

New University-Industry Collaborative Model for Attracting International Students to Taiwan

Wei-Chung Wang¹, Hui-Chen Chan²

^{1,2}Office of International Affairs, National Tsing Hua University
Hsinchu, Taiwan

wcwang@pme.nthu.edu.tw¹

Abstract

To expedite the internationalization of its campus and make it more responsive to the challenges of international students, National Tsing Hua University (NTHU) in Taiwan has developed two new programs to help international students to adapt to the conducive, friendly, and supportive learning environment. In this paper, the Private and Public Sectors Scholarships Program and Intensive Mandarin Program developed by NTHU for international students are introduced.

Introduction

National Tsing Hua University was first established in Tsing Hua Garden in Beijing in 1911 as Tsing Hua Academy. In 1928, the Academy was renamed National Tsing Hua University (NTHU). In 1956, NTHU was re-installed on its current campus in Hsinchu, Taiwan. Since its reinstallation, NTHU has developed from an institute focusing on Nuclear Science to that of a comprehensive research university offering degree programs ranging from baccalaureate to doctorate in Science, Engineering, Humanities and Social Sciences, as well as Technology Management. NTHU has been consistently ranked as one of Taiwan's premiere universities and is widely recognized as the best incubator for future leaders in industries as well as academics in Taiwan.

Being aware of its obligation to students and striving to become a world-class university, NTHU maintains a very active contact and cooperation with high-tech companies in the Hsinchu Science-based Industrial Park (HSIP). The close contact between NTHU and high-tech companies residing on HSIP not only bridges the gap between academia and industry, but also better equips students to become future industry leaders. In keeping pace with industry, from time to time, NTHU introduces new courses into its curriculum, or programs when necessary. In this paper, the Private and Public Sectors Scholarships Program and Intensive Mandarin Program recently developed by NTHU for international students are introduced.

Private and Public Sector Scholarships Program

By virtue of NTHU's long-term contribution to industry and academia, three private sector companies in the HSIP and one public research and development (R & D) institution have offered scholarship packages to international students wishing to study in NTHU. A brief introduction of the private sector companies and the public research and development institution is as follows:

Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) [1]: TSMC was founded in 1987 and is the world's largest dedicated semiconductor foundry headquartered in the HSIP. As founder and leader of this industry, TSMC has a reputation of offering advanced wafer production processes and unparalleled manufacturing efficiency. Its revenue sales represent 50% of the dedicated foundry segment of the global semiconductor industry.

Media Tek Incorporation [2]: A leading fabless semiconductor company for wireless communications and digital media solutions was founded in 1997. Media Tek is also the market leader and pioneer in cutting-edge system-on-chip (SOC) system solutions for wireless communications, high-definition digital TV, optical storage, and high definition DVD products. Although headquartered in Taiwan, Media Tek has sales and research subsidiaries in Mainland

China, U. S., England, Ireland, Denmark, India, Japan, Korea and Singapore.

Macronix International Company: Founded in 1989, Macronix is a leading and most advanced provider of innovative non-volatile memory (NVM) semiconductor worldwide. Macronix is one of the very few suppliers offering a wide range of Serial Flash products from 512Kbit to 128Mbit densities. Macronix dedicates 14%~24% of its annual revenue to R & D.

Industrial Technology Research Institute (ITRI): The largest non-profit R&D organization founded by the Ministry of Economic Affairs in 1973, ITRI is Taiwan's premiere research institute. ITRI is also the originator of Taiwan's high-tech companies, including TSMC, UMC and Media Tek. ITRI constantly makes great effort to improve domestic industrial technologies.

The beauty of the Private and Public Sectors Scholarships Program is not only the monthly stipend but awardees stand a better chance of being employed by these top-notch private companies and public research institute upon graduation or work as an intern during school sessions. In addition to the regular stipend, interns will be paid during the internship period. The interns will have the best opportunities to be exposed to Taiwan's industrial and research environment.

Intensive Mandarin Program

In any society for an outsider to become part or communicate with its locals, the outsider must at least learn the language of the society. We have realized that over the years, students who failed to attend the basic mandarin course find it difficult to communicate with the locals outside the university. This difficulty has to a certain degree hindered their integration. To assist international students in the near future to overcome the language barrier, NTHU has designed its intensive mandarin program for all international students without mandarin knowledge. Integration and communicating with the locals is the least students can expect from the intensive mandarin program. One fourth of world's populations speak mandarin, learning mandarin will facilitate one's quest for knowledge in Taiwan.

Toward overcoming language barrier for international students, NTHU will offer two months intensive mandarin courses to all international students starting from August 1 2009. After two months' intensive training, students who sign up for the course will be able to interact and communicate fluently with the local people and to become integrated in the Taiwanese society. Furthermore, being fluent Mandarin will give students the edge in their professional career should they want to work in Taiwan.

For the next three years, NTHU will encourage its international students to arrive in the campus two months earlier before the semester begins and attend the two months and 240 hours intensive mandarin courses. Living expenses and dormitory rooms will be provided by NTHU. Regarding the tuition and fees of the courses, NTHU will pay for the students first. However, students have to take the Test of Proficiency-Huayu (TOP) accredited by the Ministry of Education within a year after taking the courses. Within next 6 years, to pass the TOP will gradually become one of the requirements of graduation from NTHU.

Conclusions

With the increasing scholarship opportunities for our international students, and the conducive learning environment, we welcome applicants from worldwide to join NTHU and expand their horizon in the fields of Science, Engineering, and Technology Management. In our today's era, the importance of higher education is emphasized and an additional qualification will enhance one's chances in the increasingly competitive job market. With this in mind, we encourage our prospective students to join these university-industry collaborative scholarship programs and attend the intensive mandarin courses specifically designed for them.

References

01. 1. Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company
<http://www.tsmc.com/english/default.htm>
02. Media Tek Incorporation
<http://www.mtk.com.tw/>
03. 3. Macronix International Company
<http://www.mxix.com.tw/>
04. 4. Industrial Technology Research Institute
<http://www.itri.org.tw/>