

The New Abnormal



Department News

Breaking New Ground: Doris Shih, The New Chair of the English Department

WRITTEN BY RITA HSIEH

Professor Shih is the new chair of the English Department starting Fall semester in 2021, and she plans to breathe new life into the department.

This semester, the Department of English Language and Literature has appointed Professor Shih as the new chair. Prof. Shih started her academic career in the English Department of Fu Jen University in 2001. Her teaching and research interests are English language teaching and cultural learning using technology, specializing in educational technology, multimedia education, and intercultural communication. “Since Professor Shih came to the department, she has broken new ground by opening a lot of courses that are related to computers and technology, which is very helpful for the department,” said Julie Lee, the secretary of the English department.

With many and varied experiences and a number of research studies completed, Shih said that “she is ready to take the next step.” As a professor, one of the most challenging parts is the need to teach and advise but also to do research. “For professors, this is kind of required for us. We should also continuously work on research projects so that we can help our field make

progress.” Despite being very busy, Shih said, “my mindset is more ready, and the timing is right for me now” to head to the department.



Professor Shih with an alumna.
Photo provided by Professor Shih.

The English Department has been encouraging students to learn diversely instead of just focusing on one particular field. During Professor Shih’s term in office, she said, “I’ve been thinking about

collaborating with “College of Foreign Languages and Literatures” to continue this trend. To give the students in the department more choices and more chances to explore their potential, she plans to work with CFL to provide a more diverse curriculum. “CFL has designed a lot of different programs. I’ve also heard that some of the students in the senior year are taking courses from those programs. Therefore, I’m wondering that (if possible) maybe we can use some of these courses to count for graduation,” said Shih. She is also considering turning workshops into actual credits to encourage students to learn more about different fields, so students “can join the workshops and maybe collect the number of hours to fulfill the requirements of the credits. However, of course, these plans have to be discussed and further designed by the department curriculum committee,” Shih said.

To assist undergraduate students in finding their future paths, Shih will continue the efforts of her predecessors, such as inviting outstanding alumni to return to the department and share their experiences. She said, “if the pandemic gets better, I do hope that we can continue to invite guest speakers from different fields as well as outstanding alumni.” Second, both the department website and college website have abundant information about internships and collaborations with different companies, so students could have more opportunities to enrich their experiences.

Finally, Shih wants all the students from the department to keep two things in mind. First, she wants to encourage all the students in the department to present and participate in the virtual Annual Global Issues Conference (GIC). “Since our department is a member of Global Partners in Education (GPE) led by

East Carolina University in North Carolina, USA, I would highly encourage you to present and share your research in GIC,” said Shih. She also believes that the research papers and reports that students have done for their CC classes are worth being shared internationally. “Our students have been learning with high motivation and producing outstanding research reports and research papers in different areas, these research outcomes should be presented and shared with international audiences worldwide,” added Shih.

The other thing is to keep a positive attitude during the pandemic. “I think especially during this current COVID-19 pandemic period, it’s a difficult period for not only the students but maybe even everyone. But again, I just hope that we could all stay positive and hang in there,” said Shih. She wants students to “just try to do the best but don’t push yourself too hard. If you need a little more time to complete the assignments and get everything done, or if you need any help, talk to the teacher. You can come to me or come to the department office. I want to tell everyone in the department that there’s nothing that we can’t handle, so just do your best.”



Professor Shih, the new chair of the English Department. Photo by Rita Hsieh.

No Quarter: 2021 Senior Play Production

WRITTEN BY YVONNE LAI

During an interview with the director of the 2021 Senior Play Production, Dee’Dee Tsai, and leading cast Quentin Liao provide a closer insight into the core concept of the play No Quarter (written by Polly Stenham) and their interpretation of the script.

A majority of Polly Stenham’s play depicts dysfunctional families. *No Quarter* focuses on Robin’s attempt to defend his home after being kicked out of school in London. After finding out the house is going to be sold by his ten-year-old brother Oliver (played by Young Tsai), Robin (played by Quentin Liao) decides to stop the house from being sold by doing anything he could. *No Quarter* examines relationships, namely, the relationships between Robin and his mother, brother, friends, and admirers. At the same time, it demonstrates Robin’s intention of protecting his last shelter and his sense of value “the whole world corrupts whereas I am the only one sober.”



Director Dee'Dee Tsai. Photo by Athena Chu.

No Quarter stands for “no mercy.” “No one has mercy for Robin, and Robin has ‘no quarter’ for anyone as well --- this is how it looks on the surface,” said Liao. Underneath the surface, when others try to offer help to Robin, he refuses to accept it and distances himself further away from them. Robin lives in fantasies built by his mother, but he refuses to accept the real world when others intend to bring him back to reality. “The impact on Robin from every character in the play may be what we encounter in the real-life,” said Tsai, pointing out the feature of relationships that people are all mutually influencing each other.

When asked about the ending of the play, “There’s no so-called happy ending for *No Quarter*. At the end of the play, people are not granted happiness for sure,” said Liao. “Any relationship remaining stable may lose its balance at the next moment,” said Tsai. “And we welcome everyone to think about the ending of *No*

Quarter.” The crew left an open-ended question for the audience to guess what might happen next by examining every detail of the interaction between the characters.

Q: What motivated you to choose *No Quarter* as 2021 Senior Play production?

Tsai: Practically speaking, *No Quarter* requires a lower level of technical skills than the other script I was going to choose. The ages of the characters are all similar to ours, and we, fortunately, got an equivalent number of actors and actresses this time. Therefore, considering our current condition, *No Quarter* would be more suitable. I also chose this script because *No Quarter* deals with the issue of relationships. I was facing some dilemmas when choosing the script, and I realized coping with different relationships is crucial in our lives. Somehow, I can understand how relationships influence our lives by looking through the script.

Q: How would you describe Robin, the character you are playing?

Liao: I would say he is bisexual with an Oedipus complex. Robin is born gifted with an empty corpse. Some of his behaviors would be tolerated just because of his talent. If others do the same thing as him, they might be disproved and blamed. However, society tends to tolerate the faults made by those who are gifted, so others cannot directly drag him back to reality.



Robin of *No Quarter* played by Quentin Liao.
Photo by Dee'Dee Tsai.

Q: What do you expect to leave in the audience's mind after watching the play?

Tsai: I cannot control the audience to have the same interpretation. But what I hope is that the audience can relate to the story and have certain enlightenment after watching the play.

Senior Play Carries On Amid Pandemic

WRITTEN BY QUENTIN LIAO

Scheduled to perform on 12/20-21 and 12/23, the 2021 Senior Play No Quarter adopts a variety of safety measures due to the impact of COVID-19 and its variants.

Xin-Tien Wu, the executive producer of *No Quarter*, responds that the crew is taking and enforcing safety measures to ensure both the safety of crew members and audiences. Wu says that to comply with regulations, every audience member must have their body temperature taken and fill out the TOCC (Travel history, Occupation, Contact history, and Cluster) form before entering the theater. If one's body temperature is above 37.5 Celsius, he/she would be asked to leave the premises and be offered a full refund.

Non-faculty members are allowed to attend this year's Senior Play. They need to provide their full name, phone number, and ID number to apply for FJCU Pass, an electronic pass that allows them to enter the school and venue. Wu further suggests that each audience member would have to sit in their assigned seats and that the whole venue would be disinfected after every performance.

As of the crew, every member of this year's Senior Play will have their health status and vaccination record checked two weeks before due dates. Everyone will have their temperature taken each day, and will be required to wear masks except for actors rehearsing on stage. When asked if infection rates rise and might severely interfere with the performance, Wu replies that all rehearsals will stop immediately, and that performances will be taped and uploaded to a website to watch for free. Along with the performance, each section would also upload their work for display.

Liao: A novelist Nathalie Chang (張亦絢) wrote this quote in the preface of her novel: "I offer the biggest regret for not being able to tell a happier story, but I hope the novel can make your life better at the end."

Yun-Qian Tsai, the director of *No Quarter*, affirms the purpose and necessity of a backup plan. As an actor in the 2021 Annual Play *Frozen*, she had experienced firsthand how COVID-19 disrupted and eventually canceled the performance back in May. "The pandemic caught us all off guard," Tsai recalls. "The play was canceled within two weeks. It was especially damaging to the crew since by then, the play was pretty much ready for display." Tsai wants to make sure all the preparation for *No Quarter* would not go to waste even as another outbreak occurs. "During summer vacation, we made 10/31 the deadline to whether or not we will perform the play in the theater," Tsai says. "If the condition does not allow us to do that, we will continue to make props and translate the subtitles. We will put it all up on the website for people to watch."

The uncertainty also affected how the crew was recruited and early stages of preparation. "We ask actors to send in tapes via email for the online audition," Tsai says. "As the school postponed the first day of the semester." Tsai mentions that although this method does not differ tremendously from an in-person audition, "one cannot feel the gravitas each student possesses face to face." Conditions were also too risky for in-person rehearsal, as Tsai opted for rehearsing online or through telephone. "Luckily we do not need to opt for the backup plan as the deadline on 10/31 passed." However, Tsai shows her concern even as the crew came back on campus for rehearsal and

preparation: “The outbreak in May certainly affects our mindset even as everything gradually returns to normal.” Tsai adds that “the crew is under tremendous pressure for fear that the play will be canceled again.”



Crew members abiding COVID-19 safety protocols.
Photo by Quentin Liao.

As of 11/22, the CDC requires wearing masks under all circumstances except indoor/outdoor activities and shooting personal/group photos both indoor and outdoor. The guidelines Fu Jen Catholic University provides when students are holding an event include an assessment form before the activity,

safety measures before and during activities being held in school, and the organizer’s health status.

Before the event, the university requires organizers to gather both the participant’s travel history and health status. The organizer is required to remind participants of safety measures through different platforms, and put up posters at the venue. The organizer is required to disinfect the venue and equipment such as microphones or seats. The organizer should also establish contingency measures with local health authorities.

During the event, participants are required to wear masks, take body temperature, and disinfect their hands before entering the venue. Participants are required to sign in and sit in assigned seats. Organizers should abide by current measures on capacity and social-distance. Organizers should control the duration of the event and ensure individual hygiene. They are also required to establish self-health management within the group, such as documenting body temperatures starting from fourteen days before the event, and providing backup plans should anyone fall ill.

Mini Play Contest: What Does Acting a Play Mean for Freshmen

WRITTEN BY TERRY LEE

On December 9th, divided into eight groups, freshmen of the English Department put on Medea by collaborative efforts in CFL theater to have a taste of acting in a professional theater and develop their future interests in performing arts.

Mini Play, a tradition for freshmen to perform a play, is listed as one of the course objectives in Introduction to Literature. Students have to cooperate with assigned group members to discuss how to enact the story on stage. Meanwhile, students also need to attend workshops to be familiar with sound and lighting systems and spare time for rehearsal.

an enormous challenge. A freshman student, tired of weekly assignments from the classes she has taken so far, mentioned that she felt stressed during the preparation because of limited time. “It’s a little bit hasty with the tight schedule, and I am dealing with my Midterm exam at the same time,” said another freshman student.

For freshmen who have entered the English Department of FJU for only two months, Mini Play is



The group put on the best show receives the award.
Photo by Terry Lee.

However, some students appreciate having a chance to perform in a theater. A freshman responsible for prop management said, “I’m having a great time in the theater. With the practice I have with my groupmates, I can gradually improve my performance and enjoy the spotlight. What’s more, Mini Play offers practical experiences we can’t acquire from the regular classes.”

To put on a good performance, seamless teamwork is a must. Nevertheless, most freshman students have never cooperated with so many members in a group, so they encountered some troubles during group work. One of the directors said, “it’s difficult to communicate with ten people, and having all the group members agree on some plans is even more challenging.”

As for the aspects of skills, a stage manager points out, “I have to adjust my tone of speaking in a way that the actors and actresses will accept when I’m correcting their performance. It helps me improve my communication skills.”

Life Itself Is a Moving Feast: Professor Liu’s Next Step

WRITTEN BY ALVIN LIN

Professor Cecilia Liu reflects on her teaching career at the Department of English Language and Literature at FJCU and explains that with her passion for English she will continue teaching even after retiring.

For actors and actresses, they benefited a lot from this performance. “Acting is like role-playing somebody else. I have to drop my identity and personality to be another person temporarily. What’s more, I get to understand the essence of acting by this experience,” said a student who played Aegeus, King of Corinth. “The most difficult part of playing Medea is that it’s hard to imitate and become a woman totally losing her mind. I need to be both mad and sad at the same time. It really takes time to master this character,” students said.

Sound and lighting effects are also essential components for a good play. “Learning how to control sound and lighting effects is more difficult than I originally thought. I also need to communicate with the audio control room about the timing of sounds,” a crew member of sound and lighting effects said. Though she made some mistakes in the actual Mini Play, she said she was quite satisfied with her overall performance.

Many students agree with the advantages that acting out a play brings. “To perform a character of *Medea*, I need to read the texts thoroughly and understand both the play itself and the background of ancient Greece,” a student said. Others also developed literary analysis skills by performing. “By acting out as *Medea*, I get to know more about its themes, which will be helpful for my final exam,” one student said.

“Mini Play sparked my interests in theater studies as a freshman,” said Professor Hegel at the end of Mini Play. He hopes students can gain interest in theater through this experience and encourages students to actively join Annual Play and Senior Play.

“I started teaching at Fu Jen Catholic University (FJCU) as a part-timer in the evening division from 1983,” said Professor Cecilia H.C. Liu. After finishing her master’s degree, Liu first taught full-time in Taichung and part-time in Fu Jen for 10 years. At that point, she went to Ohio University for a Ph.D. in English Literature and Theatre, then returned to continue teaching at FJCU until today.



Professor Liu's favorite photo from her retirement party. Photo provided by Professor Liu.

Having published more than 80 academic writings, directed more than 35 theatre performances, and received 20 awards, Professor Liu is one of the most passionate, devoted, and hard-working professors. Students often describe her as independent, brave, caring, tender, and warm-hearted. “I would say that teaching itself is significant. I wouldn’t call it a job but a profession, indeed. And no matter where you are, I will say that it’s really like a beautiful garden,” the professor explained. “The garden wouldn’t be beautiful by itself. You have to nurture it, water it, and

move the pots around sometimes.” According to Liu, teaching involves thoroughly researching and studying a text. In the end, a teacher learns more than what is taught.

When talking about her early years while pursuing education, Professor Liu said, “disability is not only a weakness but also a curse, a sin.” Professor Liu is a polio survivor from a low-income family. She had to work hard to earn chances to improve and foster certain abilities. “I have to be independent. I have to learn something that I can keep with me. That thing happens to be English. It opened a door for me. I learned that life can be different so it’s wonderful,” Liu sees her disability as a blessing. Professor Liu said, “you need a strong soul, a sturdy heart, and also, very solid learning as the foundation. So, I equipped myself with different sorts of knowledge.” Through learning, she found that even though her body could be restricted and kind of imprisoned. But her heart, her soul could soar in the sky. It could be infinite.

At the end of the interview, Professor Liu reminded current students and past alumni, “life itself is a moving feast. You can always decide what to take with you. You are the master of your life. I am, as people say, a powerhouse. I hope I can keep it this way. Keep on learning. Life is precious. Even when I’m crying, even when I’m sad, I tell myself: ‘Hang in there, it will be better. You will see the light after this dark tunnel. Hang in there. Don’t give up. Don’t give up on any hope. The most important thing is don’t give up on yourself.’”

See More and Be More: Dr. Bi-Chu (BC) Chen

WRITTEN BY ALVIN LIN

Dr. Bi-Chu (BC) Chen received her Bachelor of Arts degree here at Fu Jen University; she continued her studies to acquire a master’s degree in education studies in the United States, and a doctorate at Tamkang University. Getting a master's degree was a part of an organized plan after working as a teacher and a secretary in international trading business

companies for several years to accumulate enough money to go abroad. She decided to undertake a doctoral program because “If I study [Ph.D.] then I can learn more theories and conduct experiments that might help improve my teaching style.”

Being a professor was not Chen's aspiration since she "just want[s] to be a teacher. That's why I don't like students calling me professor! I dislike being called a professor." She returned to teach at Fu Jen University, her alma mater, to inspire more students just as she was inspired by many before her.

Chen described her teaching style as "more learner-centered, like self-learning or self-autonomy." She hopes that her students can be independent thinkers so she incorporates the kinds of activities that increase teacher-student interactions. She said, "I always want to have more interaction with my students in class."

For Chen, the difference between being an administrator and a professor is that a chair has more things to take into consideration compared to a professor because a department chair sees things at a different level. Chen said, "I think being a chair put myself in perspective, so I can see with a wider view and know more, and hopefully, I can be more understandable, right? So, it's also about the philosophy of life. It is not just about working or teaching: How to live better and more balanced?" But she acknowledged that "we are often too busy" to be truly balanced.

The reason why Chen decided to use BC as her name is because of identity. She had an English name when she was still studying at FJCU. However, as Chen was studying in the United States, she realized it's very important to hold one's identity. Chen asked foreigners or Americans to call her by her Chinese name. Luckily, the two Chinese characters are easy for Americans to pronounce, and they often asked about the meaning behind her Chinese name, so they learned more about Chinese culture.

In the end, Chen would like to thank all the faculty, as a large group, "because I cannot be the chair myself and do everything, right? And there are some very important persons for my administrative work: the secretaries. I appreciate their great help and their support. Dean and Vice-Dean, Professor Lydia, Kate showed me some training directions. Kate is very smart and she works efficiently. And Professor Yung Bi, who served as my mentor, and the former chair, Dr. Murphy also helped me in so many ways. And, of course, all the faculties, I really won't just thank any specific one because what is a department without teamwork, right? I'm thankful for the two secretaries. They're very important to me. I think I couldn't finish my term without them."

Actually a Good Teacher: A Story About KuoKuo (文國士)

WRITTEN BY ESTHER WANG

Looking back over the past few years, Wen Guo Shi (文國士) has graduated from TFT and has learned a lot about the educational inequality that Taiwan is facing. As an educator in other fields, he still remembers his motivation and passion for education.

Wen Guo Shi (文國士), also known as KuoKuo, is an alumnus from the Department of English Language and Literature. He is a teacher trying to improve the achievement gap between urban and rural students, and caring for children who lack family support. His teaching has already helped many children, and his stories and speeches have also impacted many people.

Wen's educational philosophy is "regardless of family background, every child should have the right to choose how to live their life." Both of his parents are schizophrenic, forcing him to be observant from a young age and nurturing in him an ability to be good at comforting people. These traits helped with his application for the TFT (Teach for Taiwan) program. He hopes that all children can receive equal education.

“I’m actually a very good teacher,” he said confidently. From his perspective, a good teacher is not only a leader or mentor but also a person with a sense of self-awareness and self-reflection. “School is the place to experience love” where a good teacher can use positive methods to nurture students. A positive approach is how to react to a student's score. A good teacher would congratulate a student for getting 96 out of 100 and not question why they missed four points. As Wen said, “these subtle differences will reflect on the relationship with the students and affect how students feel.”

After graduating from FJCU, Wen worked in a cram school while figuring out what he truly wanted to do. He then quit the job and occupied himself with rural education projects for two years. When the projects ended, he stayed in experimental education institutions and is now working in a teen shelter institution.

Wen has dedicated himself to education in rural areas since he graduated from the Graduate Institute of Criminology at National Taipei University. Since then, he has been participating in the TFT program and started teaching in eastern Taiwan.

Wen pointed out that family structure and poverty issues, such as intergenerational education, are more likely to occur in rural areas. Children who are brought up by an uneducated grandparent may receive less family education. When they have problems with homework, there’s no one in the family who can guide them. What’s more, their parents usually work in the city and thus are unable to stay with their children.

Yay or Nay: Distance Learning Under COVID-19

WRITTEN BY ALVIN LIN

FJCU English majors and faculties offer personal accounts of the different reflections on distance learning during a global pandemic.

Students’ Lives Under Distance Learning

While the popular belief is that students must’ve preferred distance learning over traditional learning,

These are only some of the problems underlying inequality in education.



Teacher Wen working in the TFT program.

Photo by 小眼攝影.

After two years of experience in rural education, Wen is now in a more difficult work environment. He is currently serving in a teen shelter with a high turnover rate among employees and low salaries.

Before entering the teen shelter, the child-clients usually undergo various tough experiences, such as trauma, emotional disorders, learning disabilities, among others. These children at the teen shelter were not well educated or cared for, which means they have been ignored, helpless, or under pressure for a long time. The teen shelter serves as the final stage of an educational path before entering the workforce. Wen said, “it’s a lot of hard work just to make the children feel emotionally and spiritually supported then bring them back to the right track. However, many of them still commit crimes or live extreme lives after entering the workforce.”

some would say otherwise. “I stood in the empty dorm alone for the rest of the semester,” said Quentin Liao, a senior of the English Department. “It was not fun.”

He is one of many students that finds distance learning repulsive and prefers traditional lectures.

“I think that distance learning allows us to be more focused. On the one hand, you are relaxed alone in your familiar space. On the other hand, you are free from the interference of other students,” explains Esther Wang, another senior. “Watching play-back videos of lectures pre-recorded by the professor allows me to adjust speed and to repeat or skip parts of the lectures for as many times as I want. I don’t have to worry about missing anything because every lesson is recorded.”

Education vs. Distance Learning

As traditional face-to-face education became impossible during the pandemic, educators turned to the ever-so-growing community and technology to conduct distance learning. However, people doubt the possibility that it will ever replace the traditional ways. Especially the amount of tuition that students paid to the university made many students feel that it doesn’t add up. “I feel like being forced to conduct distance learning is not worth the same amount of tuition as going to a physical class, I feel scammed!” said Ann Lai, a senior student.

Although administrations and faculties supply classes with equipment, resources, funds, lectures, and lessons on the matter, students and teachers felt lost and often clueless when facing this abrupt change. Some professors who are not familiar with technology often had to spend around 10 minutes just to start a class. Lecturers, teachers, and professors often find distance learning to be double the pressure and double the work. Many of them find learning such technology to be troublesome and often spend too much time just to start a class. Thankfully, ever since the outbreak, the university has constantly been keeping the faculties informed about tactics for distance teaching and were able to access some resources via Tronclass (e.g., 防疫 4.0—數位教學肯定行).

Students’ performances vary greatly due to the limitations that their different types of equipment

cause. To most students, it’s often more difficult to hear the professors. With the presence of internet connection issues, questions asked by either the professors or students often need to be repeated and the responses are often misheard or misunderstood.

Despite many complaints, distance learning still has its advantages. “I had to wake up at 6 just to make it to my 9 am class because I had to commute. Distance learning allows me to wake up one hour before our class and still have sufficient time to prepare for class,” said Jasmine Hsu from the seniors. The feeling of having much more time at hand is a common recognition that many students share as soon as distance learning became mandatory.



Students using Microsoft Teams to conduct online meeting. Photo by Alvin Lin.

In the Future

Opinions and points of view regarding future preventions differ from one another. According to our new English Department Chair Doris Shih, with her research background in “Curriculum and Instruction” and “Educational Technology,” she is confident and ready to face another period of distance learning. She is also confident that instructors and students in our department are ready to move to online instruction as well. Chair Shih said, “some of our teachers have also been teaching entirely online for the Advanced and Intermediate Distance-Learning (AIEDL) program. Therefore, many are experienced in teaching via the online mode.” Chair Shih added, “I think since our faculty members and students have experienced online learning since Mid-May to the end of June of 2021 (the semester of 2021 Spring), and the first two weeks of the 2021 Fall semester, we are somewhat experienced

with it.” However, some may not hold such a positive point of view.

“Not every course is compatible and convertible to distance learning,” said Julie Lee, the English department secretary. “Last year’s Annual Play performance was an example. Acting can not be done online with the actors separated. As a result, professors and teachers spend more effort on converting and rearranging lecture contents. There are also problems with the hardware. Not every lecturer and student has the suitable equipment for a proper online class. The university can provide the hardware for lecturers, but students are not able to use these types of equipment. I am afraid that this contributes to students’ poor learning performance.”

“At the same time, the administrative staff also need to solve problems for both the professors and students. Therefore, we are still busy even though they are not on campus. Not to mention there are only two secretaries, it is very difficult to work solely online. There are many jobs can that require coordination with other offices. Thus, I prefer to come and work on campus,” said Lee. Other than worrying about the use of tools or online programs, student and professors’ main concerns will be related to learner motivation, health issues (eye exhaustion with the computers), and the fact that face-to-face contacts are necessary between instructors and students especially for language learning.

The War Between ENGSA and COVID-19

WRITTEN BY MICHELLE FAN

Forced to cancel many events due to local infection clusters, the students of the Department of English Language and Literature at FJCU in the Students’ Association have felt the impact of COVID-19 not only on annual activities such as the cancellations of the Freshman Tea Party, Freshman Orientation Camp, among others but also on their mental health and a greater amount of administrative work while enforcing and following epidemic control regulations.

The English Department Students’ Association (ENGSA) has been planning events and activities for every student in the English Department to acclimate and interact with each other. However, many of these were canceled due to the outbreak of COVID-19. This has seriously impacted the 21st English SA’s event planning methods, the relationship between seniors and underclassmen, and English SA members’ physical and mental health as well.

Impact of These Cancellations

Three activities have been canceled since the 21st English SA took charge: Freshmen Orientation Camp, Freshmen Gatherings, and the Department Trip. According to the members of ENG SA, canceling the “Orientation Camp” was the worst since this activity was the biggest event they planned as a group. “The Orientation Camp is not only the biggest event that we

as chair and vice-chair will be in charge of but also the biggest accomplishment we will have since no other activity has the scale of the Orientation Camp,” said Mia Lin, the Chair of the 21st English Department Students’ Association.

The Orientation Camp involved numerous games, night-time activities, performances, food, etc., to welcome freshmen into the English Department. This year, the Orientation Camp was canceled two months before the actual event was scheduled to take place. By then, most planning was already done. “It is so frustrating how there is no possible way for us to make people see all the efforts we made,” Mia said. “Since all the activities were canceled.”

The Freshmen Gatherings while not hosted by the English SA was a great opportunity for members to

promote upcoming events. It was also a great chance for freshmen to meet their seniors and ask questions about their future at Fu Jen University. The event-planning team leader, Cindy Lin, was quite concerned about being deprived of these opportunities. “Not having the camp and the gathering makes it harder for us to bond with this year’s freshmen,” Cindy said. “Compared to last year, we lost the chance to directly interact with the freshmen. This could also lower their desire to participate in other events since no one would want to come without knowing any seniors.”



ENGSA having their weekly meeting.
Photo provided by ENGSA.

Events being canceled can also affect the future English SA. “We rely much on the documents of outgoing seniors when planning events. They help us learn from our seniors’ mistakes and imitate what they did well,” Cindy said. “However, without holding the events there will be no documents for the next successors to learn from.”

Impact on Students’ Attitude and Mental Health

The uncertainty of whether activities will be canceled generates pessimism and causes immense stress and anxiety for the members of the English Students’ Association. With the outbreak of COVID-19, many activities were canceled, and Taiwan went into level three alert for nearly half a year. The uncertainty of another outbreak means “We don’t know for sure whether the next activity will be canceled,” said Yoyo Wu and Henry Chang, members of the public relations team. “So we ask ourselves, how much are we willing to do for an activity that might not even be held? Given that the Freshmen Orientation Camp was canceled two months before the actual event, we are pessimistic

when it comes to putting in all the effort. All our hard work would just go away in only one night. We just don’t know if it’s worth it.”



ENGSA members after the Year-end Party.
Photo provided by ENGSA.

As SA president, Mia feels it’s important to comfort the members when events get canceled. “I think the hardest part is breaking bad news to my members,” said Mia. “I try my best to not make canceling events sound too bad, but that’s impossible. I care about the members’ mental condition a lot, but it is so hard to strike a balance between taking care of the members’ feelings and announcing that the event had to be canceled.”

Impact of Uncertainty under COVID-19

“One of the greatest changes might be doing everything online,” said Amy Teng and Henry. “It is difficult to have productive online meetings.” When asked about which methods they prefer, online or in-person meetings, almost all members replied they prefer in-person meetings. “It’s just easier to get things done,” said Sylvia Zhan, the vice-chair of the Association. “When we have in-person meetings, we can judge from members’ facial expressions to know whether they like an idea or not, even if they said nothing. But when it comes to online meetings, everyone keeps their cameras off. Perhaps they feel shy or feel unrepresentable, but it sure makes decisions harder to make.” Amy, one of the members of the event-planning team also added, “most people prefer typing instead of replying through microphones. This actually doubles the presenter’s work since they have

to check the message inbox in between presentations, which leads to low efficiency.”

Preparation before events is also doubled because of the school and government’s COVID-19 regulations. Paperwork must be submitted to ensure that each event abides by the rules. The PR team also must find venues that are big enough for participants to keep a safe social distance. It is also mandatory for all members to

prepare extra face masks, rubbing alcohol, and thermometers. Staff also need to be aware if anyone didn’t put on face masks during events. “Although these extra procedures can be a little tiring, they are necessary,” said Cindy. “The school’s policy is actually very easy to abide by since they are the same as the government’s. However, the rules haven’t been changed a bit since May. FJU is very slow when it comes to changing policies to fit the current situation.”

Last Gathering of 2021: English Department Year-end Party

WRITTEN BY TYLER LEE

On November 22nd, the English Department held the Year-end Party; despite the difficulties that the English Department Students’ Associations encountered, they included many unforgettable activities to spark long-lasting memories.

This year, the English Department’s Year-end Party is held at LM building’s 101 room in Fu Jen University, started at six and ended at nine to ten at night. Participants had to dress up as any movie characters to fit this year’s dress code. It is the perfect opportunity for students in the department to befriend people they don’t often meet.

The main coordinator of the party, Henry Chang said, “the ultimate purpose of the Year-end Party was to provide a place where everyone can forget about the deadline of the assignments, and the things that are bothering them.” He further said, “we want people to enjoy and feel relieved.”

Choosing LM building’s 101 room in Fu Jen University was never the coordinator’s first choice. However, all the restaurants exceeded the English Department Students’ Association’s (ENGSA) budget. They believe that the best option was to hold the Year-end Party on campus because it’s free. Fortunately, the benefit of selecting an on-campus venue is that students could join the party right after class.

Both coordinators said, “We enjoyed the Year-end Party, but the preparation was challenging.” Fillan Chen pointed out that practicing for the opening

dance of the event was difficult since not everyone knows how to dance. He added that for a whole week before the event, everyone practiced dancing at eight o’clock in the morning, “I practiced the same song 31 times, I actually counted.” He complimented Henry for organizing the schedules of the event and completing the paperwork that needed to be done. He also praised Jimmy, the budget holder, for helping them control the budget so that they don’t lose money. Although the event was a success, Henry still expressed that he would not want to be the coordinator again because there were too many uncontrollable variables like finding enough sponsors or the right date, which made the crew burn a lot of their midnight oils.

One of the biggest problems ENGSA faced was the inadequate budget since holding an event requires lots of money. Therefore, they had to find sponsorship and more participants to not lose money. Moreover, since the freshmen Orientation Camp had to be canceled this year, no one in the Student’s Association had any experience holding a big event, which resulted in difficulties filling out required documents that had to be sent to the school administration to ensure safety under COVID-19. They had to check with Julie Lee, the assistant of the

English Department, repeatedly to make sure that there were no mistakes, and everything was in accord with the school's regulations.

The two coordinators pointed out that the activities, games, performances, theme cosplay, and singing, included in this year's party aim to make the participants feel relaxed and entertained. From Fillan's point of view, the Party King and Queen Election was one of the unforgettable activities because everyone was cheering for their group representatives. Both coordinators agreed that the auction had the most participation. Participants competed to get mysterious prizes by bidding on the tokens each team won from games.

Amanda Wu, Kiki Huang, and Yvonne Lai, three seniors in the English Department, attended this year's Year-end Party and shared their opinions on

the event. Amanda mentioned that she liked that everyone could dress up as beloved movie characters, which allowed freshmen and sophomores to fit in easily. Kiki loved the buffet, games, songs, and the people dressing up creatively. Furthermore, Amanda noted that the most memorable moment was the Party Queen and King Election because the competition between groups was interesting. Kiki also pointed out that the auction was the most memorable since nobody knew the prizes. Yvonne noted that the Red and White Flag game was very engaging as it requires reaction time, and the game's pace got faster each round. She recalled back from her own experience of holding this activity in the past and said, "It's funny when the participants started panicking." Furthermore, she added that the Sticker Notes game was enjoyable as participants used all their strength to shake off the attached sticky notes. "Audiences will see the weird facial expressions of the participants and their skin jiggling," said Yvonne.



(Left) Red and White Flag Game/ (Right) Sticky Notes Game. Photo provided by ENGSA.

Cross-Cultural Communication: Connecting With Students from Different Countries

WRITTEN BY CASPER LIN

Located in SF901, the distance learning classroom of the Divine Word Academic Highrise, "Cross-Cultural Communication: Global Understanding Project" is an elective course offered by the Department of English Language and Literature at Fu Jen Catholic University (FJCU) that is designed to allow students from FJCU to learn different cultures without traveling.

The course aims to promote students' cultural awareness and improve their intercultural communication skills. This is done through the provision of international connections for students in several different countries with the aid of technological devices.

In addition, this course is also part of the Global Virtual Exchange (GVE) Programs of the Global Partners in Education (GPE) organization directed by East Carolina University (ECU) in the United States. This project is established for students to connect with other students from more than 40 global partners in 29 countries, and the program has received numerous awards in the United States.

As Professor Shih, the GPE coordinator in Taiwan and the instructor of "Cross-Cultural Communication: Global Understanding Project" mentioned, this course has been established since the spring of 2007. ECU will help assign two to three different institutions from different countries to connect with students in FJCU (countries for connection in the recent years included USA, Japan, Peru, and Mexico), and the connection for each country lasts three to four weeks.

The course covers such topics as college life, family structure, the meaning of life, religions, health care, food and nutrition, stereotypes, and prejudices, demonstrating the variation in cultural learning. Class sessions include discussion in both small groups and one-on-one chats with reflective journals, papers and oral presentations.

Christine Zheng, the current teaching assistant (TA), noted that one perennial difficulty is some students may be too shy to talk. She said, "we expect the students to talk more because it's really a precious chance to do this kind of activity. But when I see students not talking, I don't know how to encourage them."



Connecting with students from different countries in class. Photo by TA Christine Zheng.

Zheng recommends the course since "it's a very precious opportunity to get to interact with people from other countries and know their culture, and it's important to know how to interact with people from different backgrounds."

However, the number of students in this course must be limited. Since having too many students may affect the quality of connections, "I can only limit students to maybe 16 or 18 people at maximum," Professor Shih said.

In addition to limited enrollment, Professor Shih said that she "must meet my students and do some preparation lectures the very first week of the semester, but sometimes the coordinating university ECU let us jump into the connection right on the second week. That would always give me a heart attack because in the second week, usually students are still doing add and drop. If you are sure to be in my course to do the connection, you must come to class on the first week."

Besides these potential obstacles for students, Professor Shih must "do a trial test before our actual class connection," as well as coordinate time differences between partner schools. Ultimately, while the pandemic has impacted travel and person-to-person meetings, technology allows for continued cultural exchanges, the development of intercultural skills, and interaction with people from different countries.



Festum Mediaevale: The 2021 Fr. Franz Giet Building Week

WRITTEN BY ESTHER WANG

From November 24th to December 4th, the annual Fr. Franz Giet Building (FG) Week, also known as the CFL Christmas Market held by the College of Foreign Language (CFL), used the theme of Festum Mediaevale to highlight different FG week under the school's 60th anniversary celebration. Some events especially matched the medieval theme, such as the orchestra club performance, a short theatrical performance, and an AR game experience at the opening ceremony, as well as a Christmas art exhibition in Global Lounge (寰宇廳) with even food stalls named after medieval culture or stories.

Because The FG Week, or the CFL Christmas Market, is the annual event held closest to the Christmas holiday, it was even grander this year in light of the 60th anniversary of the Fu Jen Catholic University. “Festum Mediaevale” is based on medieval European culture and Epiphany, an important holiday in Christianity. “We want to look back on the history of Fu Jen University this year,” said the dean of the CFL, Prof. Kate Liu. The theme includes medieval knights’ stories, Vikings’ culture, and some of the famous Christmas food eaten in the Middle Ages such as Galette des Rois (King cakes).

The opening ceremony held in the Global Lounge on the first floor of the FG building attracted more people this year than previously. The orchestra club was invited by CFL to make an opening performance. “Although *Game of Thrones* is a conceived story, it’s

well-known and has some elements of the Middle Ages. And we also chose another orchestral suite related to Christmas to further enhance the Christmas spirit,” said Libby Shih, one of the people in charge of the FG week. The orchestra club had been preparing for almost a month, and the performance made people stop walking just to enjoy the performance and take photos.

The short drama performance enacted by students from the Department of Italian Language and Literature and Department of English Language and Literature continued the joyous atmosphere set by the Christmas orchestral suite. The performance was based on the *Three Wise Man*, and adapted into a funnier version, catering to the medieval storytelling style when the stories were presented more

humorously. This year's unique theatrical performance produced a lot of laughter in the audience as intended.

The Christmas Art Exhibition near the language self-learning room could be easily seen thanks to the architectural design and the transparent glass wall of the FG building. The starry sky picture at the bottom was designed by a team of digital marketing and internship students from the CFL, and the other eight major paintings were designed by the dean and Alyson Wang, the person in charge of the Christmas Art Exhibition. The whole exhibition was inspired by famous medieval paintings such as *The Bean Feast* and *Illustration of Green Knight's Arrival* to connect with the theme of Festum Medieval. "For example, there are two of the pictures related to Christmas, others are related to medieval elements and culture, such as unicorns, which are considered medieval sacred symbols," said Wang.

Medieval themed VR games made by students were also available at the opening ceremony. With the guidance of Professor Lynn Zhou, medieval characteristics and traditions were presented vividly and interactively. One group created a game based on the painting Viking Ship by Alex Tornberg. "Learning VR games is a hard-won opportunity. I found it interesting and fun knowing how to produce it," said the team leader Alvin Lin. "Our main goal is to introduce the Yule, which is kind of like the Vikings' Christmas, and how it is different from the Christmas we know," Lin added. Some students revealed that making VR games is actually very hard. One group member, Eric Chang, said, "the logic of designing characters is the most difficult. For example, there is a scene in the game where the original gameplay is to avoid the sight of Non-Player Characters (NPCs), but because of the program can't provide a function that could detect the player's position, so we have to

change it to other methods, such as avoiding the touch of NPCs."

"I think this year is better than last year. The whole design of the game is a little bit more difficult. For example, there is a scene where the task is to find required elements to move onto the next part of the game. Although the game is quite hard, they are very memorable," said Michelle Fan, one of the people who played VR games this year and last year. In addition, the FJU English Self Learning Center took this opportunity to combine AR games with self-learning points, making learning English more interesting and meaningful. The murals in the seating area were also designed by students at the CFL.

The school also invited many external vendors to set up food stalls in front of the FG building. To blend the food stalls with the Medieval Europe-themed Christmas Market, CFL decided to give each food stall a Medieval themed name. For instance, there are "Spartan Mochi," "Germanic Brown Sugar Milk," and "Constantine Sweet Potato."

As for the students' food stalls, each department had local specialties from different countries to sell. For instance, the English Department invited everyone to enjoy scones and hot chocolate on a cold Saturday, the same day as FJU's anniversary celebration. The French Department sold the King Cakes, which was also the feature product of the Christmas Market this year since as a common dessert in the Middle Ages. In addition, CFL also offered pre-ordered featured products of six departments and sold them on Shopee enabling the school to promote the Christmas market and allowing customers to learn more about exotic dishes and different countries' specialties, such as German Christmas Gingerbread Men Cookies and Japanese Hokkaido cheese cod file. The total number of orders reached more than 200.

Carry the Weight: Student Counseling Center Adopts New Guidelines

WRITTEN BY QUENTIN LIAO

Starting from the 2021 fall semester, the Student Counseling Center (SCC) in Fu Jen Catholic University announces key changes and additions to the guidelines for each counseling session.

Every student is now required to fill out an application form and schedule a pre-interview before being scheduled for in-person counseling sessions. From September 22nd to October 4th, the pre-interviews were conducted online via Microsoft Teams due to the impact of COVID-19. Since then, the pre-interviews have been conducted in-person. The Student Counseling Center would then match each student with a counseling psychologist for counseling sessions. The SCC claims on its Facebook Page that this change is to “increase efficiency on scheduling for counseling sessions,” adding that “let us all cope with these adjustments.”



Student Counseling Center offers educational books for those in need. Photo by Michelle Fan.

Aside from the pre-registration process, another major change is that there must be at least a three-week interval between six sessions and the next. Regarding this decision, Hsing-Tsu, Tsai, the Clinical Psychologist responsible for the English department, responds that “a shortage of resources” has led to this new rule. Tsai says that the SCC sees a steady increase of demand from students. The SCC estimates that around 700 students have applied for one and/or more counseling sessions last semester. This spur, compared

with around 500 students applying for counseling sessions three years ago, has taken a toll on the already strained resources at the SCC. (To protect the privacy and anonymity of each student, the SCC does not wish to provide exact figures.)

There are currently around twenty clinical psychologists on site, Tsai says, to accommodate students’ needs. The SCC used to adopt the “first come first served” model, with students calling in and making appointments for themselves on the first day of school in each semester. Tsai confesses that not all students can receive proper care on this basis. The SCC is switching to a “round-robin” method, with “time slices are assigned to each process in equal portions and in circular order, handling all processes without priority,” hence the pre-interview and the three-week interval. This method, as Tsai elaborates, is a compromise hoping to cope with the increasing demand from students. Tsai cannot properly estimate its result yet since the SCC has only been implementing the guideline starting this semester.

The whole point of adopting the “round-robin” method, Tsai claims, is to open up opportunities for students who need help. “Picture a one-lane road, with a massive truck stuck in the middle of it. There might be a lot of smaller cars behind but cannot get through because the truck is taking up all the spaces,” Tsai proposes the analogy for further comprehension of this change. On the other hand, Tsai shows his concern regarding the three-week interval, with its effect on both the student and their counselor. “It’s an ongoing process,” Tsai says. “And we are still observing the effect until the end of the semester.”

The necessity to free up more resources for students that need counseling is imminent. Three students from National Taiwan University committed suicide over the span of five days in November last year. “We are seeing acts of imitation,” Chén lì zhōng, head of the Department of Mental and Oral Health under the Ministry of Health and Welfare, responded “we need to fix the safety net, figure out the causation and stop the tragedy from ever happening again.” In total, 59 college students had committed suicide in 2020, according to Pan Wen-chung, the Minister of Education in Taiwan. The Ministry of Education also saw a 68% increase on the number of students who had suicide intentions, from around 800 students in 2018 to 1350 students in 2019. According to Ya-Ling Huang, Chairman of Taiwan Counseling Psychologist Union, around 50,000 people are being counseled. The outbreak of COVID-19 in May worsens the already fragile status quo, with counseling sessions being stopped abruptly, Huang shows concern on its effect on individuals, among 30,000 of whom are students.

Wei-Xuan Lin of *The Reporter* investigated this phenomenon. She found out that while online counseling sessions are a probable alternative, the tight regulations in Taiwan make it almost impossible for organizations to conduct online counseling. For one, counselors in Taiwan are required to conduct sessions in the office. This makes online counseling impossible when counselors were working from home or were telecommuting back in May.

Tsai acknowledges the ambiguity and difficulty when the SCC was struggling to figure out alternatives to tend to students’ needs. The SCC eventually settled on conducting online counseling sessions via Microsoft Teams should remote-teaching continue throughout this semester. On October 4th, FJCU allowed students to have class back on campus. With the COVID regulations loosened, the SCC resumes in-person counseling sessions. However, as Tsai points out, the lack of counselors to provide proper care for every student in need remains a big hurdle. Tsai hopes that the new changes can benefit more students, but without a clear result, many challenges still lay ahead.

Yum Yum: New Food Alert in the Li Cafeteria

WRITTEN BY MICHELLE FAN

Winning the heart of FJU students, “Mo&Mo Stewed Food” is voted as the best restaurant in Li Cafeteria (33.7%), runner-up next is “XiangXu” fusion restaurant (25.3%), followed up by the “Vegan Curry” restaurant (21.7%).

As for beverage stores, the majority favors “Chung Fang Tea Shop” (18.1%) over “Taro Taro” (9.1%). Moreover, 90.4% of the students think the renovated restaurant has improved a lot, with only 9.6% of the students prefer the restaurant before renovation.

The long-closed Li Cafeteria is finally back in business! A lot has changed since the renovation, new restaurants and beverage shops started their business in the cafeteria, and Family Mart had been taken down to provide a larger space for more restaurants. The newly added restaurants are as follows: Mo&Mo Stewed Food, XiangXu fusion restaurant, Master Liu

Pork Ribs, The Pacific, Vegan Curry, and Ah Ju Ma. Other than restaurants, there are two new beverage shops as well: Taro Taro, and Chung Fang Tea Shop.

Despite many students having only tried the Li Cafeteria once, they responded positively toward the new change. 90.4% of the students like the new cafeteria better because of the new restaurants. Li Cafeteria was not students’ favorite in the past since most restaurants were terrible and expensive. However, there are more tasty and affordable restaurants now, like Xiang Xu and Mo&Mo Stewed Food.

Out of all restaurants, “Mo&Mo Stewed Food” is considered the best in Li Cafeteria with its students-friendly price, interesting combo meal, nicely cooked braised dishes, and the clerk’s polite manners. The majority recommend the Prince Combo as a must-try. With just 70 NTDs, it consists of pork ball, fish patty, prince noodle, bird egg, little sausage, dried tofu, cabbage, tempura, and fried bean curd. One female student complimented on this particular combo, “the Prince Combo is carefully designated. It has a lot of ingredients that the majority of students like, and it balances the unhealthy manufactured food with cabbages and seaweed. I highly recommend students who have trouble deciding what to eat to try this meal. Also, because each ingredient come in a small amount, female students would not have a hard time finishing it.”



The Prince Combo of “Mo&Mo Stewed Food”.
Photo by Yvonne Lai.

“Xiang Xu” fusion restaurant is also highly recommended by students. This restaurant offers a wide variety of food choices for students. XiangXu offers food ranging from snacks (fried chicken, fried potatoes, fried cuttlefish, etc.) to Chinese meals (pot boiling noodles, fried instant noodles, teppanyaki). Many students chose this restaurant as their favorite because of the diverse dishes and affordable prices. “My favorite restaurant would be Xiang Xu,” a student did not hesitate to talk about his favorite restaurant in Li Cafeteria. “The stock of the pot boiling noodles is amazing! I especially recommend milk flavor and kimchi flavor. The best part is it’s affordable. Most of the restaurants in Li Cafeteria are quite pricy.”

Over half of the students who had tried the Japanese/Korean restaurants agree “Vegan Curry” has the tastiest dishes among them (63.3%). Vegan Curry offers all vegan dishes, such as curry, thin noodles, braised dishes, pasta and drinks. “Although it is a vegan restaurant, its curry does not taste vegan, which is a good thing,” one of the students commented. Many students recommended “Smiley Hash Brown Curry with Kimchi” as their favorite dish. The name itself is quite self-explanatory; however, kimchi is optional with 10 NTDs extra fee required.

Between two new beverage shops, most students choose Chung Fang Tea Shop as the one with higher cost-performance ratio. Chung Fang focuses on tea-based beverages, whereas Taro Taro focuses on cheese foam toppings, latte and slushy. However, Chung Fang Tea Shop won with 18.1% since students prefer cheaper prices over high quality. Many students prefer neither of the beverage shops, “if I have a third option, I will choose neither,” one student replied. “They are both very expensive.

Among all the survey participants, only 9.6% of the students prefer the old cafeteria over the new one. The students like the previous stores, such as spicy hot pot, Yi-Mei and Family Mart. Family Mart is especially favored by students. Those who prefer the new cafeteria also expressed how much they want the convenience store back. “Even though Li Cafeteria has improved, I still want Family Mart back since it is convenient to have a convenience store in the middle of the campus,” one student commented. Because Family Mart decided to end their business in FJU, there are only two convenience stores left on campus. One is at the far back of the campus, and the other is at the entrance. Having a convenience store in the middle of the campus is beneficial for the majority of students, as they prefer a convenience store within walking distance to take out microwave food to class when in a hurry.

Moreover, students complained about the price. “Perhaps because of expensive store rent, almost all of the restaurants in Li Cafeteria are pricy,” said one of

the students. “Other cafeterias on campus have cheaper price and high-quality food, whereas Li Cafeteria’s restaurants do not live up to what we expect for how much they charge, which makes Li Cafeteria replaceable.” Other minor issues include lighting, closing time and few vegan restaurants.



Vegetarians have long been feeling neglected since there aren’t many vegan options among all school cafeterias. Therefore, they hope the school can eventually invite more plant-based restaurants into campus.



(Left) The interior design of Li Cafeteria/ (Right) Mo&Mo Stewed Food. Photo by Yvonne Lai.

FJU Students' Lives Under the Pandemic

WRITTEN BY TERRY LEE

From May 15th to the end of the 2021 spring semester, Fu Jen Catholic University (FJU) students experienced the first ever lockdown due to a local cluster infection of COVID-19 in Taiwan as the CDC raised the alert level to level three, with most students returning to their hometowns and starting distance learning sessions for the rest of the semester.

After successfully preventing local infections of COVID-19 in Taiwan for approximately sixteen months, Taiwan experienced the threat of the pandemic for the first time, with confirmed cases of COVID-19 infection soaring to a record-high number of 721 (including the backlog of unprocessed tests) on 5/22. The government issued a stay-at-home order, forcing venues like restaurants, schools, entertainment facilities to be temporarily closed. The authorities at FJU announced plans for distance learning shortly after the administrative Yuan raised the alert to level three.

Located in New Taipei City where the infection rates were the highest, FJU became one of the places with the highest risk of getting infected by COVID-19. Students living in dorms or renting a room nearby the

campus immediately packed their luggage and left the campus for their safer hometowns.

Some students didn’t expect the sudden change and showed disappointment about the abrupt adjustment to their own plans. Jessica Huang, a senior in the Department of Nursing, said she felt annoyed after the announcement.

“Everything about my plans of studying has changed. The hospital canceled my internship, and I needed to be aware if either the school or the hospital made any new announcement.” As a student majoring in Nursing, she is required to get on-site experience. With the level three alert, the internship switched to online. Jessica said the online intern sessions weren’t as beneficial as the on-site intern classes: “In terms of acquiring

experiences for future careers, it's a loss that we can't go to the hospital for an internship."

However, the lockdown order didn't affect students studying in other departments in the same ways. Yvonne Lai, a senior English major, took a positive view regarding the change in learning modes. "It's more effective to take classes online and study at home. I don't need to wake up early to put on make-up, and I have enough time to rest."

As Taiwan's CDC kept extending the level three alert, staying at home became the "new norm" for students. Some students seemed to adapt to the new routine well. "I didn't feel anxious about the situation then. Kaohsiung was not as serious as that in Taipei," Huang said.

Another student, Lai said, "I wasn't anxious at all. I couldn't contract the virus if I stay at home. After I finished my assignments, I killed time on the Internet and did something I haven't done for a long time, like playing video games and the instruments," Lai said. According to a survey by Taiwan News, the top two places that people would like to visit after the COVID-19 alert level lowers are restaurants and beaches.

Huang said she went to Kenting and got a diving license after the lockdown was over. "I enjoy myself a lot when I'm diving in the water. During the lockdown, I couldn't even go to a swimming pool."

Since restaurants were closed during the level three lockdown, people could only take away food or call for delivery if they hoped to enjoy the food cooked by a restaurant, while others worked on cooking meals at home. "I cooked a new dish every week. I think I have improved my cooking skills a lot. I ordered ingredients through Uber Eats and cooked for my family. Sometimes I also made desserts," said Lai.

In the eyes of students studying abroad, the Taiwanese government poses restrictions on citizens to the extent that it hinders people's freedom. "In Canada, confirmed cases of COVID-19 are one hundred times more than Taiwan, but the government didn't fine people for not wearing masks," said Anson Lim, who has been studying in Toronto for four years. "I hope Taiwan's CDC maintains the strict regulations, since they not only protect people in Taiwan, but also prevent the medical system from breaking down," said Huang. "Everyone is responsible for preventing the spread of COVID-19. It shouldn't only be the job of government officials, doctors, and nurses.

From Classic to Anime: FJU Piano Club, Where Different Types of Music Are Played

WRITTEN BY CASPER LIN

Piano club, one of the clubs in Fu Jen Catholic University that has a history of more than 25 years, holds the feature of providing an environment that enables members to play different types of music ranging from classical to pop music.

Located on the 4th floor of Archbishop Lokuang Student Activity Center Building, the piano club provides a different learning environment and is where piano enthusiasts gather.

"I think the main purpose of establishing this club is to provide a shelter for those who love piano. This place enables them to practice playing the piano and make

friends with those who share the same interests," said Zhe-An Lai, the current president of the piano club.

One of the stereotypes of the club is that only people who know how to play the piano are allowed to join. Yet, Lai has a different perspective. "Almost half of the members do not know how to play the piano. In addition to some of the members like me who have already known how to play and are here to seek a place

for practicing, there are also people who come here to learn how to play the piano or basic musical theories,” replied the president.

To assist members who want to learn, there is a formal system in the club that enables members who know how to play to teach those who do not. “The education of our club is responsible for this formal system. For members who registered as teachers, they can teach those who registered as students. The teachers are paid, and there will be a small test at the end of the semester to make sure students learn what they were taught,” said the president.

President Lai also mentions that there are multiple music genres being played in the club. “Other than classical music, pop music or songs from Japanese anime are also included. Take myself as an example, even though I used to play classical music when learning how to play the piano, I prefer playing anime songs nowadays,” said the president. This gives students the opportunity to show different interests and talents.

The education of the club later answers the question of whether such an environment is beneficial to club members, and the reply seems to be positive. “There are always people who are willing to teach, so if members in the club have questions, others are there to help. In the piano club, you can break the limitation of your own musical field because you will hear songs you are not interested in before. Maybe after you listen to them repeatedly, you may like them afterward and

start asking for the name of the songs. I used to get stuck in the musical type I was playing, but when I suddenly hear other kinds of music, I may try to learn how to play it,” said the education.

Other members also agree that having different types of music played is special for learning. A member who is also a piano beginner said, “it’s like a method of learning. I can get access to different types of music beforehand and decide what kinds of pieces I want to learn in the future. When different songs are being played, we can also discuss about it.”



The piano tuner teaches members the structure of a piano. Photo by member of the club.

“Some of the members prefer playing pieces that are transferred from pop music, and perhaps the feeling of isolation vanishes as they find out all kinds of pieces are being played. They may abandon the thought of being unable to fit in the club,” replied another member who prefers pop music.

Exchanging Culture: International Students at FJU

WRITTEN BY RITA HSIEH

The inbound exchange students in the English Department share their experiences about studying in Taiwan, studying in Fu Jen University, and their struggles of being international students in Taiwan.

Federica Bettoni, Coleen Godard, and Linda YE are three international exchange students in the English Department. Federica is a 21-year-old Italian girl, while Coleen and Linda are both from France. Coleen

is still a 19-year-old sophomore student and Linda is a senior who is about to graduate. Being asked about why they chose to come to Taiwan to study, two of the girls said it was because they wanted to improve their

Chinese. “I study foreign languages for business purposes. I study English and Chinese, and that’s why I came here. It’s because I want to learn better in Chinese,” said Federica. As for Coleen, it’s also because of the desire to learn Chinese.



Federica Bettoni, Linda YE, and Coleen Godard (from left to right). Photo by Rita Hsieh.

“I prefer Taiwanese culture, and I like Taiwan better,” Federica added. It appears to them that they prefer the atmosphere and the feelings that Taiwan brings to them more than the atmosphere of China. Therefore, they chose to learn Chinese in Taiwan rather than China. Coleen mentioned that she thinks China is stricter and has less freedom. “I just didn’t want to go to China because it was too strict, and the political stuff...it doesn’t really suit me. In my mind, Taiwan is free, and it’s exactly what I’m looking for, so I came to Taiwan,” said Coleen.

However, studying in Taiwan is very different from how they used to study in their countries. The biggest difference is how the course is being conducted. Federica mentioned that there’s a huge difference in terms of class size. “In Italy, we have this huge classroom. When I attend the classes, there are more than 100 students. Teachers will just give lectures, and we have to take notes. But they won’t ask us questions about what they said. Here in Taiwan, however, teachers will ask you questions.” Therefore, in Taiwan, university’s lessons are more interactive. Students get to have more interaction with their professors. “In France, teachers don’t take attendance because there are too many of us,” Coleen added.

This phenomenon can also be seen in presentations. “We have a lot of presentations here (in Taiwan), which is something I feel a bit stressful because I’m not pretty familiar with this kind of work,” said Linda. Nevertheless, they all mentioned that they barely do presentations when they attend classes back in their countries. “You (students in Taiwan) have a lot of group presentations or individual presentations, but we don’t have any in Italy. We just have a final exam at the end of every course because the class is too big,” Federica noted. Interestingly, there is also a huge difference about how the presentations are being conducted. Linda mentioned that students are not allowed to look at their phones during presentations in France because they may receive a zero. Nonetheless, students in Taiwan tend to read their phones throughout the presentations, which is shocking to her.

Also, being an international student on campus sometimes is not easy for them. Communication and language barriers are some of the biggest obstacles they face daily. Federica shared one of her experiences, “I had some journals due last week, but I didn’t know that because I wasn’t in class. So, I asked my classmates, who I didn’t really know, whether there was any homework or not. They said yes, there is one. But actually, there were three. Therefore, I ended up getting zero.” Coleen further mentioned that “it is somehow difficult to let others understand what I’m saying. I don’t think that I have a terrible accent in English, so I don’t know why.”

Despite the challenges they have encountered, the girls seem to enjoy studying in Fu Jen a lot, and they also like the campus very much. The scenery and the view of the campus are something they love and enjoy the most about FJU. “The campus is so big, beautiful, and well-placed. Everything is so near,” Coleen noted. What’s more, both Coleen and Federica mentioned that the universities back in their countries are not that big. The buildings are usually located in different places in the city. “My university in Italy is not big, so we don’t really have a campus. There are three different buildings around the city, so we have to walk

around the city to go to different buildings. But in FJU, it is a big campus with all the buildings together. Not to mention, there are so many spots that people can gather, like café, food court, and so on. We don't have these in Italy," said Federica. Linda also noted that the food courts on campus are part of her favorites about FJU.

FJU's dedication to creating an international learning environment was noticed by these international students. "I also like the fact that you have a lot of courses in English, which is something my university doesn't have. For example, in my school, if someone doesn't know Italian, they will have major trouble in class. But here, you provide business courses or administration courses in English so that everyone can understand," said Federica.

As for Coleen, she mentioned that she really adores the atmosphere of the entire campus as well as the people

here. "People here are really friendly. I was actually pretty worried about having mean roommates, but it turns out that my roommate is super friendly and cares a lot about us," said Linda. "Even the teachers here and the administrations, they are more caring."

Linda, Federica, and Coleen expressed their excitement about their remaining time in FJU, and they wish to have chances to join more clubs. They mentioned that they don't have clubs in the university back in their hometowns. Therefore, they would like to join some clubs soon and make more new friends.

Finally, when asked about whether they would recommend any of their friends to come and study at FJU, they all said, "definitely!" "All of the events you're having, all of the nice people, and the beautiful campus you've got... FJU is really the best!"

New School, New Life, A Look at How Transfers Are Doing

WRITTEN BY TERRY LEE

Every July, flocks of students arrive at Fu Jen Catholic University (FJCU) to participate in the transfer exam and fight for a spot to study in the new school. The member of the Department Newsletter Team spoke to three transfer students about their experiences while studying in FJU, their struggles during times of preparation, their expectations of the new school, and how they have benefited from the resources offered in FJU.

According to the official figures, it is difficult to transfer to FJU. Take the Department of English Language and Literature as an example, 205 people registered for the transfer exam in 2020, while the department only accepts 7 people. The acceptance rate is also low in other departments, reflecting how difficult it is to study in FJU through transfer exams.

Tyler Lee, a Senior in English Language and Literature Department

After studying at a University of Science and Technology for a year, Tyler decided to transfer to the English Language and Literature Department in his Sophomore year due to the frustration and disappointment he felt in the Freshman year. "In my

previous university, the mandatory and elective courses that I attended were too easy and flexible. I couldn't acquire sustainable knowledge. Students there were irresponsible and childish. They treated the assignments casually, and they didn't respect the professors properly."

During his time of preparation, he encountered several difficulties regarding the resources that he could receive to improve his English composition skills. "One professor promised me that he would help me in English composition; however, he didn't help me at all. I had to learn how to write a decent essay on

my own. I felt I lagged behind a lot of people preparing for the exams.”

After successfully entering FJU, Tyler revealed that the sensation when realizing he got the admission was one of the best in his life. “The time that I realized that I got admitted, I felt that I conquer the world! I felt that anything is possible if you tried your best!”

Having been studying in the Department of English Language and Literature at FJU for three years, Tyler enjoys his academic career, and feels that his English proficiency is gradually progressing. Not only is he capable of writing research papers and other types of writing, but he also learns professional knowledge about TEFL, literature, and public speaking. “I love FJU because I have improved so much. Meeting my skillful and capable peers has pushed me to become better every single day.”



Tyler Lee studying at the lobby of FG building.
Photo by Michelle Fan.

G.E. Lu, Senior in Department of Economics

Majored in Economics, G.E transferred to FJU as a makeup for his failure in the university entrance exam four years ago. “I felt extremely happy. My pressure suddenly disappeared. Nevertheless, I was also afraid that I won’t be able to adapt to the new school.”

G.E. was quite dissatisfied with the atmosphere in his previous school. To make himself well-prepared for the annual exam, G.E rarely went to school, so he

couldn’t join the student activities. “I had to study intensively every day then. It’s a pity that I couldn’t join the activities. Seeing my classmates having wonderful freshmen lives, I felt depressed.”

Studying at FJU challenges G.E’s concepts of the subjects he has majored in. “To understand Economics, one can’t simply memorize the numbers and models. If I hope to pass, for instance, Microeconomics, I have to comprehend the theory behind each formula instead of remembering them.” Compared to the previous school, the courses in FJU train his logical thinking. He said he can’t cram for Midterm and Final exams, but needs to plan his studying schedule as early as possible.

Allen Hsu, Junior in Department of Information Management

As a transfer having a gap year devoted to exam preparation, Allen gained admission to the Department of Information Management last summer. Before studying in FJU, Allen felt apprehension in terms of his future. “I don’t know what I could do with the graduation certificate if I continue to study in my previous school.”

Allen said he has endured a hard time when preparing for the transfer exam. If he didn’t transfer to his ideal school successfully, the money and time he spent on the exam would be in vain. Instead of gaining support from friends and family, Allen said, “they didn’t expect me to get decent grades on the transfer exam since I didn’t like studying at all before. What I could do was to study hard in hopes of proving they are completely wrong about my attitudes towards the transfer exam.”

When asked about how he has been doing in FJU, Allen responded that the courses are challenging, but he looks forward to each class, since the professor talks about practical knowledge that will be useful in workplaces. “Learning in my department, I can have a sense of what I’m going to do in the future.”

Rinascimento: The 10th FJU Fashion Marketing Week

WRITTEN BY RITA HSIEH

The Fashion Marketing Faculty of the Textiles and Clothing Department in the Fu Jen University holds the 10th Fashion Marketing Week with the theme of Rinascimento during the last week of October with various activities.

Rinascimento – The Theme of the 10th Fashion Marketing Week

The general coordinator said the theme “Rinascimento” was inspired by the COVID-19 pandemic. “I came up with this idea because this golden era in Europe was caused by Black Death, which is known as the most fatal infectious disease in the historical record. Moreover, the word ‘Rinascimento’ means ‘Renaissance’ in English, and it contains the meaning of ‘rebirth’. If Black Death could lead to an artistic movement that caused such a great impact on our history, people could also start thinking about what could possibly be done under the post-epidemic era to make the world a better place.”

The Influencers’ Speeches

This year, the Fashion Marketing Faculty invited five influencers in different fields to give enlightening speeches to the FJU students. The faculty has invited the psychological counselor, Shan-Ting Deng; the manager of Want Show Laundry, Reef; the famous fashion stylist, Judy Chou; the prominent internet influencer, Zhang Yi; and finally, Wednesday Wu, who is a well-experienced slashie. “Personally, my favorite speech was from Zhang Yi since we got to see another side of him,” the general coordinator of the event said. “Students who came for his speech were so many that eventually there was no space to contain all.”

The Catwalk Competition

The catwalk competition was held on Wednesday, October 27. The entire competition was mainly designed by the freshmen of the Fashion Marketing Faculty, and the clothes displayed on stage were all inspired by famous artworks from the Renaissance. “We gave each group a piece of painting, and they would need to think about how to recreate the outfit by

mixing the concept of Renaissance and some modern elements. They also needed to design a poster and a short video based on their work,” said the vice coordinator.

The Creative Bazaar

The creative bazaar took place right in front of the department building of the Department of Textile and Clothing during the entire Fashion Marketing Week. The bazaar features different types of booths that sell from second-hand clothes, vintage clothes donated by students in the department to crafts and desserts made by the students in the department.

The Pop-Up Shops

The pop-up shops were next to the creative bazaar, and they were also there during the entire Fashion Marketing Week. “We invited several stores related to the fashion industry to cooperate with us. We sell and promote their items on campus. The shops and stores we invited include vintage clothing stores, online and physical clothing stores, and accessory shops,” said the general coordinator of the Fashion Week.

The Static Exhibition

The Static Exhibition took place inside the department building, and the idea and concept of the exhibition were also relevant to the theme “Renaissance.” The products displayed in the exhibition were mainly from their sponsors.

The FJU Fashion Marketing Week has continued for ten years, and it is an especially important event for the students in the faculty. “The Fashion Marketing Week is important to us because our faculty don’t hold activities as frequently as the fashion design faculty and the textile design faculty do. This event is the most

representative event. Therefore, it is a good way to let more and more students know about us,” the vice coordinator said.

What’s more, through the fashion marketing week, students get to put what they have been learning into practical experiences. Holding this event requires skills such as communication skills and negotiation skills, and the vice coordinator stated that it was a real challenge for her during the process of preparation. “It isn’t as easy as how it looked to me before. It requires a lot of techniques, especially when it comes to communicating with others. It’s challenging, but I definitely learned a lot from this experience,” she said.



The Static Exhibition of the Fashion Marketing Week. Photo by Rita Hsieh.

Refashioning the Past: The 2021 Qipao Workshop

WRITTEN BY JOCINDA WU

FJU Textiles & Clothing Department holds a Qipao Workshop on November 8th in its department building as a substitute event for its annual held Qipao-themed exhibition.

To promote Qipao’s frog button craftsmanship that is on the verge of being lost, the Ministry of Culture cooperated with FJU Textiles & Clothing Department to hold a workshop on November 8th in the Textiles & Clothing building for everyone interested in Qipao culture to explore the value of Qipao in Taiwan. As one of the series of the themed events, the Qipao workshop focuses on the different techniques for frog button designs and the speaker’s personal experiences with Qipaos and her collections.

Wei-Chun Huang, the secretary of National Taiwan University’s Museum of Anthropology, led the workshop. She has been a researcher for more than 20 years and personally wears Qipao: “When I was a child, I watched Grandma wearing Qipao.” This childhood experience led to a childish ambition: “When I turn 20, I will go to Qipao shops to find a designer to make one for me.” Huang shared that once she turned 20, she really had her first Qipao done. “I felt I suddenly turned into a beauty when I put it on,” she said. Currently, Huang has many Qipaos made by

designers through the years. The Qipaos she brought to the workshop are just a part of her collections.



The Qipao collection of Secretary Huang.
Photo by Jocinda Wu.

The design of frog buttons varies according to the design of the whole Qipao, and the color stays consistent with the embroidered border. Huang introduced Rong Yi Qipao from Master Xu Qipao Studio, a Qipao studio that preserves the traditional ways of producing Qipao clothing. In the studio, there is a designer in charge of Qipao clothing and another

designer specializing in frog buttons. They work independently in the process of making the clothing, and the final piece of Qipao will be combined together after both the clothing and the frog button are completed. There are diverse styles of frog buttons, such as pipa knot, square knot, phoenix knot, flower basket knot, double ear knot, butterfly knot, and bee knot, to name a few.

Approximately 70 participants attended this workshop. Some were students from different departments of FJU, and some were Qipao researchers or aficionados from other areas in Taiwan. Wei-Di Wang, a senior student majoring in Japanese language and culture, was attracted to this event to learn more about Qipao and plan to visit Qipao shops in the future. “This workshop allows me to know more about Qipao clothing, as it (Qipao) seems so far from my daily life,” Wang said. Another participant, Wen-Jie Qiu, an alumnus from the Textiles & Clothing Department, took part in this workshop to continue to improve his knowledge about the fashion industry. “I am an interior designer, but I am interested in everything that has something to do with fashion and design.”

The students from the Textiles & Clothing Department who take the course “Research of Taiwan Clothing

Culture” taught by the Dean and Professor of College of Fashion & Textiles, Zhao-Hua Ho, are required to participate in this workshop. One student said that she is highly interested in Qipao clothing, and it might become her research topic in the future. Professor Zhao-Hua Ho concluded the workshop: “Qipao, after experiencing different eras, different trends, and different backgrounds, accomplishes different classics.”

“Every year, we hold events about Qipao, and it’s special this year because we have it as a workshop, instead of an exhibition,” said Yi-Ling Huang, the organizer of the workshop. Annually, there is an exhibition held with different themes about Qipao in the Chinese Textiles and Clothing Culture Center (at the 6th floor of the Textiles & Clothing department building) to welcome every Qipao researcher from everywhere. Huang further explained that the reason why it is not held this year is that it is currently unopened for maintenance. Fu-Lin Gao, the manager of Chinese Textiles and Clothing Culture Center, says the team is planning for a new Qipao exhibition, which will be focusing on frog button craftsmanship and the stories behind the Qipao collections in its center. Furthermore, the team hopes the Chinese Textiles and Clothing Culture Center can reopen next year.

Theatre for Life: The CFL Theatre Fundraising Event

WRITTEN BY ESTHER WANG

The College of Foreign Language Theatre (CFL Theatre) fundraising event continues to receive support as a place that sparks students’ interest in drama, introduces future career options, and is a site for colorful memories. This theatre is also more affordable for students to rent for rehearsals. But more funds are still needed to reach the NT\$ 3 million goal to afford professional training fees, recruitment fees, and equipment renewal.

Most students describe CFL Theatre as “a place like home” since it is usually the first theater they become familiar with, opening them to the world of drama. According to the English Department secretary, Julie Lee said, “the fundraising event slogan, CFL Theatre for Life (十年理圖，終生劇場), indicates that the fundraising plan will last ten years, and also suggests

those who have joined the CFL Theatre activities in any form are considered as a part of a big family.”

There’s a strong possibility that most students will have their performance debut in the CFL Theatre, stimulating their passion for drama in the future. Stan Lai, an alumnus and renowned theater director, said

that CFL Theatre is the place that catalyzed his passion for art and drama. A senior of the English Department, Young Tsai, also claimed that it was because of his experience in the 2019 Annual Play that he started to fall in love with theater. “I’ve always liked stories, and I also enjoy creating them. However, I’ve never had a chance to try theatrical performances,” Tsai recalls. “Although the 2019 Annual Play was canceled due to Covid-19, it was this experience that encouraged me to take the role of Oliver in the 2021 Senior Play.”



Outdated props in the CFL Theatre.
Photo from CFL Theatre official website.

In comparison to Arens Multi-functional Conference Centre or other venues, the CFL Theatre is more affordable for students. “If CFL Theatre doesn’t exist, students will be forced to rent rehearsal spaces outside the school,” Tsai said. Moreover, the lighting, audio, and stage props in the theater are all designed for practicing and learning. “I think the equipment designs in the CFL Theatre are relatively simple and easier to operate,” said Chloe Wu, an alumnus with experience as a stage manager.

CFL Theatre is also a site for many students’ memorable experiences. Ranita Wu, an English Department student with experience as lighting crew, said, “Students in the College of Foreign Language must participate in a play production at least once in university as a life experience since you will not experience the same sense of group work if you won’t work in the theatrical or media industry after graduation.” Wu admits that “though not every memory in the crew is wonderful, these precious but unique experiences will only happen in college,” but “the existence of CFL Theatre is important to everyone.”

“The fund could be used for renewing the equipment and space, starting a diverse selection of courses, and paying for experts, workshops, etc. to cultivate students’ insight towards drama as well as professional training,” said Lee. The most important part of the goal is not only to help continue the life of the theatre but also to let students acquire professional education in theatre management and inspire their creativity in the arts.

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