



Research on the Integration of Ideological and Political Education with Professional Practice Teaching for Undergraduates

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Abstract: Ideological and political education is a valuable tradition and unique political advantage of our country. It is also a crucial tool for universities to maintain the correct political direction, accomplish the fundamental task of cultivating moral character, and train youth with the "Four Virtues" in the new era. In the context of unprecedented changes in a century, with increasingly complex internal and external environments, it is urgent to further strengthen ideological and political education for undergraduates. Ideological and political education is not an abstract concept; it must be closely integrated with professional practice teaching to maximize its effectiveness. How to better promote the in-depth integration of these two aspects in terms of concepts, content, carriers, and models, and how to find effective entry points and integration paths, has always been a challenging issue in the field. Based on this, this paper explores the relationship between ideological and political education and professional practice teaching from a theoretical perspective, outlines the significance of their integration, analyzes current difficulties and issues in teaching, and proposes integration paths focusing on concepts, infrastructure, reform and innovation, methods, and team building. It is hoped that this paper will provide some references for the field.

Keywords: ideological and political education; professional education; integration paths

1. Introduction

Ideological and political work is the lifeline of all work. It is a catalyst for guiding students to establish good values, cultivate patriotic sentiments, closely connect personal ideals with the fate of the nation, and actively integrate into the great journey of national construction. China has the largest undergraduate student population in the world. By the end of 2023, the number of enrolled undergraduate students in China reached 19.65 million. Effective ideological and political work for this vast group is particularly important. Ensuring effective ideological and political education is challenging, especially in integrating it with professional practice teaching, which has always been a focus and difficulty in the field. Further research in this area holds significant theoretical value and practical significance.

The country attaches great importance to ideological and political education for undergraduates. President Xi has explicitly pointed out that "Ideological and political work must focus on students, care for students, and serve students, continuously improving their ideological level, political awareness, moral qualities, and cultural literacy, making students into well-rounded talents with both virtue and ability." In March 2024, during his visit to Hunan First Normal University, President Xi emphasized the need to "make good use of red resources and strengthen the construction of the 'Big Ideological and Political Course.'" "Not only should we focus on strengthening the faculty team, but we also have a responsibility to teach students well and cultivate future good teachers." The report of the 20th National Congress proposed "using socialist core values to shape and educate people and advancing the integration of ideological and political education across all levels of education." The Ministry of Education, the Organization Department of the Central Committee, and seven other departments issued the "Opinions on Accelerating the Construction of the Ideological and Political Work System in Universities," which clearly states, "Comprehensively advance ideological and political education across all disciplines" and has specific requirements for courses in science, engineering, agriculture, medicine, and the arts.

In the new era, universities, especially normal universities, must further elevate their political stance, place greater emphasis on undergraduate ideological and political work, closely align with current international and domestic situations, continuously update educational concepts, innovate educational models, enrich teaching content, and promote the deep integration of ideological and political education with professional practice education. This integration should be mutually reinforcing, ensuring that ideological and political education for undergraduates remains vibrant and dynamic. It is essential to fully leverage the role of ideological and political work in strengthening CPC's leadership, consolidating ideological consensus, and fortifying the main front of ideology, striving to cultivate ambitious, talented, virtuous, and capable undergraduates for the new era, providing talent support for the comprehensive construction of a strong socialist country.

2. Theoretical Foundation

2.1 Connotation of Ideological and Political Education

Ideological and political education refers to the process by which a society or a specific social group applies political guidance, ideological affirmation, moral standards, and other methods to exert purposeful, planned, and organized influence on its members, encouraging them to autonomously accept this influence and thereby develop the desired ideological and moral qualities in alignment with the needs of a particular social class. For undergraduate students, the connotation of ideological and political education mainly includes political guidance, ideological armament, moral character shaping, career planning, learning motivation, disciplinary training, lifestyle development, cultural immersion, skill development, and quality enhancement[2].

2.2 Relationship between Ideological and Political Education and Professional Practice Teaching

Although there is a significant difference in the content between ideological and political education and professional practice teaching, their intrinsic logic shows a high degree of consistency, providing a natural foundation for their integration and development. On one hand, professional practice teaching contains rich ideological and political elements, making it the most vivid material for implementing ideological and political education within the curriculum and organizing such education. This helps make ideological and political education more grounded and relevant. On the other hand, ideological and political education focuses on human development, helping undergraduates establish sound life values, enhancing their intrinsic motivation for learning, stimulating their potential, and improving their ability to learn professional courses. Promoting the integration of ideological and political education with professional practice teaching is not only a necessary practice for curriculum ideological and political education but also an important way and inevitable requirement for accomplishing the fundamental task of cultivating moral character. Thus, ideological and political education and professional practice teaching have a solid foundation for integration, allowing them to complement each other and progress together.

2.3 Importance of Promoting Integration between Ideological and Political Education and Professional Practice Teaching

Accomplishing the task of cultivating moral character and nurturing undergraduates who love their country and people, have ideals and ambitions, take responsibility, and are proactive, is the most important responsibility and mission for universities. Ideological and political education and professional practice teaching are key aspects of this mission. First, ideological and political education is a crucial approach to addressing the fundamental questions of "who to learn for, how to learn, and what to learn," and is a fundamental method for guiding undergraduates to establish good life values. Second, professional practice teaching is an essential means for imparting scientific knowledge and professional skills to undergraduates and training professionals needed by society, forming the core of educational work. For undergraduate education, it is essential to focus on both professional practice teaching and ideological and political education. Only when these two aspects advance together in a complementary manner can they achieve the greatest educational effect.

The natural complementarity between ideological and political education and professional practice teaching means that promoting their integration can fully utilize their strengths in different areas, achieving mutual reinforcement and progress from the perspective of talent cultivation. This integration helps undergraduates further solidify their ideals and beliefs, cultivate patriotic sentiments, enhance learning motivation, and improve overall quality. From the perspective of educational and teaching work, integrating ideological and political education with professional practice teaching helps expand teaching models, enrich teaching content, uncover and accumulate ideological and political factors within professional courses, and better promote curriculum ideological and political education. It also facilitates the deeper development of both fields of teaching. From the perspective of teachers' professional development, this integration will guide professional course teachers to actively learn political theory and enhance their humanistic qualities, while encouraging ideological and political educators to pay more attention to the content of various professional disciplines, making ideological and political education more practical and engaging, and improving teaching quality.

3. Difficulties and Issues in Integrating Ideological and Political Education with Professional Practice Teaching for Undergraduates

3.1 Insufficient Awareness and Lack of Integration Consciousness

Ideology is the premise of action. To promote the integration of ideological and political education with professional practice teaching, it is crucial to first address the issue of awareness and enhance the proactive consciousness of integration.

However, some universities still do not place enough importance on this integration and have not organized specialized research or teaching activities on the topic. Teachers often lack awareness of integration in the teaching process, leading to a separation between ideological and political education and professional practice teaching. As a result, there is minimal integration of ideological and political content into professional courses, and ideological and political courses rarely cover professional content, leading to overall ineffective ideological and political teaching.

3.2 Insufficient Teaching Resources and Monotonous Models

The integration of ideological and political education with professional practice teaching is not simply about splicing the two together; it requires finding appropriate content and carriers. The ideological and political content embedded in professional practice teaching needs to be closely related to the knowledge or skills being cultivated in the professional field, maintaining internal consistency. Ideological and political elements in professional courses also need appropriate carriers, such as text, images, audio, video, or even live demonstrations. However, many teachers currently collect insufficient teaching resources and use monotonous teaching models, which fail to effectively stimulate students' interest in the course.

3.3 Lack of Methods and Poor Integration Effects

The integration of ideological and political education with professional practice teaching is not merely about inserting ideological and political content into professional practice teaching or interspersing professional content in ideological and political courses. It requires creating specific contexts and finding suitable opportunities to present the integration in various forms. There needs to be an organic combination rather than a simple patchwork. Many teachers struggle with timing and lack methods, resulting in a rigid and awkward integration that fails to achieve good teaching outcomes.

3.4 Deficient Theoretical Knowledge and Inadequate Integration Ability

The integration of ideological and political education with professional practice teaching requires professional teachers to have a certain level of political theoretical foundation to explore and present ideological and political elements in relation to their professional practice. At the same time, ideological and political educators need to have some professional knowledge to better integrate professional practice content into ideological and political courses, making the education more persuasive, engaging, and relevant to students' future growth and development. However, many university teachers currently lack comprehensive skills and qualities, with professional teachers having insufficient theoretical knowledge in ideological and political education, making it challenging to effectively conduct integrated teaching.

4. Research on the Paths for Integrating Ideological and Political Education with Professional Practice Teaching for Undergraduates

4.1 Adhering to Ideological Guidance, Strengthening the Foundation, and Advancing the Integration of Ideological and Political Education with Professional Practice Teaching

To promote the integration of ideological and political education with professional practice teaching, it is essential to focus on ideological guidance as a key strategy and strengthen the foundation of this integration. This involves emphasizing classroom teaching as the primary channel and implementing President Xi's important directives on ideological and political education, aiming to unify moral education, knowledge cultivation, and spiritual development.

Universities should leverage the leading role of Marxism colleges, coordinate with various professional colleges, and strengthen research on the integration of ideological and political education with professional practice teaching. It is crucial to accelerate the development of practical and closely related guiding teaching opinions for specific institutions, laying the groundwork for integration. Professional colleges need to enhance their awareness, prioritize the integration of ideological and political education with professional practice teaching as a key reform task, and focus on the overarching goal of moral cultivation and ideological unity. They should strengthen educational foundations, particularly through effective use of classroom teaching as the main channel, and enhance the application of curriculum ideological and political education, blended teaching methods, and case teaching methods. Expanding campus-based extracurricular activities and utilizing both internal and external practice bases are also important. Incorporating ideological and political education elements, inviting skilled professionals to discuss career ethics and professional spirit, and guiding students to visit red revolutionary cultural sites to inherit red genes and stimulate patriotic enthusiasm are valuable practices.

4.2 Innovating Educational Models, Enriching Educational Resources, and Building a Collaborative Educational System for Ideological and Political Education and Professional Practice Teaching

Innovating educational models and enriching educational resources are crucial methods for integrating ideological and

political education with professional practice teaching. Universities should adapt to local conditions, coordinate internal and external resources, fully mobilize teacher enthusiasm, and explore open teaching, flipped teaching, blended teaching, and other models. Developing ideological and political teaching resources specific to professional courses and creating a collaborative educational system that integrates ideological and political education with professional practice teaching are key goals.

Focusing on professional practice courses, specific applications of curriculum ideological and political education should be strengthened. Engaging professional course teachers, ideological and political educators, and counselors, the goal is to thoroughly explore and incorporate ideological and political elements into professional courses. Building a curriculum ideological and political resource library that includes ideological and political element systems, course materials, teaching videos, case studies, multimedia resources, and course animations can cover diverse teaching scenarios and provide rich learning materials for teachers and students. Additionally, further innovation in teaching models is necessary to flexibly apply ideological and political elements in professional practice courses. For example, Professor Gao Xiaofen from Shanghai Jiao Tong University, in teaching "Introduction to Computer Science," used a comparison between traditional advertising and computational advertising to highlight shortcomings in personalization and investment returns, thereby fostering students' critical thinking. Strengthening online integrated teaching and using campus networks and official university WeChat accounts to establish online educational platforms will also promote the integration of ideological and political education with professional education. The China University MOOC system, which includes high-quality ideological and political education videos from nationwide institutions, is popular for its rich content and diverse formats.

4.3 Strengthening Training, Enhancing Team Building, and Solidifying the Foundation for Integrating Ideological and Political Education with Professional Practice Teaching

Promoting the integration of ideological and political education with professional practice teaching requires a highly skilled, responsible, and well-qualified teaching team. Universities should further enhance political theory education and training for professional practice teaching, and organize regular communication between ideological and political educators and professional teachers to understand professional content and improve overall teaching quality.

Encouraging the enthusiasm and initiative of professional course teachers is essential. Universities should establish and improve mechanisms for regular political theory learning for professional teachers, incorporating it into overall teacher development plans, strengthening system incentives, and ensuring comprehensive support. Combining group learning with self-study will comprehensively enhance the political quality of professional teachers. The cooperation and coordination of ideological and political teachers are equally crucial. Efforts should be made to strengthen the professional identity, sense of honor, and responsibility of ideological and political teachers, encouraging their active participation in the integration of ideological and political education with professional practice teaching, and fostering a collaborative work environment.

5. Conclusion

In the new era, advancing the integration of ideological and political education with professional practice teaching for undergraduates remains a significant and challenging task. Universities, especially those focused on teacher education, must continue to be guided by the thought of socialism with Chinese characteristics for the new era, closely aligning with their own realities. They should strengthen internal quality and external capabilities, fully utilize the main role of ideological and political education in the classroom, deepen the application of ideological and political elements in professional practice courses, continually innovate educational models, enrich teaching resources, explore teaching methods, and promote the deep integration of moral and intellectual education for undergraduates, striving to cultivate high-quality talents who love their country and people.

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