recognized this year for “Sustainable Design and Innovation.” She emphasized that participating in the USR Awards is not merely a competition, but also a process of reflection and translation. Receiving recognition twice has helped her better understand different approaches to sustainability education: “Strategic Management” represents an “embedded professional pathway,” integrating sustainability into disciplinary cores. At the same time, “Sustainable Design and Innovation” adopts an “outreach impact pathway,” guiding students into real-world contexts to address societal

issues through action. She stressed that university classrooms should not only transmit knowledge but also serve as platforms for responding to global challenges and creating change, extending learning beyond the classroom into social practice.

“Sustainable Design and Innovation” is developed within the framework of Tamkang University’s USR project “Good Life in Tamsui,” utilizing the “WhoYoung Team Up” platform to guide students in a value co-creation learning journey. The course integrates youth engagement, teamwork, and local concerns, enabling students to understand issues and take action in real-world contexts while constructing meaningful learning experiences. According to Tu, the course can be understood from three perspectives. First, it adopts challenge-based learning, with students participating in the “Better Campus” intercollegiate competition to design fundraising initiatives supporting corporate social programs. Second, as an advanced Honors Program course, students progress through stages of issue awareness, community engagement, problem formulation, and interdisciplinary practice, gradually building the capacity to address future societal challenges. Third, the course incorporates a social impact evaluation mechanism based on the Social Return on Investment (SROI) framework promoted by Social Value International, aiming to establish a practical and measurable system for evaluating course impact, transforming the course into a starting point for “experimental governance.”

Since the 2012 academic year, Tamkang University has offered its Honors Program, featuring the Three Circles of Curricula that integrates advanced professional courses, general education, and extracurricular activities.

The program aims to cultivate academically strong individuals with innovative thinking and independent research capabilities, while also nurturing globally minded talents with an understanding of local culture, as well as future leaders with creativity and leadership skills.

Various colleges have also designed advanced professional courses for Honors Program students to enhance their competitiveness upon graduation. Dean Li-Ren Yang of the College of Business and Management stated that the college actively incorporates the university’s development vision into its

curriculum, promotes industry–academia collaboration, and further strengthens students’ practical competencies through Honors Program courses. For example, courses integrate the preparation and analysis of corporate sustainability reports and collaborate with the Securities and Futures Institute to combine certification exams, teaching materials, and coursework, aligning talent cultivation with industry needs. The college also promotes “three innovations education” (creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship), fostering students’ problem–solving abilities through field visits and teamwork. According to the latest “Top University Students Favored by Corporations” survey released by Global Views Monthly, Tamkang University ranks third nationwide in the “Business, Management, and Law” category, demonstrating strong recognition from industry.



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