

Research on strengthening the ideological function of "Situation and Policy" courses in universities

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Abstract: The course of ideological and political theory is the main battlefield and channel of ideological education in universities. At present, the ideological function as a qualitative attribute of the "Situation and Policy" textbook has not formed a widespread understanding in academic theoretical research and university education practice, and its ideological function is still greatly limited. To strengthen the ideological function of the "Situation and Policy" course, it is necessary to adhere to the principles of Marxism as the guide, cultural education, and student-centered education, in order to improve the unique pertinence and timeliness of the "Situation and Policy" course and give full play to its essential attributes of ideological education.

Key words: reinforcement; course on situation and policy; ideological function

1 The concept and characteristics of the course "Situation and Policy"

The "Situation and Policy" course is a course guided by Marxism, closely combining the national policies and domestic and foreign situations, to educate college students on the Party's principles, lines, policies, and current affairs. As early as 1987, the Central Propaganda Department issued the *Decision of the Communist Party of China Central Committee on Strengthening and Improving Ideological and Political Work in Higher Education Institutions*, which stipulated that situation and policy education should be included in the teaching plan. In the same year, the National Education Commission decided in the *Opinions of the National Education Commission on the Construction of Ideological and Political Education Curriculum in Higher Education Institutions* to set up the "Situation and Policy" course in the ideological and political education curriculum of college students, and determined that this course is a compulsory course. In 2004, the Central Propaganda Department and the Ministry of Education issued a notice on further strengthening education on the situation and policies of students in higher education institutions, and put forward specific opinions on the status, role, and practices of education on the situation and policies among students in higher education institutions [1]. After continuous exploration and innovation, the curriculum system, teaching content system, and teaching method system of the "Situation and Policy" course have initially matured. Universities across the country have also explored a mature teaching practice model in practice. After decades of development, the construction of the "Situation and Policy" course has achieved remarkable results, but there are still many problems such as unclear management boundaries, insufficient teaching staff, outdated textbook design, and single teaching modes. Among them, as one of the most fundamental roles of

the ideological and political theory course, the ideological function of the "Situation and Policy" course has not been fully utilized.

Ideological work is related to the future and destiny of the Party, as well as the long-term stability of the country. All previous leadership teams of the Party and the state have attached great importance to ideological work. Colleges and universities are the forefront of ideological construction. Ideological construction in colleges and universities is not only related to the ruling security of the CPC and the ideological security of the country, but also related to the socialist school running direction of colleges and universities, as well as the fundamental issues of who, how and for whom to cultivate people. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the ideological construction of universities at the strategic height of maintaining the security of the Party's governance, national ideological security, and building socialist universities with Chinese characteristics and world-class universities. To strengthen the ideological construction in universities, it is necessary to give full play to the role of ideological and political theory courses, especially to strengthen the ideological function of "Situation and Policy" courses. Maintaining ideological security is the essential attribute of "Situation and Policy" courses. The fundamental connotation of "never changing without its roots" and the teaching content and form of "changing with the times" and "moving with the situation" determine that the "Situation and Policy" course has strong "pertinence" and "efficiency" in the ideological construction of universities, and this unparalleled superiority of other courses has established the unique position of the "Situation and Policy" course in the ideological construction of universities. Therefore, it is necessary to make strengthening the ideological function of the "Situation and Policy" course the primary goal of the "Situation and Policy" course construction.

2 An analysis of the reasons for restricting the ideological function of "Situation and Policy"

2.1 The issue of the teaching staff for the "Situation and Policy" course

As an important component of ideological and political theory courses, "Situation and Policy" covers various fields such as politics, economy, culture, etc., and has a wide and comprehensive nature that other ideological and political theory courses cannot match. This characteristic provides convenience for the ideological education of the "Situation and Policy" course, but also poses a huge challenge to teachers. It requires teachers of the "Situation and Policy" course to have a deep theoretical foundation and a broad knowledge perspective at the same time [2]. At present, the teaching of "Situation and Policy" courses in Chinese universities adopts a "combination of full-time and part-time" model, mainly composed of ideological and political course teachers, teachers from other departments (mostly counselors), and school administrative staff. This combination model of "specialization and integration" meets the basic needs of the nature of the "Situation and Policy" course, but there are still significant problems. Although the current scale of "Situation and Policy" course teachers in universities is large, their quality is uneven, and some teachers find it difficult to meet the teaching needs of "Situation and Policy". This is mainly reflected in the part-time teaching of "Situation and Policy". Part time teachers are mainly concentrated among counselors or other administrative staff in schools. The former may not be fully competent in teaching the "Situation and Policy" course due to insufficient theoretical cultivation, while the latter may be busy with work and unable to fully devote themselves to the "Situation and Policy" course. At the same time, although the personnel configuration model of "combining full-time and part-time" solves the basic needs of "Situation and Policy" courses at the macro level, it is a significant challenge for both professional and part-time teachers to effectively expand in depth and breadth for each classroom and teacher. In addition, there is still a problem of high mobility among part-time teachers in the "Situation and Policy" course. Although the vast majority of universities in China have adopted a "combination of full-time and part-time" model in the allocation of teachers in the "Situation and Policy" course, there is no systematic and effective personnel transfer policy in the selection and replacement of part-time teachers, which has a significant degree of

arbitrariness. Finally, some teachers still face issues of unclear political direction and lack of firm political beliefs.

2.2 The selection of content for the course "Situation and Policy"

In the ideological and political theory courses of universities, the "Outline of Modern Chinese History" focuses on history, while the "Introduction to Basic Principles of Marxism and Introduction to Mao Zedong Thought and Socialism with Chinese Characteristics" lean towards theory. The "Ideological and Moral Cultivation and Legal Basis" mainly focuses on the ideological and moral cultivation of students. Only the "Situation and Policy" course integrates past history with the current era, empty theories, and vivid reality. Therefore, it is the best course to achieve ideological education in universities. Having a great range of choices in teaching content is a basic condition for ideological education based on the situation and policies, but it also brings difficulties to specific teaching practices. The course "Situation and Policy" has neither a fixed teaching content nor a fixed unified textbook. The basis for its teaching content is the teaching outline issued by the higher education department every semester. In fact, due to the unpredictability of the teaching content of "Situation and Policy", this outline is also difficult to meet the teaching needs of "Situation and Policy" course to keep up with the times. Teachers of "Situation and Policy" need to constantly adjust their teaching content according to the needs of current events. Due to the unstable and unsystematic teaching content of the "Situation and Policy" course, how to grasp the teaching laws of "Situation and Policy" has become the biggest challenge for teachers. If this problem cannot be handled well, the "Situation and Policy" course can easily become a simple collection and organization of current affairs and news, hot issues, and emergencies. Once this happens, not only will the ideological function of the "Situation and Policy" course not be fully realized, but students will also be unable to form a correct view of the situation and policies, and may even have a one-sided or even incorrect understanding of the current situation and policies.

2.3 The issue of forced conflicts in ideological education

The blending and stirring of various cultural trends is one of the characteristics of the current era. The active cultural trend is an important symbol of the vitality and vigor of current Chinese society, which also brings great challenges to the ideological work of universities. Behind the prosperity of ideology, there is a fierce ideological struggle surging. Some dangerous ideas that go against the mainstream ideology of society spread rapidly through the cyberspace, immediately catching up with college students who pursue novelty but lack discernment, and quickly occupying a vast market among young students. The fundamental task of ideological education is to help young students resist feudal backwardness and external negative ideological tendencies, and establish correct Marxist ideals and beliefs. To achieve this fundamental task, there will inevitably be a certain degree of compulsion and indoctrination in the content of education. The Marxist indoctrination theory holds that due to the limitations of existing social status and knowledge perspectives, the working class is unable to scientifically understand the profound impact and significant significance of the proletarian revolution. Socialist consciousness can only be instilled into workers from the outside, that is, from outside the scope of economic struggle and the relationship between workers and landlords [3]. Carrying out Marxist education and theoretical education for workers, mastering scientific methods of struggle, and deeply understanding one's own mission are the basic connotations of Marxist indoctrination theory. It can be seen that it is necessary to instill the ideology of "situation and policy". The indoctrination and education of ideology will inevitably collide fiercely with various value streams that cater to the broad interests and pursuits of young students. How to grasp the contradiction and balance between the two is the basic issue of the success of ideological education in the "Situation and Policy" course of consciousness.

3 The principles and methods of strengthening the ideological function of "Situation and Policy" courses

3.1 Principles of strengthening the ideological function of "Situation and Policy" courses

Firstly, adhere to the laws of ideological construction and adhere to Marxism as the guide. The course "Situation and Policy" is first and foremost a Marxist theoretical course. Although the textbook "Situation and Policy" does not systematically teach Marxist theory, it is the best course that vividly combines Marxist theory with the practice of socialism with Chinese characteristics and the changing world situation, containing how to adhere to the guidance of Marxist theory, apply the basic position, viewpoint, and method of Marxism, draw on advanced historical experience, combine with current political hotspots, and help students deepen their understanding of the current international and domestic political and economic situation, as well as the Party's major policies, and help students establish correct political concepts and cultivate good habits of speaking politics. The fundamental task of the "Situation and Policy" course is to continuously improve students' ability to analyze and judge domestic and international political and economic situations, as well as their ability to resist various erroneous ideas.

Secondly, raise the banner of "cultural confidence" and adhere to educating people with excellent culture. Huntington once pointed out in *The Conflict of Civilizations and the Reconstruction of World Order* that the struggle of the future world is essentially a competition between civilization and culture, and the development of history has proven the correctness of his prediction. The current world is experiencing the fusion and collision of multiculturalism and social trends, and this intersection of multiculturalism has brought good opportunities for the new development of Chinese Confucian civilization. At the same time, it has brought equal impact on cultural confidence and ideological beliefs. The struggle of ideology ultimately boils down to the opposition between different civilizations, and at the same time, the struggle of ideology often takes culture as the carrier. In short, cultural confidence and ideological construction are two aspects of the same thing, complementary and dialectically unified. Adhering to cultural confidence is inseparable from ideological construction, and ideological construction is also inseparable from the confidence of excellent Chinese culture. Culture is not only an effective carrier of ideological education, but also the foundation of ideological education.

Thirdly, adhere to the inherent laws of education and teaching, and adhere to student-centered approach. The organic combination of indoctrination and inspiration is the basic principle of ideological education. Instilling refers to the indisputable "compulsion and authority" in ideological education content, while inspiration is the pursuit of maximizing the effectiveness of ideological indoctrination content in the "Situation and Policy" course at the methodological level, thereby achieving the fundamental educational goal of "cultivating morality and talent". Education is the process of human subjectivity development, and ideological education is particularly so. Contemporary college students are nurtured and grow up in an open and inclusive social environment, which makes them more diverse in value needs and rebellious psychological traits. If educators turn a blind eye to these typical characteristics of contemporary young students, it is likely to produce educational effects that are completely opposite to their educational goals. Ideological education must adhere to the educational concept of "people-oriented", and on the basis of accurately grasping the ideological characteristics of contemporary college students, respect their classroom subjectivity.

3.2 Methods to strengthen the ideological function of the "Situation and Policy" course

Firstly, pre-set teaching content to improve the timeliness of the "Situation and Policy" course. The teaching content of the "Situation and Policy" course should be based on the basic laws of the changing development of the times, constantly meet the comprehensive educational laws of college students, so as to adapt to the situation, advance according to the times, and innovate according to the situation. More efforts should be made in teaching content and methods, adopting personalized and flexible teaching designs to avoid the dogmatic lag of teaching content and the monotonous mechanical teaching methods, thereby improving the timeliness of the "Situation and Policy" course [4]. In addition, the "Situation and Policy" course should also be tailored to local conditions, taking into account hot and sensitive issues in the

region, and using current events in the region as carriers to achieve the "localization" of the "Situation and Policy" course. For example, Henan Province can appropriately focus on issues related to agriculture, rural areas, the Central Plains Economic Zone, and the construction of Zhengzhou Airport, so as to enhance the infectiousness of the "Situation and Policy" course with vivid examples that are close to the real life of college students.

Secondly, refining value elements and improving the pertinence of the "Situation and Policy" course. "Ideology" is the essential attribute of the "Situation and Policy" course, and the basic goal of the "Situation and Policy" course is to achieve the recognition, and practice of the mainstream ideological values in China by teachers and students in the education of situation and policy. The course on "Situation and Policy" should take the initiative to shoulder the heavy burden of ideological security in universities, actively play the role of defender and builder in ideological security in universities, take the initiative in the current situation where various social and cultural trends are fully surging, prescribe targeted medicine, and respond to historical nihilism, liberalism, especially the infiltration of Western countries into China's ideological field. In addition, find the right entry point in the intersection and collision of practical education, policy education, ideological education, and the healthy growth needs of college students; actively transform academic discourse into teaching discourse; get close to students' learning and life, and appropriately quote popular and online discourse that college students enjoy.

Thirdly, enriching teaching forms and enhancing the attractiveness of "Situation and Policy" courses. Specifically, the teachers and students of the "Situation and Policy" course, on the basis of making full use of the openness and participation of Internet teaching, jointly complete the basic work of the pre-class design, class teaching and post class assessment of the "Situation and Policy" course. In this two-way interaction process, "Situation and Policy" teachers are able to gain a deep understanding of the ideological trends of young students and carry out personalized teaching of situations and policies. Young college students, on the other hand, activate the subject consciousness of the classroom through extensive participation, thereby continuously enhancing their sense of identity with the "Situation and Policy" course. Compared to traditional single offline courses, the hybrid mode of combining online and offline is not limited by time and space, which has strong operability, high student enthusiasm and participation, and is a popular teaching form for young students.

Conflicts of interest

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

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