

Conception of undergraduate vocational education in philanthropic management

Yingzi HU

School of Social Work, Beijing College of Social Administration (Training Center of the Ministry of Civil Affairs),
Beijing 102600, China

Abstract: This article discusses the urgent demand for training professionals in philanthropic management in colleges and universities against the backdrop of the rapid development of philanthropy in China. It also proposes the idea of establishing undergraduate-level vocational education in philanthropic management in response to the current inverted pyramid structure of educational levels. The article analyzes the connotation of undergraduate-level vocational education in this field, including career orientation, job capability analysis, training objectives, and training specifications, and elaborates on the main teaching contents, such as professional curriculum setting, values cultivation, practical teaching, and vocational skill (qualification) certificates. Finally, the article emphasizes the important role of undergraduate-level vocational education in this field in cultivating high-level technical and skilled professionals, and providing professionals support for the development of China's philanthropy.

Key words: philanthropic management major; undergraduate vocational education; philanthropic management professionals

1 Proposal of the problem

The rapid development of China's philanthropy and the continuous growth of philanthropic organizations urgently require universities to cultivate professional in philanthropic management. According to the *Report on University-based Philanthropy Education Development in China 2021* jointly released by the Dunhe Foundation, the Institute for Philanthropy Tsinghua University, and the Philanthropy and NGO Support Center, by the end of 2021, there were a total of 35 philanthropic professional education projects in universities in China, including 23 graduate programs (of which only 8 MSW programs are to cultivate incremental professionals for the industry), 10 general undergraduate education programs (including 7 concurrent programs and 3 professional directions, no undergraduate vocational education programs), and 2 specialized /vocational education programs [1]. The academic level presents an inverted pyramid structure. From the perspective of training incremental professionals for the industry, undergraduate programs should become the pillars of the pyramid, or it would be more reasonable for different academic levels to present a spindle structure, with the middle larger part being undergraduate programs, and the two ends being graduate programs and specialist programs. However, the current inverted pyramid structure of academic levels indicates that there is an urgent need to increase more undergraduate programs in cultivating professionals in philanthropic management in universities. Establishing undergraduate-level vocational education in philanthropic management fills the gap of undergraduate program in this subject.

According to the *Implementation Plan for National Vocational Education Reform* issued by the State Council in January 2019 (referred to as *Vocational Education 20 Articles*), it is clear that vocational education and general education are two different types of education. Article 3 of the *Vocational Education 20 Articles* mentions that "the professional settings of undergraduate-level vocational education should reflect the characteristics of vocational education types, adhere to the positioning of high-level technical and skilled professionals training, and be systematically designed". How to carry out vocational education and cultivate high-level technical and skilled professionals at the undergraduate level in the major of philanthropic management? This is the key question to be answered in this article.

2 Connotation of undergraduate vocational education in philanthropic management

As an undergraduate-level vocational education program in philanthropic management (hereinafter referred to as "philanthropic management major"), the profession is the logical starting point of the program. Therefore, the professionals training objectives of the philanthropic management major should be responsive to the needs of objective vocational job groups for professionals and the needs of students' career development within the professional job groups.

2.1 Analysis of career orientation and job (group) professional competency

The primary target occupations for the philanthropic management program are social organization management positions such as fundraisers, community member administrators, program managers, and communications fundraisers.

The professional competencies of these positions (groups) include: scheme design and planning ability, project operation and management ability, evaluation and summarization ability, fundraising and resource integration ability, charitable service ability, communication and interpersonal skills, etc.

2.2 Training objectives

The philanthropic management major aims to cultivate students with well-rounded development in morality, intelligence, physique, aesthetics, and labor, who have a solid foundation in science and culture, master the knowledge of philanthropic professional values and ethics, social surveys and needs assessments, project planning and management, brand building and resource development, volunteer management, philanthropic policies, regulations, and standards. They are capable of designing, implementing, and evaluating philanthropic projects, conducting philanthropic communication, philanthropic fundraising, and social policy advocacy activities. They possess a craftsman spirit and information literacy, and are able to engage in high-level technical skills in philanthropic project design and management, communication and fundraising, philanthropic services, and association member management.

2.3 Positioning of training specifications

In terms of training specifications and positioning, undergraduate vocational education in philanthropic management should be improved in quality over the specialized higher vocational education in the same field, reflected in two aspects:

Firstly, the professional nature of the philanthropic management major is by no means equivalent to an "expanded version" of specialized higher vocational education or a "reduced version" of regular undergraduate education. The professional nature of the philanthropic management major should reflect the characteristics of cultivating high-level technical application professionals in terms of professional and curriculum settings, rather than simply adding a few courses to the original three-year specialized higher vocational education. On the one hand, in terms of the requirements for students to master the theoretical level of professional knowledge, the requirements for the philanthropic management major should be significantly higher than those for the specialized higher vocational education of the same major; on the other hand, the requirements for students to master the theoretical level of professional knowledge in the philanthropic management major can be slightly inferior to those in the relevant majors of regular undergraduate education, but the requirements for students' practical abilities are stronger. That is, the focus of professionals cultivation in the philanthropic

management major is different from that in regular undergraduate education. In addition to having a solid theoretical foundation in professional knowledge, students in the philanthropic management major also need to master multiple skills for core positions in the philanthropic field.

Secondly, the professional and vocational education of the philanthropic management major should be strictly distinguished in terms of professionals specifications, curriculum systems, and training modes. That is, the comprehensive level of professionals in the philanthropic management major should not only reach the level of undergraduate education, but also highlight professional characteristics and the mastery and application of high-tech.

In brief, the philanthropic management major aims to cultivate vocational and technical management professionals who possess both basic theoretical knowledge and practical operational skills.

2.4 Main professional capability requirements

The primary professional competencies required for the philanthropic management major are as follows:

(1) ability to consciously follow the values and ethics of philanthropic; (2) ability to conduct investigations and analyses specific to a particular social issue and the needs of service recipients; (3) ability to design, organize, implement, and evaluate philanthropic projects, conduct brand communication, philanthropic fundraising, and social policy advocacy activities; (4) ability to serve and manage community members and volunteers; (5) ability to implement and carry out policies, regulations, and standards related to philanthropy; (6) ability to write various application documents for philanthropic management; (7) ability to apply digital management in the field of philanthropic management; (8) ability to engage in lifelong learning, sustainable development, and research & innovation development; (9) having good language expression and communication skills.

3 Main teaching content of undergraduate vocational education in Philanthropic management

In terms of curriculum design, the philanthropic management major is primarily composed of three types of specialized courses, with the cultivation of values as the top priority, practical teaching as a feature, and acquiring several vocational skill (qualification) certificates as a means to enhance employment opportunities.

3.1 Professional courses

The professional courses for the philanthropic management major include professional basic courses, professional core courses, and professional expansion courses.

3.1.1 Professional basic courses

The foundational courses for the major in philanthropic management are primarily offered in the first and second academic years. These courses are designed as prerequisites to enable students to better grasp the core courses later on. They include courses such as the "Fundamentals of Public Welfare and Philanthropy", "Management Fundamentals and Applications", "Practical Sociology", "Chinese Social Issues", "Methods of Social Investigation", "Social Security Practices", "Foundations of Social Psychology", "Policies, Regulations, and Standards for Philanthropy".

3.1.2 Professional core courses

The core courses for the major in philanthropic management are designed to correspond to the core job positions in the philanthropic field, while reflecting new technologies, skills, and norms. Emphasis is placed on the use of information technology and promoting the deep integration of technological innovation with industrial development, including courses such as "Philanthropic Project Design", "Philanthropic Project Management", "Philanthropic Communication and Brand Building", "Philanthropic Organization Fundraising Practices", "Community Management and Services".

3.1.3 Professional development courses

Professional development courses mainly refer to courses that broaden professional knowledge, meet personalized development and employment directions. Professional development courses mainly aim to cultivate students' support function capabilities and comprehensive quality in the charity industry. Courses such as "Non-Profit Organization Financial Management", "Social Organization Performance Evaluation", "Human Resource Management", "New Media Editing", "Internet + Public Welfare", "SPSS Statistical Software Application", and other courses have been added.

3.2 Cultivation of values

For the cultivation of professionals in the major, the cultivation of values should be placed in the first place. The foundation of the professional values is the sense of mission and responsibility towards society, that is, knowing what social problems exist and how to solve them, cultivating students to better understand society, promote social progress, and then form good values. How to internalize values and cultivate a public welfare personality, that is, to have an altruistic tendency, a conscience, a strong sense of social responsibility and modern philanthropic concepts, is also an important manifestation of "taking moral education as the foundation". The cultivation of such values can be achieved through volunteer service practice outside the curriculum system and practical teaching within the curriculum system.

Prior to entering the major in philanthropic management, students have participated in some voluntary service activities to varying degrees, but they have not yet formed a systematic understanding of voluntary service. After entering the major, students begin taking the compulsory core course "Voluntary Service and Management". They not only learn relevant concepts, theories, policies, and regulations, but also learn how to improve their own voluntary service capabilities, and more importantly, how to manage volunteers. While learning these theoretical knowledge, teachers of the public welfare major can actively encourage students to participate in voluntary service after class and provide students with various voluntary service information and channels, which allow students to stimulate their interest in learning through participating in voluntary service activities, accumulate experience in the practical level of philanthropy, internalize the values of philanthropic management in practice, improve professional skills, strengthen the understanding of professional knowledge, and further promote the unity of knowledge and action. At the same time, voluntary service is an altruistic behavior. Students can gain more sense of achievement by helping others in the process of voluntary service, and regard this kind of fraternal and mutual aid behavior as their personal responsibility. By participating in volunteer activities, they not only come into contact with and learn about certain social problems, but also enhance their social responsibility.

3.3 Practical teaching

In terms of professional teaching arrangements, the philanthropic management major emphasizes both theoretical and practical teaching, with a focus on practical teaching. In principle, practical teaching accounts for more than half of the total class hours, and the internship period is generally six months. Practical teaching integrates general knowledge, abilities, qualities, and professional skills according to the position and workplace, emphasizing "learning through doing and practicing through doing", and students' comprehensive practical abilities to meet the needs of complex positions and better match job requirements.

The construction of a "double-qualified" teaching staff is matched with practical teaching. Among the full-time teachers in the major of philanthropic management, the proportion of "double-qualified" teachers should not be less than 50%. Teachers are trained in enterprises or training bases for at least one month every year. Industry frontline workers are employed as industrial mentors to teach in schools. A resource pool of part-time teachers is selected and constructed, with a certain proportion of part-time teachers to undertake substantive professional teaching tasks. They participate in the teaching of practical courses, student graduation design, etc., so that students can grasp the actual job requirements of the

industry. The teaching hours of the professional course teaching tasks undertaken by part-time teachers are generally not less than 20% of the total teaching hours of the professional course.

3.4 Vocational skill (qualification) certificate

3.4.1 Document background

The *20 Articles on Vocational Education* proposes that starting from 2019, the pilot work of the "academic certificate + a number of vocational skill level certificates" system (hereinafter referred to as the "1+X certificate system pilot") should be launched in vocational colleges and applied undergraduate colleges. The pilot work should further play the role of academic certificates, consolidate the foundation for students' sustainable development, encourage vocational college students to actively obtain multiple vocational skill level certificates while obtaining academic certificates, so as to improve their employment and entrepreneurship skills, and alleviate structural employment contradictions [2].

The vocational skill level certificate is an important part of the 1+X certificate system. It is a new type of certificate, and a proof of the vocational skill level of graduates and members of society. It is a recognition of learning achievements. The certificate reflects the ability requirements of the post (group), the comprehensive vocational ability required for professional activities and personal career development, and comprehensively covers professional knowledge, professional quality and skill operation. It is divided into junior, intermediate and senior levels. Students independently choose to participate in vocational skill level certificate training and assessment, without graduation restriction

3.4.2 Community governance professional skill level certificate

Currently, the "Community Service and Management" pilot course offered by the philanthropic management major (higher vocational education) integrates coursework with certification. Students can take the Community Governance Professional Skills Level Certificate (Intermediate) exam after completing the course. In the future, students in philanthropic management will be eligible to take the Community Governance Professional Skills Level Certificate (Advanced) exam.

3.4.3 Vocational and technical level certificate for fundraisers

The *Occupational Classification Code of the People's Republic of China* has included fundraisers, and the *National Professional Skill Standards for Fundraisers* were promulgated and implemented in August 2022. It is hoped that relevant departments will organize corresponding level certificate examinations in recent years, which will lay a better foundation for the cultivation of professional talents in philanthropic management and their professional development.

4 Conclusion

As a new talent training model, undergraduate vocational education in philanthropic management can effectively fill the gap in the current professional training system, cultivate high-level technical and skilled professionals with both solid theoretical foundation and practical operation skills, and provide strong talent support for promoting the high-quality development of China's philanthropy. In the future, we should further strengthen the research and practice of undergraduate vocational education in philanthropic management, explore more perfect professional training models, and contribute to the prosperity and development of China's philanthropy.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

[1] Lan YX. 2022. *Report on University-based Philanthropy Education Development in China 2021*. Dunhe Foundation, the Institute for Philanthropy Tsinghua University, and the Philanthropy and NGO Support Center.

[2] The State Council. 2019. *Implementation Plan for National Vocational Education Reform*.