

Introduction to the Department of English, Aletheia University Tamsui Campus

In 1965, the former Tamsui Oxford College located on a scenic hillside above Tamsui port, opened as a three-year college with nine departments based on a western-curricula model. One of these departments, the Department of Business and Secretarial Sciences, offered both business-related and English language courses to students who were interested in studying English in preparation for careers in international trade and business. In addition to business English, students were required to take additional English courses such as Freshman English, English Translation, English Composition and Conversation, and English Grammar. Many students in the department demonstrated their proficiency in English and won numerous awards nationwide in English language speech contests.

After twenty-nine years, when the college was upgraded to a four-year institution, the Department of Business and Secretarial Sciences closed; however the “Committee for English Teaching and Research” continued to operate smoothly with fully qualified and experienced full-time English language instructors. As a result, one year later in 1995, the Department of Foreign Languages and Literature with Japanese and English courses opened its doors to a new class of in-coming students.

During the following years, Tamsui College graduates who applied for English teaching jobs informed the college administration that they were often required to provide additional proof of their specialization in English. Consequently, the name of the department was revised. With the needs of Taiwan’s developing international market and economy foremost in mind, the English and Japanese courses were divided into separate language departments; therefore the English division appeared under a new name, the Department of English Language and Literature. In 2006, while applying to the Ministry of Education (MOE) for the new department name, a clerical error omitting a certain Chinese character caused the name to become the “Department of English and American Literature.” The mistake was corrected and the name today is the Department of English.

The Department of English offers over 70 courses covering a wide variety of language areas and skills. Students are required to take eight courses related to spoken and oral English; four, to grammar; twelve, to composition; and four, to translation. The rest are elective courses, covering fields of literature, culture, interpretation, translation, tourism, teaching, among others.

Students graduating from the Department of English look forward to many opportunities in higher education or prospects for career employment. Students who desire to study abroad may apply to master degree programs offered at sister universities of Aletheia University in the United States, United Kingdom, and Japan.

Students wishing to enter a profession after graduation have an excellent opportunity to enter various fields including education, tourism, business, translation, and international trade. As a result of its diversity, the Department of English has maintained a consistent enrollment while at the same time preserving high standards. Serious students with intellectual potential and academic promise feel challenged and excited to be an English major at Aletheia University.

The organization of the Department of English is student-centered. The department office is always open to accommodate student inquiries and needs. Devoted teachers keep regular office hours for advising and counseling students. Frequently, teachers communicate with students through email and Internet blogs. Teaching materials are targeted toward student interests in popular culture and media such as news, music, and movies. Department classrooms are equipped with e-podiums and other audio-visual equipment to support up-to-date teaching methods. Also teachers in the department are involved in academic research, conferences, and/or doctoral programs. Furthermore, the department encourages qualified teachers to devote additional time to student extracurricular activities such as field trips and play performances. The Department of English faculty takes an interest in the holistic development of students to encourage them to make healthy personal decisions as well as deepen their sense of social justice and the need for human compassion.

The Department of English emphasizes teaching excellence, up-to-date research, and continuing professional development among faculty members to provide the best learning environment for English majors. As a result, not only are Department of English students well-informed about the latest employment opportunities and fields for further study, but teachers with professional knowledge are ready to provide expert advice and career counseling.

Many extracurricular department events are planned each year to give students more opportunities to make new friends and enjoy their university life. The Student Association (SA) organizes exciting activities throughout the year including the Freshman Fall Camp outing, singing contest, and sports contest. In Addition, every year the senior class performs a graduation play selected from well-known dramas and musicals and directed by an experienced faculty member. It's always a memorable evening of free dramatic entertainment all in English, and students and teachers attend the performances.

In keeping with the department curriculum design to integrate English language learning with other fields and student interests, the annual play performances offer various outlets in which students can practice their English language skills. The play production involves real-life qualities such as interpretation, language fluency, physical coordination, mental acuity, leadership, emotional maturity, cultural

sensitivity, empathy, long-range planning, decision-making skills, management, creativity, arts appreciation, and numerous other interpersonal communication skills.

The list of past and upcoming department plays includes these famous titles:

1998 *Arms and the Man*, George Bernard Shaw

1999 *Salome*, Oscar Wilde

2000 *Deirdre*, J. M. Synge

2001 *Lysistrata*, Aristophanes

2002 *Some Like It Hot*, Tennessee Williams

2003 *Arsenic and Old Lace*, Joseph Kesselring

2004 *Bell, Book, and Candle*, John van Druten

2005 *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman

2006 *Jesus Christ Superstar*, Andrew Lloyd Webber, Tim Rice

2007 *Man of La Mancha*, Dale Wasserman

2008 *Sweeney Todd*, Stephen Sondheim

2009 *Skin of Our Teeth*, Thornton Wilder

2010 *Ann Frank and Me*, Cherie Bennett and Jeff Gottesfeld

2011 *Chicago*, John Kander, Fred Ebb, and Bob Fosse

2012 *Once Upon a Deserted Island*, Carlo Goldoni

2013 *The Dream of Queen Esther*

2014 *Burlesque*

2015 *Ghost*

2016 *High School Musical*

For further information, please see the department webpage:

<http://hl001.epage.au.edu.tw>