

The Value Connotation and Practical Pathways of Curriculum Ideology and Politics in Higher Education for the New Era

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ABSTRACT

Universities serve as crucial bases for cultivating professional talents and shoulder the significant mission of fostering qualified builders and reliable successors for the socialist cause. In the process of realizing Chinese modernization, the concept of "curriculum ideology and politics," which has emerged as a new approach to strengthening the educational function of courses, has broken the previous pattern where ideological and political education relied solely on dedicated courses. It addresses the fundamental question of "what kind of people to cultivate and how to cultivate them" in the new era. To advance curriculum ideology and politics, universities should explore its educational value and implications, and focus on three key dimensions—curriculum, teachers, and students—by tapping into ideological and political resources related to course content, teacher knowledge, and student experiences. This can be achieved through three main pathways: integrating teaching and educating under teacher guidance, combining explicit and implicit teaching methods, and establishing collaborative mechanisms. These approaches collectively contribute to exploring practical pathways for realizing the value of curriculum ideology and politics.

KEYWORDS

Curriculum ideology and politics; Holistic Educational Value; Practical pathways

1. INTRODUCTION

In the new era of socialism, the rapid development of information network technology has made innovation in ideological and political education at universities a crucial task. College students' ideologies exhibit both variability and malleability—they are influenced by mainstream ideologies and socialist core values while also susceptible to non-mainstream ideologies and diverse value systems. Amid evolving domestic and international environments and changing educational targets, higher education institutions face opportunities and challenges from the clash of diverse social ideologies and increasingly complex ideological struggles. Against this backdrop, effectively conducting ideological and political education has become a vital mission for higher education, with integrating ideological work throughout the entire teaching process serving as the fundamental guarantee for enhancing its influence and effectiveness.

University ideological work primarily relies on "ideological courses" and "curriculum-based ideological education": the former conducts Marxist theory education through ideological courses, while the latter integrates ideological education into professional courses to achieve synergistic educational goals. The development of "curriculum-based ideological education" requires balancing disciplinary training objectives with spiritual cultivation and value education responsibilities. By exploring the intrinsic value of professional courses and implementing educational requirements for moral cultivation, it aims to foster students' personal integrity and patriotic sentiments, thereby ensuring the realization of national objectives in cultivating specialized professionals.

2. ORGANIZATION OF THE TEXT

2.1. The Value Connotation and Requirements of Curriculum Ideology and Politics

"Course-based ideological and political education" represents a scientific educational philosophy and methodology. It embodies both an accurate grasp of the principles governing ideological and political education in higher education institutions and innovative approaches to implementing such education in the new era of socialism. Building upon the deepened framework of ideological and political curricula, this approach constructs specialized courses as vehicles for ideological and political education. Consequently, course-based ideological and political education emphasizes the educational value inherent in professional courses as platforms for ideological and political cultivation.

2.1.1. Adhering to the Educational Function of Serving Politics

The fundamental orientation of curriculum-based ideological and political education is to cultivate builders and successors for socialist construction. This is determined not only by China's national system as a socialist country under the people's democratic dictatorship, but also constitutes the political essence of curriculum-based ideological and political education. Curriculum-based ideological and political education must adhere to "serving the people, serving the governance of the Communist Party of China, serving the consolidation and development of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and serving reform, opening up, and socialist modernization," thereby nurturing generation after generation of competent talents dedicated to lifelong dedication to the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

2.1.2. Implementing the Educational Goal of Holistic Development

Course-based ideological and political education, relying on teaching subjects and educational activities, aims to strengthen value guidance and personality development. It enables students to understand principles, gain knowledge, and cultivate character through the process of knowledge transmission and skill development, thereby shaping their correct worldviews, outlooks on life, and values, ultimately promoting their all-round development in moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor education. Moral education and intellectual education are inseparable. In accordance with talent cultivation requirements, the construction of course-based ideological and political education must adhere to the principle of "cultivating virtue before cultivating talent," integrating ideological and political education into professional courses. By upholding the principles of teaching and nurturing, as well as establishing virtue through education, it employs the subtle influence of education to cultivate well-rounded professionals for the development of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

2.1.3. Following the Educational Principle of Scientific Pedagogy

As a crucial practice in higher education pedagogy and moral education, curriculum-based ideological-political education must adhere to scientific principles of nurturing. Firstly, it should uphold fundamental educational laws by building students' knowledge systems and competencies through specialized instruction, reinforcing ideological guidance to cultivate correct perspectives, values, and orientations. Integrating ideological-political education throughout the teaching process ensures alignment between academic instruction, talent development, and socialist educational objectives, fulfilling the mission of fostering virtue through education. Secondly, it aligns with moral education principles that follow the long-term, cyclical nature of integrating cognition, emotion, volition, and action. Through sustained influence, external moral cultivation becomes internalized as student character. Thirdly, it addresses contemporary college students' physical-mental characteristics—such as strong self-awareness, active thinking, and susceptibility to diverse influences. By leveraging professional course resources, it guides students to enhance their ideological-political literacy and critical reasoning capabilities.

2.2. Content sources of curriculum ideological and political resources

The effective implementation of ideological and political education in courses relies on systematic exploration of educational resources within specialized curricula. This process, grounded in syllabi and textbooks, integrates teachers' practical knowledge with students' life experiences to organically incorporate ideological and political education into professional instruction. It guides students to establish correct values while cultivating patriotic sentiments and a sense of social responsibility.

2.2.1. Ideological and Political Resources Based on Syllabi and Teaching Materials

The development of ideological and political resources for courses should first be grounded in teaching syllabi and textbooks, adhering to the guidance of Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thought of "Three Represents", the Scientific Outlook on Development, and Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. Through systematic organization and secondary development of course content, elements such as socialist core values and outstanding traditional Chinese culture will be integrated into the knowledge system. Particularly in the humanities and social sciences field, it is necessary to coordinate the three dimensions of national, social, and individual levels, consciously integrate traditional ideological and cultural resources, achieve deep integration of professional knowledge and value guidance, and highlight the educational function of courses.

2.2.2. Ideological and Political Resources Based on Syllabi and Teaching Materials

The practical knowledge within teachers' knowledge systems serves as a vital resource for ideological and political education. Originating from educators' reflection and refinement of their own teaching practices, this knowledge demonstrates distinct action-oriented and individualized characteristics (Chen Xiangming, 2009). Teachers should consciously expand and systematize their practical knowledge around educational objectives, integrating personal teaching experience with value guidance to develop instructional content that combines professional expertise with ideological-political connotations. This approach effectively supports the implementation of curriculum-based ideological education.

2.2.3. Ideological and political resources based on students' life experience

Contemporary college students demonstrate strong social engagement awareness and prioritize personal value realization, with their cognitive patterns and behavioral traits being profoundly shaped by the internet environment. Ideological and political education in curriculum design should focus on students' real-life experiences and developmental characteristics, developing educational resources closely tied to their lived experiences to enhance the relevance and appeal of teaching content. Key emphasis should be placed on incorporating materials that resonate with students, stimulate reflection, and guide ideals and convictions. This approach helps students contemplate life's meaning through academic pursuits, enhances comprehensive competencies, and ultimately achieves spiritual elevation in life.

2.3. Practical Path of Ideological and Political Education in Curriculum

The exploration of curriculum resources provides the content foundation for ideological and political education in curriculum, while its effective implementation requires systematic practical approaches. In general, the promotion of ideological and political education in curriculum can be carried out from the following three aspects to achieve a comprehensive and multi-level educational pattern.

2.3.1. Teacher Guidance Integrating Teaching and Educating

The effective implementation of ideological and political education in curriculum design primarily depends on teachers' guiding role in nurturing students. Professional educators must organically integrate knowledge transmission, skill development, and value cultivation, transcending mere

instruction to uphold the educational tradition of "imparting knowledge, guiding careers, and resolving doubts." Teachers should adopt differentiated teaching approaches, emphasizing diverse formats and effective communication while avoiding rigid lecturing. By systematically embedding ideological elements into teaching objectives, content, processes, and evaluations, they can foster students' intellectual, emotional, and value-based resonance, thereby fully realizing the guiding function of being "life mentors."

2.3.2. Teaching Methods Combining Explicit and Implicit Approaches

Ideological and political theory courses, as the main channel of explicit education, emphasize systematic value guidance; while the implementation of ideological and political education in specialized courses requires flexible strategies that combine explicit and implicit approaches. When addressing key content such as methodology and values, explicit methods should be adopted to provide clear and thorough explanations. For humanities and social science courses, instructors can start from students' life experiences and social concerns, using implicit methods like case discussions, narrative expressions, and practical experiences to guide students in independent thinking and discernment of value orientations. For instance, by telling China stories and promoting the Chinese spirit, students can be subtly influenced by ideological and political education through contextual immersion.

2.3.3. Mechanism Guarantee Through Collaborative Linkage

The effective implementation of ideological and political education in courses cannot rely solely on individual teachers' efforts, but requires the establishment of institutionalized collaborative support mechanisms. It is essential to strengthen cross-departmental and interdisciplinary collaboration, creating an integrated system for ideological education through coordinated efforts among academic affairs, student services, faculty development centers, and other stakeholders. By refining teaching design standards, conducting specialized training programs, and establishing course evaluation and incentive systems, we can form a continuous improvement cycle in educational development. Only by incorporating ideological education into the comprehensive talent cultivation framework can we achieve its regularized and high-quality advancement.

3. CONCLUSION

The development of a modern socialist nation in the new era cannot be achieved without cultivating talents. Curriculum-based ideological education has laid a solid foundation for students' comprehensive growth and talent development. Moving forward, we must adopt multiple measures to maximize the educational impact of such initiatives. This requires all faculty members to proactively embrace their "ideological education responsibilities," allowing every course to naturally embody its "ideological essence." By nurturing students' patriotic sentiments and enriching their life aspirations, we can subtly impart knowledge and values. Through this gradual process, universities will continuously enhance their capacity to fully implement the fundamental mission of moral education and talent cultivation.

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