

The Pathways to Improving the Quality of Higher Education Teaching from the Perspective of Ideological and Political Education

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Abstract: In the context of the new era, the quality of higher education teaching has become an important indicator for measuring the overall level of higher education. Ideological and political education, as a crucial support for moral cultivation, plays an irreplaceable role in higher education teaching activities. However, current higher education institutions still face problems such as insufficient integration of ideological and political elements, a mismatch between teachers' ideological and political education capabilities and their professional development needs, and inadequate reflection of ideological guidance in the teaching evaluation system during the process of improving teaching quality. Based on the perspective of ideological and political education, this paper systematically discusses the basic difficulties, principle requirements, and core pathways for enhancing teaching quality. It proposes innovative strategies including improving the curriculum ideological and political education system, building a high-quality teaching staff, and optimizing teaching organizational forms, aiming to provide theoretical reference and practical guidance for the high-quality development of higher education teaching.

Keywords: ideological and political education; higher education; teaching quality; curriculum ideological and political education; teacher development

Introduction

As an important base for cultivating builders and successors of socialism, the quality of higher education teaching is directly related to the effectiveness of talent strategies and the satisfaction of social development needs. With the new era raising higher demands on higher education, the role of ideological and political education in teaching has become increasingly prominent, influencing not only students' value formation but also the overall improvement of teaching quality. However, during actual implementation, problems such as insufficient systematic integration of ideological and political elements into teaching, the need for improvement in teachers' ideological and political education abilities, and inadequate ideological guidance in teaching evaluation systems remain prominent and require urgent attention. This paper takes ideological and political education as the entry point to explore the main difficulties in improving higher education teaching quality, analyzes the basic principles of empowering teaching quality enhancement through ideological and political education, and proposes practical core pathways. It strives to build an effective bridge between theoretical deepening and practical promotion, contributing new ideas and approaches for educational reform and high-quality development in higher education. This study holds significant theoretical importance as well as strong practical necessity and application value.

1. Major Challenges in Improving the Quality of Higher Education Teaching

1.1 Insufficient Systematic Integration of Ideological and Political Elements into Teaching Content

Ideological and political education runs through the entire process of talent cultivation in higher education, yet there remain significant shortcomings in the systematic integration of ideological and political elements into specialized courses during actual teaching. On one hand, some universities lack unified planning and coordinated guidance at the top-level design stage; the curriculum construction lacks effective alignment between overall ideological and political objectives and the specialized course system, resulting in arbitrary and fragmented insertion of ideological and political content, failing to form

a multidisciplinary collaborative educational environment. On the other hand, curriculum content often remains at the level of simple insertion of ideological and political cases, neglecting the deep integration of professional knowledge with ideological values, and lacking systematic cultivation of professional spirit, occupational ethics, and social responsibility awareness. Furthermore, in the teaching implementation phase, teachers lack scientific guidance on grasping and applying ideological and political elements; the intensity of ideological education varies across disciplines and courses, showing a tendency to emphasize professional knowledge over ideological education, and to focus on explicit rather than implicit elements. The forms of ideological integration are singular, content is superficial, and there is a lack of progressive depth, making it difficult for students to develop systematic value recognition and behavioral internalization during the learning process. This lack of systematic integration not only weakens the overall educational function of ideological and political education but also, to some extent, restricts the continuous improvement of higher education teaching quality and the comprehensive realization of talent cultivation goals^[1].

1.2 The Contradiction between Teachers' Ideological and Political Education Ability and Professional Development Needs

Teachers bear important responsibilities in knowledge transmission, skill cultivation, and value guidance within the education system. The level of teachers' ideological and political education ability directly determines the effectiveness of curriculum ideological and political construction. However, the contradiction between teachers' ideological education ability and professional development needs has become increasingly prominent. On one hand, with the increasing specialization of higher education disciplines and intensified research competition, teachers face enormous pressure in professional research, project applications, and output of achievements; ideological and political education, as an implicit educational task, is often marginalized in terms of time allocation and energy investment. On the other hand, some teachers lack awareness of the coordinated development of ideological education and professional teaching, and do not possess the concepts and methods to naturally integrate ideological elements into specialized courses, resulting in ideological education that is merely formal, failing to achieve an organic unity of knowledge transmission and value guidance. Meanwhile, the current teacher training system provides limited support for cultivating ideological and political education ability; the training content is disconnected from actual teaching needs, lacking precise training based on disciplinary characteristics and incentive mechanisms for sustainable development, which further exacerbates the contradiction between professional advancement and improvement in ideological education ability. This structural contradiction has long existed, affecting not only the comprehensive educational ability of individual teachers but also limiting the overall teaching quality and educational objectives of higher education institutions. It urgently requires mechanism innovation and systematic support for resolution.

1.3 Inadequate Reflection of Ideological Guidance in the Teaching Evaluation System

As a directive tool, the teaching evaluation system plays an important guiding and restraining role in the direction of higher education teaching. However, the current teaching evaluation systems in universities insufficiently reflect ideological guidance, becoming a significant bottleneck restricting the comprehensive improvement of teaching quality. On one hand, existing evaluation systems mostly rely on quantitative indicators, excessively focusing on students' mastery of knowledge, teachers' research outputs, and classroom teaching effects—"explicit" achievements—while paying insufficient attention to teachers' ideological education behaviors, students' value formation, and cultivation of social responsibility—"implicit" outcomes. This weakens or even marginalizes ideological education within the evaluation system. On the other hand, many universities lack scientific and operable evaluation indicators for ideological education effectiveness in course assessments, teacher appraisals, and graduation evaluations. Ideological education outcomes are often replaced by simple questionnaires or formal summaries, which cannot truly reflect educational effectiveness. Additionally, the results of teaching evaluation are disconnected from teacher incentive mechanisms, failing to directly link ideological education outcomes with teacher promotion, rewards, or honors, further weakening teachers' intrinsic motivation to develop curriculum ideological education. This shortcoming in the evaluation system not only affects the emphasis placed on ideological guidance in teaching design and implementation but also results in insufficient impetus for educational reform in universities. It is necessary to construct a scientific, reasonable evaluation system that balances talent cultivation and educational goals, to truly play a positive guiding role in improving teaching quality^[2].

2. Basic Principles of Empowering Teaching Quality Improvement through Ideological and Political Education

2.1 Upholding the Fundamental Guidance of Cultivating Virtue and Talent

Cultivating virtue and talent, as the fundamental task of higher education, serves as the core guidance for empowering teaching quality improvement through ideological and political education. Upholding this guidance requires universities to consistently prioritize the cultivation of students' moral character, values, and sense of social responsibility throughout the entire education and teaching process. First, universities must clearly integrate moral education objectives with professional goals when formulating training programs and curriculum systems, not only cultivating students' solid professional skills and innovative spirit but also emphasizing the shaping of correct worldviews, outlooks on life, and values, thereby promoting resonance between professional education and character development. Second, classroom teaching should deeply explore the ideological values embedded in various disciplines by employing diversified teaching methods such as case studies, situational guidance, and problem discussions, so that students subtly receive value guidance while learning professional knowledge, achieving a balanced emphasis on knowledge transmission and value shaping. Moreover, realizing the cultivation of virtue and talent requires attention to teachers' moral exemplarity. Teachers are not only transmitters of knowledge but also leaders of values; they should inspire students with noble personalities and firm ideals, guiding students to develop correct value orientations and positive life attitudes. Currently, universities should deepen the renewal of educational philosophies, break away from utilitarian tendencies focused solely on scores, admissions, papers, or titles, establish evaluation standards that combine moral integrity with talent and unify knowledge with practice, and build institutional safeguards conducive to achieving the goal of cultivating virtue and talent ^[3].

2.2 Emphasizing the Construction of a Comprehensive Education System Covering All Staff, All Processes, and All Dimensions

In the context of the new era, single classroom teaching can no longer meet the educational demands of universities. To empower teaching quality improvement through ideological and political education, it is essential to adhere to the principles of educating all staff, throughout the entire process, and in all dimensions, constructing a collaborative, efficient, and comprehensive education system. First, educating all staff emphasizes that all university faculty and staff, especially teachers, counselors, and administrative personnel, should become key forces in education. Education should not be the exclusive responsibility of ideological and political course teachers but should become a conscious commitment of every teacher in professional teaching, academic guidance, and life counseling. Through the combined efforts of various roles, a synergy of full participation, continuous accompaniment, and comprehensive coverage can be formed. Second, educating throughout the entire process requires education to run through all stages of students' university life—from freshmen orientation, daily classroom teaching, to graduate employment guidance—forming a systematic, coherent, and progressively advancing educational chain. At each growth node, attention should be paid not only to professional skill development but also to ideological guidance and character formation, ensuring that education remains continuous and unwavering. In addition, educating in all dimensions highlights breaking the traditional boundaries between in-class and out-of-class education, expanding education efforts to campus culture construction, club activities, social practice, volunteer service, innovation and entrepreneurship, and other platforms and fields. It makes full use of diverse spaces such as second and third classrooms, enriching educational carriers and enhancing educational effectiveness. Meanwhile, universities need to value the exploration of integrated online and offline education models, fully leveraging information technology's advantages in resource integration, personalized guidance, and precise services to achieve wide sharing and accurate delivery of educational resources. To ensure the efficient operation of this comprehensive education system, universities should improve organizational structures, strengthen work mechanisms, increase resource investment, enhance training support, and establish assessment and incentive systems, guaranteeing the fulfillment of educational responsibilities. This will truly form a "big ideological and political" work pattern, promoting coordinated and aligned efforts between ideological and political education and teaching quality improvement.

2.3 Strengthening the Ideological, Contemporary, and Targeted Nature of Educational and Teaching Activities

Educational and teaching activities constitute the main battlefield for universities to implement

ideological and political education and improve teaching quality. Their ideological, contemporary, and targeted nature directly determines the effectiveness of education and the overall teaching quality. Strengthening the ideological nature requires educational activities to consistently center on value guidance, adhering to correct political directions, value orientations, and educational goals. In the design of each course, universities should deeply explore and inherit the ideological resources contained in China's excellent traditional culture, revolutionary culture, and advanced socialist culture, organically integrating examples of social change with professional knowledge, so that students continuously strengthen their ideals and beliefs, enhance the "Four Confidences," and establish correct values during learning. Strengthening the contemporary nature emphasizes that educational activities must closely align with the social development needs of the new era and the growth characteristics of young students, reflecting innovation and foresight in educational content. Course content, teaching cases, and research projects should be updated timely, responding to technological frontiers, industrial transformation, and social hotspots, making classroom teaching distinctly contemporary and practically relevant, thereby enhancing students' awareness of the times and social adaptability. Strengthening the targeted nature requires educational activities to be precisely designed based on the characteristics of different disciplines, cognitive rules, and developmental needs of different student groups, practicing differentiated instruction and tailored education. For students with different professional backgrounds, academic stages, and developmental orientations, universities should develop differentiated teaching plans, set diversified educational goals, and effectively enhance the pertinence, effectiveness, and scientific nature of education. To effectively strengthen the ideological, contemporary, and targeted aspects of educational activities, universities need to improve teacher training systems, reinforce mechanisms for synchronously advancing ideological and political education with professional courses, and establish sound teaching quality monitoring and feedback systems to continuously optimize the education and teaching process, thereby steadily enhancing the educational effectiveness of ideological and political education and the overall quality of teaching^[4].

3.Core Paths to Improving the Quality of Higher Education Teaching

3.1 Improving the Ideological and Political Education Curriculum System, Emphasizing the Integration of Professional Characteristics and Ideological-Political Functions

The construction of ideological and political education within curricula serves as a crucial lever for enhancing the quality of higher education teaching and is a key link in deepening the "all-round education" system. The primary task in improving this curriculum system is to establish the concept of educating through all courses, breaking the dualistic opposition between ideological-political courses and professional courses, and organically integrating ideological-political elements into various professional courses to achieve a bidirectional connection between knowledge transmission and value guidance. Each professional course should, according to disciplinary characteristics and professional development laws, systematically sort out the ideological and political education resources it contains and design teaching content with distinct professional attributes, profound ideological connotations, and high educational significance. By scientifically planning teaching objectives, optimizing syllabi, and innovating teaching cases, it ensures that every course has both depth in professional knowledge transmission and richness in ideological and political education, truly achieving the effect of "moistening things silently."

Furthermore, emphasis should be placed on the organic unity of professional characteristics and ideological-political functions. Different disciplines should adhere to differentiated design and precise implementation in curriculum ideological and political education. Science and engineering courses can highlight educational elements such as serving the country through science and technology, innovation-driven development, and engineering ethics; humanities and social science courses should emphasize value guidance in cultural confidence, historical responsibility, and social care. By deeply excavating the educational elements of national consciousness, social responsibility, and professional ethics embedded in various professional knowledge systems, students can naturally receive ideological cleansing and spiritual nourishment during their professional studies.

To ensure the effective operation of the curriculum ideological and political education system, universities need to establish and improve quality assurance mechanisms, refine the curriculum ideological and political teaching evaluation system, and strengthen the whole-process tracking and continuous improvement of teaching design, classroom instruction, and learning outcomes. Through policy guidance, training enhancement, and exemplary demonstration, the overall ability of teachers to design and implement curriculum ideological and political education can be comprehensively improved,

ensuring that this construction truly takes root and achieves results [5].

3.2 Building a High-Quality Faculty Team, Strengthening the Capacity for Ideological and Political Education

Deepening ideological and political education for teachers is key to constructing a high-quality faculty team. Universities should regularly carry out education on ideals and beliefs as well as the construction of teacher ethics and professional conduct, guiding teachers to establish the values of educating through teaching, moral integrity in personal conduct, scholarship, and instruction. Through various forms such as specialized training, exchange seminars, and practical experiences, teachers' political, ideological, and behavioral consciousness in fulfilling the fundamental task of cultivating virtue and talent should be enhanced, thereby ensuring adherence to correct value guidance in education and teaching.

Accelerating the professional development of teachers is another important measure to improve education quality. Universities should systematically improve teachers' abilities in teaching design, classroom organization, and teaching evaluation, focusing on curriculum ideological and political education, new technology application, and teaching reform innovation. A scientific and reasonable teacher development support system should be established, with multi-level and multi-domain training platforms, encouraging teachers to participate in internal and external exchanges, study visits, further studies, and enterprise practice, broadening horizons and enhancing capabilities.

On this basis, universities should explore reforms in evaluating teachers' educational capacities, incorporating participation in curriculum ideological and political construction, educational effectiveness, and students' ideological guidance into evaluation systems for professional title reviews, job appointments, performance assessments, and commendations. This strengthens teachers' sense of responsibility and mission in ideological and political education, further promoting comprehensive improvement in teacher quality and educational ability.

3.3 Optimizing Teaching Organization Forms, Integrating Technological Empowerment with Value Guidance

In the new era, improving higher education teaching quality must conform to the trends of informatization and intelligence, actively exploring the optimization of teaching organization forms, fully utilizing technological empowerment, while adhering to value guidance as the core, and achieving deep integration of technological innovation with ideological and political education. First, in teaching mode reform, universities should vigorously promote diversified teaching modes such as blended teaching, flipped classrooms, and project-based learning, breaking the traditional one-way indoctrination model, enhancing classroom interaction, participation, and generativity. By widely applying information technology, a new teaching ecosystem combining online and offline, complementary in-class and extracurricular activities, and school-based and external linkage can be constructed, realizing personalized, diversified, and intelligent teaching processes.

Second, in teaching content and resource construction, universities should make full use of emerging technologies such as big data, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and blockchain to develop high-quality digital teaching resources, such as virtual simulation experimental teaching platforms, intelligent learning systems, and micro-course resource libraries, improving the accessibility, shareability, and customizability of teaching resources. Meanwhile, in content design, ideological and political education elements should be consciously integrated into various teaching resources, using vivid cases, rich scenarios, and real typical stories to guide students in immersive learning experiences to receive ideological cleansing and value shaping, thereby enhancing the attractiveness and influence of education.

In teaching management and evaluation system innovation, universities should introduce intelligent teaching management platforms to achieve data-driven management of the teaching process, real-time tracking of learning behaviors, and intelligent analysis of learning outcomes, promoting scientific, precise, and dynamic teaching organization and management. Especially in learning evaluation, the exploration and formation of a comprehensive evaluation system combining formative and summative assessments, with equal emphasis on knowledge mastery and value guidance, should be pursued to truly use evaluation to promote teaching, learning, and system construction, comprehensively improving teaching quality and the effectiveness of ideological and political education [6].

Conclusion

The improvement of higher education teaching quality cannot be separated from the strong guidance and deep integration of ideological and political education. By improving the ideological and political curriculum system, universities can promote the organic unity of professional education and value guidance; by building a high-quality faculty team, universities can strengthen teachers' capacity for ideological and political education; by optimizing teaching organization forms, universities can enhance the ideological depth and timeliness of teaching activities. These measures enable higher education institutions to effectively address current challenges and promote connotative development of education and teaching quality. In the future, universities should further strengthen institutional innovation and resource assurance, promote the deep integration of ideological and political education with various disciplinary fields, explore diversified education models based on new technological contexts, and continuously expand the depth and breadth of educational reform, so as to meet the new requirements for talent cultivation under the high-quality development goals of the new era.

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