



# AFL's "Student Voice"

Volume 8 Number 2

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## OCIT's New Building!



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**OCIT's New Building**

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After several years of construction, the new building on campus is open and ready for business. It's really a sight to see, too! From the massive lobby one sees when entering the main entrance to the spaciousness of the library, there is plenty to marvel at with the new addition to the campus environment.

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Have you ever seen so many computers in one place? You can walk past rooms with rows and rows of computers. Their use seems to be very popular among students. And what views of the surrounding area! It's great to see so high up. So be sure to take a bird's eye view of the area.

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Certainly the symbol of the new addition to the campus

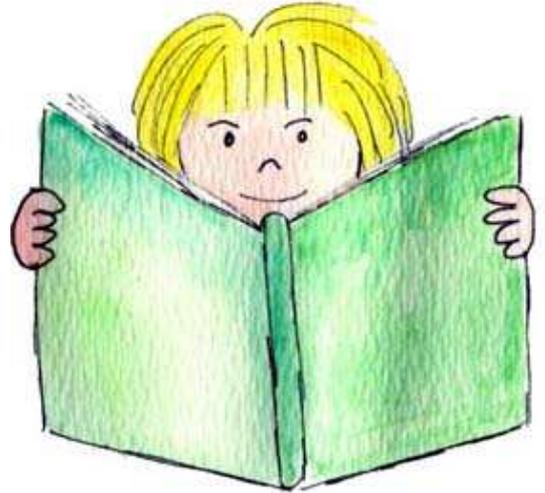
There is, however, the human side to accepting our new building. This new facility requires us to view it as a special addition to our campus. Have you walked down the stairs and found cigarette butts littering the floor, or even worse, discovered students smoking? It's only been a few months since the ceremony that officially opened the new building and some of the railing in one of the two stairways have been damaged.

So we should make a promise to ourselves to keep our new building looking as new for the near and long-term futures. Only then will it truly be an inspiration to students and faculty.

# Campus Activities that Will Help You Learn English

Last year, OCIT began a program called “English Passport,” which required students to earn points by attending activities where they could learn and improve their English. These points were to be used as part of the student’s grade in the General English courses they take in their department’s program. This program applied to all students in every department at OCIT. These points were worth ten percent of a student’s overall grade.

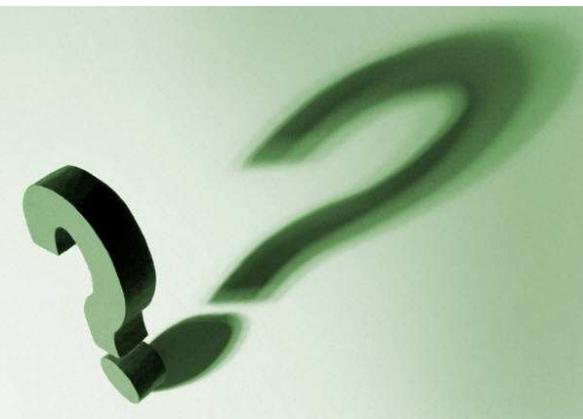
Unfortunately, many students did not participate in the English activities made available to them, or they began to participate too late to make much difference in their semester grade. Many students who would have passed before with a grade in the 60s failed with a grade in the 50s. I can tell you from my personal experience that the number of students who failed in my General English classes often doubled because many students had no or very few English Passport Points.



This same program exists this semester and will do so for the foreseeable future. And like last year, the Language Center at OCIT has developed many opportunities for students to earn points towards their grade in General English. Three of the activities that I am involved with are the Reading Club, the Tutorial Clinic, and the English-Only Lunch. All are excellent programs aimed at helping students use and improve their English abilities.

The Reading Club is designed to give students practice in reading and working on exercises to help improve their understanding of what they read. It is my sincere belief that reading can help students improve a number of language skills. I have noticed that the students in my classes who have

higher conversation abilities are often the students who are better at reading. The Tutorial Clinic provides students the chance to ask their teachers questions about their schoolwork or just sit and practice English conversation. The English-Only Lunch gives students the chance to hear their teachers talk about subjects interesting to them. Whether it be foreign festivals and holidays, differences in culture, or many other topics, they all can be explored for an hour during lunch. All these activities are low-key ways for students to enjoy learning English, and they have been developed to get you interested in using English outside of the classroom.



So don’t hesitate! Start attending your favorite programs once they begin. Start using your English outside of the classroom. It’s a no-brainer! It’s a no-lose situation! It’s easy. It’s free. And best of all, it’s fun!



## My Experience of Preparing for the TOEFL iBT by Jill

The TOEFL iBT (Test of English as a Foreign Language—Internet Based Testing) has a well-deserved reputation for being a difficult test and, in fact, is a barrier that can prevent Asian students from being accepted by American and Canadian universities. While I found this test to be one of the greatest academic challenges I've faced, I found that the preparation forced me to improve my English ability in four critical areas: reading comprehension, the ability to understand native English speakers in an academic lecture, essay writing, and the ability to answer difficult academic questions in a clear and concise way. One obstacle in TOEFL has been changed from the CBT to the iBT. There are very few people and resources in Taiwan who have experience with the new test.

When I started to gather information for this examination, I found that there were not many textbooks available to help me prepare. I also spent a lot of time looking for a school that helps students prepare for this exam. I finally attended the TOEFL training classes for two months at Chung-Hsin University during the summer. Because the cost of the course exceeded my budget, I only attended those parts that would help me with my weakest skills of speaking and writing.



The textbook I used was Barron's TOEFL iBT, which is 812 pages long. This was a lot of material for such a short course. The content was so difficult for me that I had to spend lots of time on each page. I should have started earlier and made time in my schedule to prepare, but I didn't realize how difficult it would be until later. I planned to finish reading the textbook in a month, but the reality was not what I expected. All the sections in the text had special vocabulary, and many articles were so hard that I had to fight the mental exhaustion that came with trying to learn too much in too little time. My parents would find me in the morning having fallen asleep on top of my study papers, completely worn out.

You can imagine that I didn't have great confidence for the exam. However, I had no other choice but to go for it. The test started at 10:00. My teacher wisely told me that we could start the exam from 9:00, and that I shouldn't try to be the first person to start or else I might get distracted by the other students registering. After registering, students received the four sections of the test—reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Students may receive the reading and listening parts in either short or long formats.

The reading section was the first part. I had hoped to get the short format but instead I received the long format. This was torture for me. This section covered three big articles, with each asking 13 questions. Some of the questions were pretty tricky, and I was so dizzy afterwards.

*...continued on page 8*

## English-Only Lunch Schedule

We've included next semester's schedule for the English-Lunch program. This is an excellent way for students to spend a relaxing hour with their teachers, practice their English, and earn extra points that will go towards their final grade in General English classes. Please take the opportunity to attend as many lunches as you would like.

Date	Topics	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher	Teacher
		Room 134		Room 135	
97.03.13	New Year's Resolutions	Sue 吳淑蓉	Marcella 胡學昭	Carol 吳幸玲	Kathleen 魏慧玲
97.03.20	What did you do for winter vacation?	Carol 吳幸玲	Gail 吳子芬	Alan 麥德倫	Li-Ching 洪麗菁
97.03.27	How to improve English	Alan 麥德倫	Miriam 呂仕華	Perry 安柏瑞	Kathleen 魏慧玲
97.04.03	Creativity and Education	David 白瑞登	Alan 麥德倫	Perry 安柏瑞	Scott 鐘偉立
97.04.10	The Future	Alan 麥德倫	Li-Ching 洪麗菁	Theresa 陳小屏	Kathleen 魏慧玲
97.05.01	Chinese New Year Customs	Gail 吳子芬	Alan 麥德倫	Esther 黃美珍	Darryl 畢森德
97.05.08	Career plans	Alan 麥德倫	Miriam 呂仕華	Sophia 洪麗洋	Li-Ching 洪麗菁
97.05.15	Free time activities	David 白瑞登	Alan 麥德倫	Esther 黃美珍	Scott 鐘偉立
97.05.22	Night Markets	Alan 麥德倫	Gladys 洪嫻嫻	Karen 顧意如	Scott 鐘偉立
97.05.29	Dating	Karen 顧意如	Alan 麥德倫	Gladys 洪嫻嫻	Scott 鐘偉立
97.06.05	Western Food	Ian 李宜年	Alan 麥德倫	Fang-Chun 歐芳君	Jim 辛登傑
97.06.12	TV Programs	Ian 李宜年	Theresa 陳小屏	Alan 麥德倫	Darryl 畢森德



## Welcoming Our New Teacher to OCIT: Dr Ian Lee



I'm the new assistant professor in the Department of Applied Foreign Languages at OCIT. I came to this school as an ambitious teacher committed to academic excellence. I believe that teaching professionals in the design, production, evaluation, use, and research of instructional materials and environments fits my personality and nature. From an early age I began reading intensively and became interested in the power of the written word to convey different thoughts and opinions, and the general aspect to conveying knowledge from person to person.

I chose the Department of Education to represent my first step along an education-based career path. During my years at National Taiwan University, Long Island University and Texas A&M University, I realized that my greatest interest lay in the field of teaching and the study of TESOL/ESL. I believe it is my responsibility to actively participant in the class-

room making progress since I am trained in understanding Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages. Also, the wonderful teaching and working experiences in the US have made me more sensitive to the educational awareness and the explosion of teaching and learning.

As recently teaching English in colleges, I immediately liked most of this, especially the fact that it is definitely a useful work, of great value to society and the feeling that I am directly helping students is very satisfying. Through teaching, I have gained valuable experience in classroom management and personal skills, organizing and teaching my classes, as well as the structure and nuance of the English language itself. Hence, I consider myself a laid-back teacher, knowing my profession is more than adequate for the courses I have been teaching.

Over the last few years, Taiwan's educational system has undergone a period of unceasing reform. The reform of the curriculum represents an important part of this process. Therefore, I studied new teaching methodology and management, as well as professional syllabus design, multimedia-assisted English learning, and bilingual education to face the new reform. My current interests are learner-centered instruction and the effects on culturally diverse students. I hope that I will be able to use my teaching to enrich these aspects in becoming a successful teacher.

If you have any questions, please contact me at [machilus@ocit.edu.tw](mailto:machilus@ocit.edu.tw) Thank you.



## My Experiences at Summer Camp by Wendy



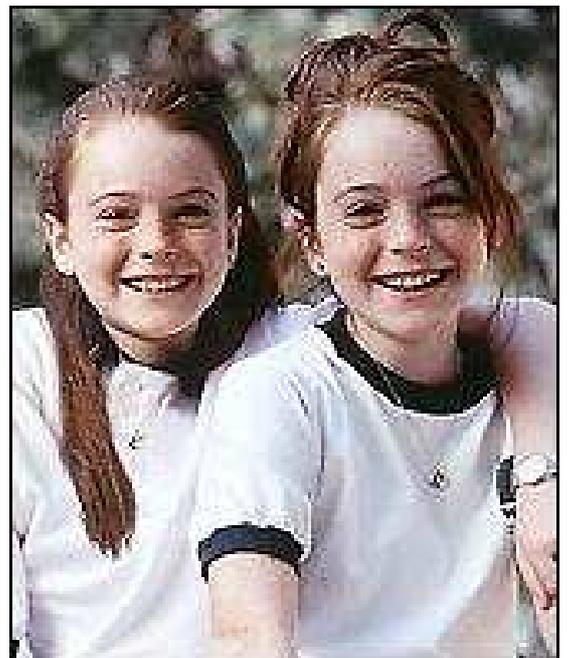
I went to the summer camp that OCIT sponsored this past summer. It was a great time for me. There were five foreign teachers: Brandon, Nico, Kent, Rafael, and QQ. My tutor was Brandon. He was handsome and humorous. We did many things that week. On Monday students needed to make a commercial. I learned how people do things together and also made lots of friends. We talked in English with other classmates and teachers on Tuesday. Now I think my skill in speaking English is better. We played games using English. It was really fun! On Friday we had our last presentation. The show was to take about twenty minutes. My class did our best. Our teacher even cried because he thought our presentation was very touching. I was very

thankful that OCIT made this great activity. I learned how to talk with a foreigner in English and many other things I have never done before. It's a great memory for me!

## Watching Movies is Fun! by Tina

Watching movies is an excellent entertainment with many advantages. To begin with, movies on TV or in movie theaters are informative and let people not feel bored. Second, movies are educational. Watching movies can enrich our knowledge with English vocabularies and other parts of wisdom. Finally, watching movies can put people at ease. They can feel relaxed and take off their strain.

To be a real movie buff is not my interest, but I have seen one movie several times. This movie was really great! It's called *The Parent Trap*. This movie is about twins who are parted from their parents by divorce. One day these two girls, who take part in the same summer camp, meet. By going through many things together, they realize that they have the same folks, and then they use various ways to get their parents back together. There is, however, a pretty woman after the affections of their father, and they must get her out of the picture. They end up obstructing the marriage and planning a reunion for their parents so they will fall in love again. I think this movie is quite good and recommend it to everyone.

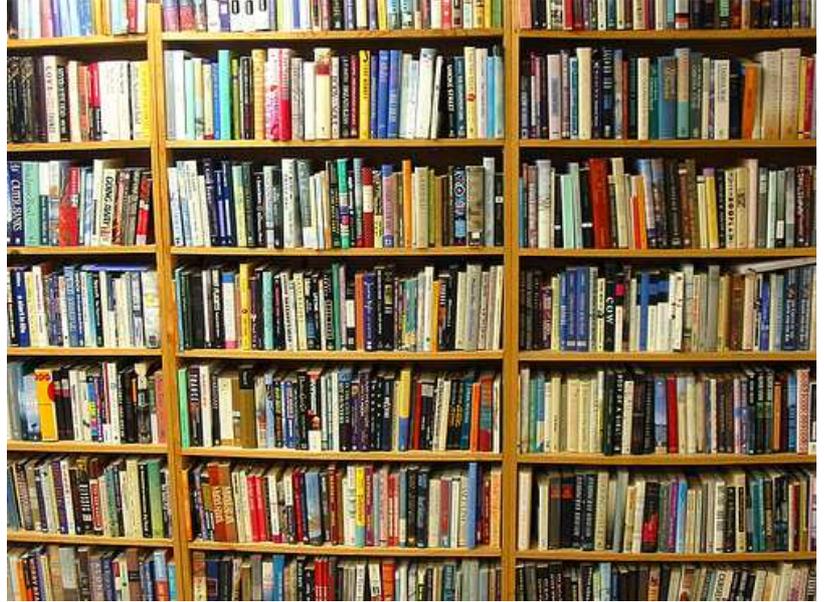


Lindsey Lohan and Lindsey Lohan in the very funny movie *The Parent Trip*



## A Place Where I Love to Go by Tina

I love to go to the bookstore and I go there as often as I can. There are many benefits to going to a bookstore. To begin with, a bookstore has a lot of books which are informative and educational that can help me find information by myself or handle homework from my school. Besides, I can go to a bookstore, and read some books to improve my temperament. Moreover, books not only broaden my mind but also enrich my knowledge. Finally, if I am tired of reading books, I can go to the stationary section to select writing materials or some cute key rings. In short, going to a bookstore has a lot of good benefits, and a bookstore is meaningful to me because it can put me at ease. By going into it, I can throw out my cares and relax. If I am tired of studying during the weekdays, I will go to a bookstore to breathe some fresh air.



**With so many books, you are never alone.**

## A Special Person in My Life by Karen



My grandfather was the most thoughtful person in the world. Although he was not a man of great attainment in his career, he was the best father and grandfather in my family. When I was a child, I never saw him get angry with any family members, especially me. I still remember when I was five years old. He was seriously sick with cancer. He became weaker and weaker, but he still gave me a big smile whenever he saw me. At that time, I had no idea what cancer was. I did not take good care of him but got into trouble very often. He never yelled at me, even though he felt uncomfortable. I lived with him for four years until he died. The day he passed away, I cried loudly but I did not know why until I grew up. I still cannot forget the memories between us. Every time I see his picture, I cry and miss him so much. I hoped I could have told him how much I love him, but I missed the last chance. The only thing I can do now is take good care of myself as he had done before.



## My Experience of Preparing for the TOEFL iBT, *cont.*

The listening section was intimidating because they gave six to nine lectures that were about nine to 13 minutes long. I was so scared that I would fall asleep from mental exhaustion, so I took a Chinese medicine called “chicken spirit” and coca cola before the exam. It did keep me awake, and I performed much better than I expected on this section.

The speaking exam tested your independent speaking and integrated speaking. The easiest parts are the first and second questions of the independent speaking. They would ask you about anything related to your life and culture, such as “How do you celebrate your birthday in your country?” and “What is your favorite movie?” The difficult parts were the integrated speaking because they have one short message and the online lecture. Then we had to combine the information into 45 seconds.

Finally, the writing section covered two parts, integrated writing for 150-225 words and independent writing for 300-350 words. To me, those two parts were not easy works to achieve, but I practiced by writing eight essays everyday, and I had one teacher to guide me. I surpassed my expectations on the writing section.

To sum everything up, if you are going to take TOEFL iBT sometime soon, it's better to start preparing *right now!* The TOEFL iBT covers a huge variety of academic subjects. Try to get the knowledge necessary whenever you have any free time and you will have a good chance to pass

## A Coincidence I Have by Sam

**co·in·ci·dence**—*noun* A striking occurrence of two or more events at one time apparently by mere chance.

It is very strange that I have a lot in common with my aunt. For instance, my aunt and I were both born in August, so we are both Leo. When my aunt studied in junior high school, she didn't choose to continue her study in senior high school. Instead, she chose to go to college, and so did I. Not only our dates of birth but our personalities are similar. My father thinks I am very choleric, and my aunt is as choleric as I am, and we both are able to focus on things very quickly. It is a coincidence that I am almost like my aunt. My father says that the only thing different between us is our gender. My aunt lives in Australia now. We often take on the phone. I think my aunt can give me a lot of useful advice because we have similar personalities. I hope I can be just like my aunt. She graduated from National Success University. Thus, I want to enter a good university, too. Still, my aunt studied harder than I do. I will keep trying to study hard and enter a good university. No matter how similar our backgrounds are, my aunt has her own life, and so do I. I won't stop trying to go to the university where my aunt graduated from. After all, nothing is impossible, right?