

## Original Paper

# Reflection and Exploration of Ideological and Political Education in the Curriculum—A Case Study of the University in Shijiazhuang City

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### **Abstract**

*In the context of the new era, higher education is not just about imparting knowledge, but also about cultivating students' ideological and moral qualities and humanistic spirit. Therefore, ideological and political education integrated into all courses has become an important component of higher education. The construction of curriculum ideological and political education has gradually become a new exploration and challenge for ideological and political education in universities. Curriculum ideological and political education is a comprehensive educational philosophy, which includes the purpose of fostering virtue through education, the practice subject being all teachers, relying on courses, and combining explicit and implicit education. Its characteristics include the humanistic teaching philosophy, the integration between courses, the potential influence of methods, and the permanence of influence. The aim is to integrate ideological and political education into all types of courses, imperceptibly influencing students' ideological consciousness and behavior, and taking morality education as the fundamental task of education. Strengthening the construction of curriculum ideological and political education is conducive to improving the effectiveness and quality of ideological and political education in universities, cultivating new-era youth with ideals, who dare to take responsibility, can endure hardships, and work hard. The practical path of "curriculum ideological and political education" from the perspective of cultivating students' moral character and enhancing their ideological awareness is to start from the teaching philosophy and teaching content design to improve educational quality, improve the assessment and evaluation system of curriculum ideological and political education construction, strengthen campus cultural environment construction such as optimizing campus environment, improving classroom teaching environment, providing modern learning support services.*

**Keywords**

*higher education, curriculum ideological and political education, foster virtue through education*

Curriculum ideological and political education clarifies the requirements for the ideological and political construction of college students in the development of the new era. The implementation of curriculum ideological and political education in universities can enable universities to effectively implement the concept of cultivating morality education as the fundamental task of education, build a three-dimensional education pattern, and achieve the educational goal of cultivating students' comprehensive quality. Universities should accurately grasp the connotation and characteristics of curriculum ideological and political education, strengthen the top-level design of ideological and political education in the curriculum based on attention, and build an educational and teaching scheme and system that teachers and students jointly participate in and promote. The following are some thoughts and explorations on curriculum ideological and political education.

**1. The Connotation and Characteristics of Curriculum Ideological and Political Education**

There is no clear definition of the concept of "curriculum ideological and political education" in the academic community. Through the literature review, there are roughly three views: curriculum ideological and political education is a kind of curriculum (Qiu Weiguang et al., n.d.) which is regarded as a curriculum and compared with ideological and political education courses; curriculum ideological and political education is an educational concept (Zhu Guangqin et al., n.d.); curriculum ideological and political education is both an educational concept and an ideological and political education method (He Yuhai et al., n.d.). This article regards curriculum ideological and political education as an educational concept to elaborate.

**1.1 The Connotation of Ideological and Political Education in the Curriculum****1.1.1 The Purpose Is to Foster Virtue through Education**

The fundamental purpose of curriculum ideological and political education is to achieve the goal of fostering virtue through education, which is also the original intention and mission of education. Universities, as the main position for educating people, should implement the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education throughout the entire teaching process to achieve "three whole people-oriented education".

**1.1.2 The Practice Subject Is all Teachers**

The long-term, complex, and systematic work of teaching and educating people is not only the responsibility of ideological and political education teachers, but all teachers should bear the mission of both teaching and educating people. Curriculum ideological and political education requires all teachers to organically combine teaching with educating people, to achieve the organic unity of imparting knowledge, cultivating ability, and guiding values, forming a collaborative education force, and building a big ideological and political education ecosystem.

### 1.1.3 Relying on Courses as the Basis

Curriculum ideological and political education does not rigidly associate professional knowledge with ideological and political education but exists in reliance on explicit ideological and political elements in courses. For example: excellent traditional culture in literature and history courses, the scientific spirit in science courses, and content reflecting the core values of socialism. In the teaching process, we should strengthen thinking and exploration, and rely on course content to promote the development of curriculum ideological and political education.

### 1.1.4 Combining Explicit Education with Implicit Education

In the educational system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, ideological and political work runs through the entire process of talent cultivation. Based on this, curriculum ideological and political education aims to deepen the reform of teaching objectives, content, methods, evaluation, and other aspects of various courses, integrate political beliefs, core values, personality cultivation, and other ideological and political education elements into course knowledge imparting, reflecting both the scientific nature of explicit education, but also highlighting the benefit of implicit education that can nurture without people noticing it, opening up the last mile of ideological and political education.

## 1.2 Characteristics of Curriculum Ideological and Political Education

### 1.2.1 The Humanistic Nature of Teaching Philosophy

Curriculum ideological and political education should take students as the center, pay attention to their physical and mental development rules in the teaching process, provide care and satisfaction for their spiritual growth needs, and choose ways that they accept and like to carry out teaching, to achieve the goal of improving their humanistic quality and social responsibility. On the other hand, it should use excellent human culture and national spirit as a carrier to cultivate students' minds, fully utilize educational resources reflecting the cultural characteristics of young college students, and combine students' ideological and political education with autonomous development, to increase the attractiveness and infectivity of the curriculum, and enhance the effectiveness of ideological and political education.

### 1.2.2 The integration of Courses

Curriculum ideological and political education is not an independent course but achieves the integration of knowledge and ability in the course itself by exploring the ideological and political elements contained in the course. The purpose is to achieve "the curriculum carries ideological and political education and ideological and political education is embedded in the curriculum."

### 1.2.3 The Potentiality of Influence

It means that morality is embedded in the curriculum. Compared to ideological and political courses, curriculum ideological and political education functions through integrating moral education elements into knowledge teaching, allowing students to accept socialist core values unconsciously, to inherit and develop excellent traditional culture, gradually form correct values, shape a complete personality, and achieve the subtle effect of education

#### 1.2.4 The Lasting Impact of Implementation Effect

The implementation effect of curriculum ideological and political education is profound. Curriculum ideological and political education is the combination of curriculum content and ideological and political content. From the perspective of psychology, there should be two points of intersection, one is excited, and the other is easy to be awakened, to achieve a more far-reaching and lasting influence.

## **2. Investigation and Analysis of the Implementation Status of “Curriculum Ideological and Political Education” in Universities - Taking Shijiazhuang University as an Example**

### *2.1 Survey Note:*

Shijiazhuang University is a municipal university, which is the typical of Shijiazhuang's universities. Therefore, this school was chosen as the main object of investigation. Following the “Guiding Outline for the Construction of Curriculum Ideological and Political Education in Institutions of Higher Learning” issued by the Ministry of Education (higher education. No.3 2020), the “Work Plan for the Comprehensive Promotion of Curriculum Ideological and Political Construction in Institutions of Higher Learning” issued by the Hebei Provincial Department of Education (higher education. No.26 2020), and the “Work Plan for Curriculum Ideological and Political Construction in Shijiazhuang University” (the party organization of Shijiazhuang University No.27 2021), our university has comprehensively promoted the construction of curriculum ideological and political education, enhanced the effectiveness of cultivating morality education, and improved the quality of talent cultivation. We have emphasized the coordination of the educational roles of ideological and political theory courses, general education courses, practical education courses, and professional courses, and actively carried out pilot projects for curriculum ideological and political teaching reform.

In 2021, one demonstration center for curriculum ideological and political education was approved in Hebei Province, three demonstration courses for curriculum ideological and political education were approved in Hebei Province, and 13 demonstration centers for curriculum ideological and political education were approved at the university level. In the past five years, 20 demonstration centers for curriculum ideological and political education have been established, 20 teachers and 20 outstanding teaching teams for curriculum ideological and political education have been selected, 100 demonstration courses for curriculum ideological and political education have been launched, and 100 research projects for curriculum ideological and political education reform have been established, forming a good atmosphere for the extensive and in-depth development of curriculum ideological and political education.

To comprehensively investigate the construction of curriculum ideological and political education in Shijiazhuang and promote the further development of curriculum ideological and political education, this article focuses on the teachers and students of Shijiazhuang University, and conducts questionnaire surveys on 542 students and personal interviews on 6 full-time teachers from the perspectives of students and teachers, respectively, to investigate and analyze the construction of curriculum ideological and

political education in the university, understand the current situation of promoting curriculum ideological and political education, and identify and point out the existing problems. On this basis, the necessity and feasibility of construction are pointed out.

A total of 542 questionnaires were randomly distributed, and 542 valid questionnaires were obtained. The survey subjects were undergraduate students in school.

The questionnaire included 19 questions, including 13 multiple-choice questions, 5 multiple-choice questions, and 1 open-ended question. As this article explores from the perspective of professional courses, the content of the questionnaire was designed based on the teaching content of professional courses, to investigate students' true thoughts about ideological and political education in professional courses. The questions mainly involve the following aspects of information: students' personal information, political awareness and value recognition, acceptance and recognition of ideological and political education in professional courses, evaluation, and suggestions for teachers teaching content and methods. In terms of personal interviews, the interviewees were all full-time teachers who were responsible for teaching professional courses. The interviews mainly focused on the curriculum setting, practices, and problems in the practice process, and how to develop ideological and political education in professional courses in the future. These three aspects provide an in-depth understanding of teachers' practice, self-reflection, and related suggestions for ideological and political education in professional courses.

## *2.2 Analysis of Survey Results*

Through questionnaire surveys and interviews, we have learned about the current development status of curriculum ideological and political education in specialized course teaching at Shijiazhuang University, as well as the views and suggestions of teachers and students on curriculum ideological and political education. Here is a brief analysis of the relevant situation.

### *2.2.1 Analysis of the Current Situation*

#### *1) Overall situation*

The surveyed students involve four grades, with freshmen and sophomore students accounting for the majority, respectively accounting for 33.21% and 53.51%. The interviewed teachers teach different majors and courses, including "Chinese History and Literature", "College Chinese", "College Student Career Planning and Employment and Entrepreneurship", "Modern Chinese History", "College Physics" and "Kindergarten Activity Design and Guidance". From the data obtained through the survey, the ideological and political education implemented in our school's professional course teaching is in good condition. Due to objective conditions, interviews with teachers have not been able to be conducted on a large scale, and in-depth interviews have been conducted based on the principle of less but better to achieve a see the leopard through the mark effect. From the research, it can be seen that ideological and political education has been integrated into professional course teaching and has been accepted by most students.

#### *2) Details of curriculum ideological and political education*

Through statistical analysis of student questionnaires and teacher interviews, the following conclusions are obtained:

Curriculum design takes teaching and educating people as its main purpose. Most students believe that curriculum ideological and political education not only helps them learn professional knowledge but also has a leading effect on personal quality cultivation. Because nearly 70% of students believe that classroom teaching not only imparts professional knowledge but also integrates personal quality education. A few students think that it adds relevant content about the party and country or personal career planning. The interviewed teachers have designed professional course teaching based on the construction concept of curriculum ideological and political education, that is, digging and integrating ideological and political resources while imparting professional knowledge to strengthen ideological and political education.

Students' concepts are easily influenced by reality. The topics that students pay more attention to in classroom learning are ranked according to their degree of attention, which are social life, current political topics, national culture, and professional-related content. Among them, 81.92% of students are most interested in social life topics. The most popular social topics are also the ones that most easily affect the direction of students' values. Interviews show that the interviewed teachers are based on teaching interaction and timely understanding of student's needs, so most teachers in the classroom will appropriately add current political hotspots according to the course content to improve students' enthusiasm in class.

Students' practical opportunities are relatively few. 79.34% of students believe that teaching methods should provide more practical opportunities and classroom interaction. Interviews show that teachers are deeply aware of time constraints, insufficient opportunities, and other conditions, and the proportion of practical activities is low. Therefore, in the process of building curriculum ideological and political education, while ensuring the teaching content, we should increase students' practical opportunities. Even if they cannot go out to participate in practice, we will reserve some interactive opportunities in the classroom.

### 2.2.2 Necessity and Feasibility of Implementation

These findings also reveal problems in the implementation of curriculum ideological and political education: the impact of diverse social values on college students; the low effectiveness of ideological and political education in schools, mainly in the areas of teacher, teaching content, teaching methods, educational connection, and other teaching design issues; the lack of systematic curriculum ideological and political education, mainly due to the imperfection of the institutional mechanism and the need to improve the ideological and political education ability of teachers. Therefore, the implementation of curriculum ideological and political education is necessary and feasible.

Necessity: First, it is the requirement of universities to implement the fundamental task of cultivating morality education. President Xi Jinping pointed out in his speech that we must adhere to the fundamental task of cultivating morality education. We should strive to cultivate socialist builders and

successors who are well-rounded in morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor, and form a higher-level talent training system. We should integrate the cultivation of morality education into all aspects of ideological and moral education, cultural knowledge education, and social practice education, and run through all fields of basic education, vocational education, and higher education. This is the fundamental purpose of all activities in universities. Second, it is necessary to achieve the connotative development of higher education. The curriculum ideological and political education plays an important role in enhancing the effectiveness of ideological and political education. Schools and teachers should steadily promote the construction of curriculum ideological and political education from the aspects of curriculum system, discipline connection, education effect, and education connection, to improve the quality of higher education (Wang, 2018). Third, it is beneficial to the all-round development of students. The main business of students is to study. In the context of emphasizing the core qualities of students, the construction of curriculum ideological and political education requires the combination of professional knowledge and ideological and political content, as well as the combination of knowledge impartment and value guidance in the process of education and teaching, to improve the comprehensive quality of students.

Feasibility: First, the mutual influence between teachers and students is profound. Students tend to emulate teachers, and teachers' words and deeds have a profound impact on students. By enhancing the ideological and political education ability of teachers, especially professional course teachers, we can not only teach students, but also educate them, and subtly integrate ideological and political education into daily life and the classroom. Second, various courses themselves contain ideological and political education elements and functions. The ideological and political education content of the curriculum refers to relying on the curriculum, and many ideological and political education elements are contained in literature and history, science, and engineering courses. Third, a good political ecological environment. From national policy guidance to local government support to the attention of schools at all levels, the atmosphere and environment of cultivating all personnel have taken shape.

### **3. Explore the Practical Path of Curriculum Ideological and Political Education in College**

#### *3.1 Improve the Level of Education and Teaching*

Actively change the teaching philosophy of teachers. After the new curriculum reform, teachers began to change their teaching concepts and re-examine the relationship between teaching and learning. From the previous cramming teaching to the optimization of cultivating morality education, it fully reflects the importance of our country's diversified cultivation of talents. Teachers should consider the so-called "cultivating morality", "how to cultivate morality", and "what kind of person to cultivate" when carrying out teaching work. College teachers should deeply understand the significance of ideological and political work in the curriculum, recognize the importance of curriculum ideological and political education, change their concepts promptly, enhance their sense of responsibility for ideological and political education, and optimize educational thought. At the same time, it should be noted that

curriculum ideological and political education and ideological and political courses are in the same direction. In addition to ideological and political courses, other disciplines also need to be closely integrated with curriculum ideological and political education. Universities should regularly train teachers on the concept and teaching methods of curriculum ideological and political education, and improve teachers' ideological and political quality and teaching method level. At the same time, teachers are encouraged to participate in the teaching reform practice of curriculum ideological and political education and constantly accumulate experience.

Integrate professional knowledge with ideological and political education. Professional courses and practical courses account for a large proportion of college students' curriculum arrangements. These courses cultivate students' professional literacy and practical abilities through the teaching of professional knowledge and practical skills. Universities should integrate ideological and political education content in a targeted manner according to the characteristics of different majors. For example, engineering majors can condense elements such as patriotism, political identity, and cultural self-confidence in professional courses; liberal arts majors can guide students to think about social phenomena and hot issues in combination with course content. When designing curriculum ideological and political education, teachers can consider how to closely integrate ideological and political content with these courses, and at the same time, consider adding practical sessions that students enjoy, so that students can improve their ideological and political level while learning professional courses imperceptibly.

### *3.2 Improving the Assessment and Evaluation System for Curriculum Ideological and Political Construction*

To ensure the smooth implementation of curriculum ideological and political construction, universities should establish a mechanism for assessing and evaluating teachers who participate in the construction. The assessment content should include the teacher's understanding of curriculum ideological and political concepts, the use of teaching methods, and student participation and feedback. When establishing the assessment and evaluation system, attention should be paid to setting up assessment and evaluation from macro design and teaching process, clarifying the specific direction of evaluation and assessment. When conducting assessment and evaluation from macro design, schools should examine whether teachers have organically integrated ideological and political construction into teaching content when designing course teaching, combined with deepening knowledge points to educate students in ideological and political aspects. In terms of the teaching process, it is necessary to examine whether teachers have set teaching standards containing ideological and political elements in teaching and whether they have timely guided students to think about their social value. In addition, it is necessary to strengthen teaching supervision and improve the implementation of a random attendance system (Li, 2020).



### *3.3 Strengthening Campus Cultural Environment Construction*

For college students, the quality of the learning environment has a profound impact on their learning and growth. A high-quality and distinctive learning environment not only reflects the spiritual outlook of a university, but also helps cultivate students' good habits, noble moral character, and correct outlook on life and values. Therefore, it is very important to create a good learning environment and optimize the existing learning atmosphere.

Firstly, we should create a beautiful campus environment. To a certain extent, the campus environment will not only affect students' psychology but also stimulate their internal potential, enabling them to carry out creative learning in a limited time. Therefore, it is necessary to plan a reasonable and scientific campus environment, build campus culture, and achieve the dual purpose of educating people at the same time. Let every corner of the campus be a landscape, every landscape implying profound educational significance, playing an educational role of edification and inspiration. For example, we can build campus cultural walls to not only make the campus more beautiful but also increase the educational effect.

Secondly, we should create a good classroom teaching environment. The classroom is one of the places where students stay longest, which will also have a subtle influence on them, stimulating their ambition and gradually establishing their correct outlook on life and values. For example, the law school's mock court, graffiti on the classroom walls, and positive energy words; the teacher education college training center corridor hangs with famous quotes from educational celebrities and the Marxist college's unique corridor culture (Chinese modern history); also, public classrooms feature transformation such as the information technology college corner empty classroom transformed into a cultural leisure promenade equipped with soft sofas, study tables and chairs, and winter national flags. It is a good place for study and rest.

Finally, we should provide modern learning support services. In addition to having rich learning resources, libraries also provide personalized services and support for the learning environment. Moreover, the use of libraries by today's college students is no longer limited to book borrowing and self-study. Therefore, schools should also attach importance to the role of libraries in learning support. Shijiazhuang University fully utilizes library venues, and regularly holds special exhibitions and lectures such as the launch of new book exhibitions, interpretation of traditional festival culture in Yan Zhao, etc. (Zhu, 2018).

## **4. Conclusion**

In summary, when implementing the curriculum ideological and political education in college, universities should strengthen the top-level design, integrate it into professional course teaching, strengthen the construction of teacher teams, establish an assessment mechanism, strengthen the practice teaching link, and innovate teaching methods to promote and strengthen the construction of curriculum ideological and political education. At the same time, teachers should pay attention to fully understand

the connotation of curriculum ideological and political education, timely change their teaching concepts, take the cultivation of morality education as the ultimate goal of teaching, clarify the coordination between various disciplines and ideological and political education courses, effectively combine professional courses, practical courses and curriculum ideological and political education, integrate knowledge points and ideological and political content in macro teaching design, actively improve the evaluation system of curriculum ideological and political education, and gradually improve the implementation effect of curriculum ideological and political education.

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