

The Mechanisms, Predicaments, and Breakthrough Strategies of the Deep Integration of Ideological and Political Education in College Courses and Professional Education

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Abstract: The deep integration of ideological and political education in courses with professional education is a core measure to implement the fundamental task of fostering virtue and nurturing talent and to promote the connotative development of higher education. Based on the logic of the Ministry of Education’s “four high integrations”, the integration mechanism is manifested as the dialectical unity of knowledge imparting and value guidance, the symbiotic synergy of explicit education and implicit education, the mutual support of practical exploration and theoretical research, and the organic combination of coordinated advancement and classified measures. The current integration practice faces predicaments such as cognitive bias, superficial element mining, stiff instructional design, and the absence of an evaluation system. It is necessary to promote the integration of the two from “formal integration” to “connotative integration” through four paths: conceptual innovation, content reconstruction, method innovation, and mechanism guarantee, to achieve the trinity of value shaping, knowledge imparting, and ability cultivation.

Keywords: Colleges and universities; Course-based ideological and political education; Professional education; Deep integration; Strengthen moral education and cultivate people

Online publication: March 13, 2026

1. Introduction

Course-based ideological and political education, as a major innovation in ideological and political education in higher education institutions in the new era, breaks down the barriers between ideological and political education and professional education. The Ministry of Education’s “Guidelines for the Construction of Course-based Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Institutions” clearly states that teachers, courses, and classrooms should be at the core to promote the full integration of educational elements. At present, China’s

higher education is moving towards a new stage of quality improvement. The deep integration of the two is the key to responding to the fundamental questions of “what kind of people to cultivate, how to cultivate them, and for whom to cultivate them”, and solving the problems of “isolation” of ideological and political education and “instrumentalization” of professional education ^[1]. But in practice, there are still problems such as superficiality, homogeneity, and formalization of integration, such as the simplistic application of general ideological and political cases in some engineering courses, lacking professional adaptability. Therefore, systematically explaining the integration mechanism, dissecting the predicaments, and exploring strategies are of great theoretical and practical significance for promoting the quality and efficiency improvement of ideological and political education in courses.

2. The intrinsic mechanism of the deep integration of course-based ideological and political education with professional education

2.1. The dialectical unity of knowledge imparting and value guidance

Professional education focuses on the imparting of knowledge and the development of abilities. The core of ideological and political education in the curriculum is the shaping of values. The two are the dialectical unity of “teaching” and “nurturing.” Professional knowledge is the carrier of value guidance, and value guidance gives a soul to professional knowledge. The practices of institutions such as Lanzhou University and Chongqing University have confirmed the intrinsic connection of mutual support between the two, achieving the integration of moral and talent education ^[2].

2.2. The symbiosis of explicit and implicit education

Ideological and political courses provide value guidance as the main channel of explicit education, while professional courses carry out implicit education through professional knowledge, industry cases, etc. The two are symbiotic. For instance, engineering majors can cultivate a sense of patriotism through major engineering cases, while liberal arts majors can strengthen value recognition by relying on cultural classics, forming an all-around education pattern.

2.3. Mutual support between practical exploration and theoretical research

The Marxist view of practice holds that practice is the source of knowledge and the sole criterion for testing truth. The deep integration of ideological and political education in courses with professional education cannot be achieved without the two-way empowerment of practical exploration and theoretical research. Practical exploration provides vivid materials for theoretical research. For example, Chongqing University has summarized the specific path of ideological and political education in engineering courses through the practice of “three methods of teaching, three steps of instruction, one system of evaluation” in the course of principles of steel structures. Theoretical research provides scientific guidance for practical exploration, avoiding the blindness of practice through the study of integration logic, path methods, and evaluation criteria ^[3].

2.4. The organic combination of coordinated advancement and classified measures

The construction of ideological and political education in courses is a systematic project that requires overall planning and full participation, while respecting the characteristics of different disciplines and specialties and implementing classified guidance. The coordinated advancement is reflected in the integration of ideological

and political education in courses with the construction of “Double First-Class”, the reform of “all-round education for all”, and the construction of first-class courses, to form a joint force for education; Classified measures are reflected in identifying key areas for the exploration of ideological and political elements based on the characteristics of different majors such as philosophy and social sciences, natural sciences, engineering and technology, and medicine.

3. The practical predicament of the deep integration of ideological and political education in courses and professional education

3.1. Cognitive bias: There are misunderstandings in the concept of integration

Some teachers have an inadequate understanding of the connotation of ideological and political education in courses, and there are two extreme perceptions: one is equating ideological and political education in courses with “imparting ideological and political knowledge”, and mechanically inserting ideological and political content in professional classrooms, resulting in the “two skins” phenomenon; The second is the belief that professional education has nothing to do with ideological and political education, ignoring the educational function of professional courses and shifting the responsibility of ideological and political education entirely onto ideological and political course teachers. This cognitive bias stems from the neglect of the essence of “nurturing people” and the failure to accurately grasp the intrinsic connection between professional education and ideological and political education. In addition, the management of some colleges and universities’ emphasis on the construction of ideological and political education in courses is limited to policy communication, lacking systematic planning and resource support, such as the establishment of a professional-appropriate training system, which leads to insufficient integration ability of teachers.

3.2. Superficial content: The exploration of ideological and political elements is not in-depth

The exploration of ideological and political elements is a core part of integration, but there are obvious shortcomings in current practice: First, the scope of exploration is narrow, mostly limited to common elements such as patriotism and collectivism, and not combined with professional characteristics to explore personalized elements such as industry spirit and professional ethics; Second, the level of exploration is superficial, with a lack of in-depth sorting out of the value connotations behind professional knowledge, resulting in a disconnection between ideological and political elements and professional content; Third, there is a high degree of homogeneity, with the lack of differentiated design of ideological and political elements in different majors. For example, some engineering courses do not extract ideological and political materials from engineering practice and industry standards, simply apply common cases, and it is difficult to resonate with students.

3.3. Stiff design: Lack of skill in teaching integration

Instructional design is the key to achieving deep integration, but most universities still have problems such as monotonous methods and rigid design: First, teaching methods are rigid, still mainly based on classroom lectures, lacking the application of interactive methods such as case teaching and project-based teaching; Second, the integration is mechanical, with ideological and political content treated as an “additional question”, briefly mentioned at the end of the course, and not organically integrated into the entire teaching process; Third, there is a lack of systematic design, and there is a lack of connection between ideological and political elements

in the courses.

4. Breakthrough strategies for the deep integration of course-based ideological and political education with professional education

4.1. Conceptual innovation: Building a solid ideological foundation for integration

Strengthen the concept of all-staff education through specialized training and guide teachers to clarify the educational responsibility of professional education; Deepen the understanding of the connotation of integration and abandon the thinking of “simple superposition”; Establish systems thinking, incorporate ideological and political education into the school’s overall development plan, and form a multi-party collaborative pattern.

4.2. Content reconstruction: Deepen the exploration of ideological and political elements

Build differentiated systems of ideological and political elements by professional category, with a focus on craftsmanship in engineering, patriotism in liberal arts, and professional ethics in medicine; Extract materials from the history of discipline development, industry cases, and cutting-edge developments to construct modular content of “core competencies—competency goals—knowledge carriers.”

4.3. Methodological innovation: Optimizing integrated instructional design

Promote interactive models such as case-based teaching, project-based teaching, and situational simulation, and draw on the experience of Chongqing University’s “Three Teaching methods”; Integrate ideological and political goals into the curriculum and incorporate them into the entire teaching process; Build blended educational scenarios with digital technology to enhance their appeal.

4.4. Mechanism assurance: Improve the integration support system

Build a multi-faceted evaluation system of “process + outcome” and “quantitative + qualitative”, and incorporate indicators such as students’ moral quality and professional spirit; Improve the incentive mechanism and link the integration results to the evaluation of teachers’ professional titles and performance assessment; Establish a collaborative training mechanism for “ideological and political teachers + professional teachers” and improve the dynamic adjustment mechanism.

5. Conclusion

The deep integration of ideological and political education in courses with professional education is the core approach to fulfilling the fundamental task of fostering virtue and nurturing talent, and its internal mechanism is manifested in the dialectical unity of four dimensions. In the face of realistic predicaments at the cognitive, content, design, and mechanism levels, colleges and universities need to work in synergy through ideological innovation, content reconstruction, method innovation, and mechanism guarantee, precisely identify ideological and political entry points in line with professional characteristics, promote the integration of the two from “formal integration” to “connotative integration”, and achieve the trinity of value shaping, knowledge imparting, and ability cultivation, To provide solid support for cultivating the new generation capable of shouldering the great rejuvenation of the nation.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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