



FU JEN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
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July 22, 2026

Dear Freshmen,

Congratulations on your admission to the *Department of English Language and Literature* at *Fu Jen Catholic University* (FJCU)! On behalf of the faculty and staff, I am truly delighted to welcome you to your new academic home. Your decision to join our department marks the beginning of a transformative journey—one that will challenge, inspire, and empower you. Our department is proud to be one of the most esteemed English departments in Taiwan, with a long-standing tradition of academic excellence and a vibrant community of students and scholars. Over the years, we have nurtured generations of graduates who have gone on to make meaningful contributions both in Taiwan and around the world.

Reflecting on my own experience from two decades ago, I vividly remember the excitement and uncertainty that came with beginning university life. Like many of you, I faced some of the greatest adventures of my early adulthood: selecting courses, adjusting to life away from home, and immersing myself in an English-speaking academic environment. At the same time, I wrestled with the daunting question of what kind of career I wanted to pursue in the years to come. I understand that, as you step into this new chapter of your life, you may feel a mixture of curiosity, anticipation, and perhaps a bit of apprehension. These feelings are completely natural. The good news is that you have chosen a major that not only encourages personal growth but also equips you with essential skills in critical thinking, communication, and analysis—skills that will serve you well in any career path you choose. In just a few weeks, you will find yourself surrounded by fellow classmates, supportive seniors, and passionate teachers, all of whom will accompany you on this journey. As your days at FJCU unfold, you will begin to discover your strengths, define your ambitions, and shape the vision you hold for your future.

To help you prepare for this important transition, I would like to offer some background and guidance. As an English major, you are entering into a rich tradition of liberal arts education that traces its roots back nearly a thousand years to the first medieval European universities. Within this tradition, the study of language and literature cultivates the ability to communicate effectively, reflect deeply on the human condition, think critically, and engage with diverse values and cultures. At FJCU, the *Department of English Language and Literature* proudly upholds this tradition while adapting it to meet the demands of the 21st century. Our curriculum is grounded in the core disciplines of English literature, linguistics, language teaching, composition and conversation, critical thinking, and global cultural awareness. These courses lay a strong foundation not only for academic inquiry but also for your personal and intellectual development. To help you bridge the gap between academic training and future career goals, our department also offers a wide array of professionally oriented courses and real-world learning opportunities. We strongly believe, however, that in today's rapidly evolving world, a traditional English education—while still essential—is no longer sufficient on its own. Success in the job market requires ambition and initiative, as well as the ability to connect your English studies to other domains of knowledge. For this reason, the department has developed a diverse selection of interdisciplinary courses specifically designed for English majors. These include subjects such as **AI technology and programming, transmediation, business communication, creative and cultural industries, sustainability, and theatre**. Through these offerings, we aim to help you expand your academic horizons, build interdisciplinary expertise, and position yourself for meaningful and dynamic career pathways.

Although the global and local job market today often places strong emphasis on technology and may appear to downplay the value of language and the liberal arts, I want to emphasize that, as English majors, you possess qualities and capabilities that are both unique and irreplaceable. Your ability to communicate effectively, think critically, and understand others lies at the heart of what is often called soft power—the human capacity to connect, persuade, and inspire. Moreover, you are uniquely positioned to serve as a bridge between disciplines, using your training in English to forge meaningful connections with fields such as business, technology, tourism, the arts, politics, and media. This interdisciplinary strength is not merely aspirational—it has been realized time and again by our alumni over the past 60 years. Many of them have gone on to build impactful careers precisely by integrating their English studies with diverse areas of expertise. You, too, have the potential to shape such a path and to make a meaningful contribution to a rapidly changing world.

As for my advice, I encourage you to embrace the changes that college life will bring with courage and openness. University will challenge you to think in new ways, take initiative, and assume full responsibility for your own learning. For many of you, this marks the first time you truly have the power to shape your future. Learning cannot take place passively. Your growth will depend greatly on the effort you put in and the attitude you bring. In fact, your attitude will largely determine the level of success you ultimately achieve. You are expected to take an active role in your education: ask questions, engage in classroom discussions, attend classes regularly and punctually, complete assignments on time, and connect what you learn to your personal experiences and goals. That said, you are not alone. Our dedicated faculty and two warm and supportive department secretaries are always here to guide you and offer help whenever you need it. We are committed to accompanying you every step of the way throughout your academic journey.

In addition, I strongly encourage you to explore your full potential by engaging with the many opportunities available to you both inside and outside the classroom. This includes experimenting with a variety of courses, programs, service-learning projects, internships, student associations, clubs, and potential career paths. During your time at FJCU, you are especially encouraged to consider pursuing a minor, a double major, or enrolling in one of the university's cross-disciplinary programs. As a comprehensive institution with 13 colleges and over 75 academic programs, FJCU offers a wealth of possibilities to broaden your intellectual horizons and prepare for a diverse range of careers. You should also take advantage of international opportunities, such as student exchange programs, which will not only enhance your language and cultural competencies but also help you stand out in today's global job market. As you navigate these experiences, take time to develop both short-term and long-term goals—but remain flexible and open to growth and change. Thoughtfully crafting a four-year academic plan and engaging in these enriching activities will not only help you discover your strengths and passions but also shape a compelling résumé that will position you for future success.

College life is a pivotal stage that will profoundly influence the person you will become for the rest of your life. While you will enjoy a newfound sense of freedom, it is important to recognize that this freedom comes with increased responsibilities and commitments. As you explore new interests and engage in various activities, you will need to develop strong time management skills and nurture meaningful relationships. Striking a healthy balance among your academic responsibilities, personal growth, and family life is essential. Regular exercise is also important—not only for maintaining physical health, but also as a means of relieving stress. Be sure to take breaks and allow yourself time to recharge during weekends and vacations. Should you ever feel overwhelmed or disheartened, please do not hesitate to reach out to your teachers. We are here to support and guide you. At the same time, embrace moments of struggle and frustration. These experiences are not setbacks—they are integral to your growth. They help you recognize your own limitations, build resilience, and prepare for the more complex challenges you will face after graduation.

Last but not least, pursuing a degree in English does not simply mean that you are “good at English.” Rather, it signifies your commitment to engaging with a broad spectrum of disciplines—including other foreign languages, cultures, and fields of knowledge—while using English as a powerful tool for global connection and understanding. There is a common misconception that studying English is limited in scope or less practical in today's world. You may encounter such views from time to time, and they may even cause you to question your choice. But once you begin your journey in our department, you will quickly come to realize that English is not just a subject—it is a channel through which you deepen your understanding of the world, expand your intellectual horizons, and develop skills that are essential, versatile, and irreplaceable in any professional context or job market.

Your life is about to become more exciting, meaningful, and yes—at times—very busy. But rest assured, you are not alone. Our dedicated faculty, staff, and fellow students are here to support you every step of the way. I am confident that your college years will be filled with unforgettable moments of exploration, growth, and joy.

Sincerely,

Dr. Wei-Cherng Sam Jheng
Professor and Chair
Department of English Language and Literature
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