

Comments made at the Deanship Transfer Ceremony for the College of Life Sciences of National Tsing Hua University

生科院卸、新任院長交接典禮



Da Hsuan Feng 馮達旋

Vice President (Global Strategy, Planning and Evaluation)
National Tsing Hua University, Hsinchu, Taiwan, ROC

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Good morning, Vice President M. C. Yip (葉銘泉,) Dean Rong-Long Pan (潘榮隆) and Dean Yen-Chung Chang (張兗君,) colleagues from Tsing Hua's College of Life Sciences. This morning, I have the distinct honor to represent my boss, President Lih J. Chen (陳力俊,) to be here to witness the change of leadership of this important college, from Dean Pan to Dean Chang.

I consider the deanship of any college in this university a position of fundamental importance. To this end, I did some homework last night to see what I could say today that would leave something for you to chew on afterwards. So here goes.

In reading Dean Pan's bio, I realize that being the Dean of the College of Life Sciences must have been an arduous task. Otherwise, why would Dean Pan who already had a great academic and research career, enrolled in a Divinity School and received a Master of Divinity degree? His action tells me that running this College, he needed divine assistance, if not divine intervention. So a word of warning to Dean Chang, do not look so relax sitting here. You obviously lack this credential.

So for you to be successful in the next few years, you will need all the luck in world!

Seriously, the College of Life Science of Tsing Hua is impressive. Despite your youth, you seemed to have scaled successfully the steep intellectual curve. In fact, in a number of areas, you are already competing with the best of the world. After arriving in Taiwan four years ago and had the opportunity of observing Taiwan's higher education "from the inside," I was informed on numerous occasions that "deans of colleges are "empty" (空) positions." As I am a firm believer that nothing happens by accident, your success must be in part, if not all, due to having strong and visionary leadership for the last two decades.

So by the action of the entire community at the College of Life Sciences, you have already demonstrated to me that at least this deanship is not empty. Indeed, the Dean of the College of Life Sciences of Tsing Hua University is bestowed with sufficient responsibilities (although more, such as human resource responsibilities could be given) from the University administrative structure, while his/her dominion, *a la* faculty, appreciates the intellectual helmsmanship! I think if you look around the world and seek successfully operated colleges within a university, you will find this as a formula!

Let me again repeat the cliché that

"life science is the science of the 21st century."

However, the fundamental reason why life science has become so intellectually prevalent is not only it went from observational (phenomenological) to analytical (molecular and even smaller,) but that the tools, technological and intellectual, one needs to pursue these "new" and complex scientific frontiers are no longer confined to laboratory microscopes and/or biologists, but to large scale computing, data mining, imagings, and beyond. This tells me that any successful College of Life Sciences should not and cannot isolate itself from the rest of the university communities. To this end, I think it is clear that already in several arenas, such as brainscience and bioinformatics, you have already palpably tapped into Tsing Hua's strengths in sciences, engineering, and even social sciences and management

sciences. Dean Pan and all his predecessors have created the right path of this to happen. I am sure Dean Chang will take the baton and “hit the ground running!”

Finally, after coming to Tsing Hua four months ago, I noticed that one of the reasons why it is such a good university is because Hsinchu is the venue of a cluster of universities (such as our neighbor National Chiao Tung University.) In addition, surrounding Tsing Hua is a “**glowing ring**” (光環) of national facilities such as the National Synchrotron Radiation Research Center, the National Center for High Performance Computing, Industrial Technology Research Institute, National Health Research Institute and so on. Every one of these institutes/centers can have profound implications on the work you do in this College. Also, I noticed that two of Taiwan’s outstanding medical colleges, Chang-Gun (長庚大學) and Yang-Ming (陽明大學,) are closely associated with your College. I hope that Dean Chang could take this opportunity to form a “Grand Life Sciences Alliance,” and really transform this area into an identifiable life science center not only for Taiwan, not only for Asia, but for the World. I see no reason why this cannot happen!

Once again, every great university today seeks a great College of Life Sciences, NOW, not tomorrow! So, to Dean Chang, I wish you the following. There is an old Chinese saying which is “***the burden is heavy and the road is long*** (任重而道遠.)” For you, Dean Chang, with our earnest best wishes and great hope that

“the burden is heavy and the road is short (任重而道不遠!)”

Good luck!