

The Dilemma and Optimization Countermeasures of the Construction of One-stop Student Communities in Universities

Jinsong Wu*

Shenzhen Polytechnic University, Shenzhen 518055, Guangdong, China

*Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.

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Abstract: The “one-stop” student community initiative in universities serves as a pivotal measure to foster students’ holistic development and enhance faculty-student integration, playing a crucial role in campus cultural development and student community governance. However, challenges such as uncoordinated community development, inadequate digital governance, and fragmented educational collaboration persist during implementation. To address these issues, universities should explore optimization strategies and implement targeted measures, including digital empowerment, substantive enhancement, and the establishment of a “co-constructed, shared, and co-governed” “one-stop” student community. Continuous refinement of the community framework will ensure sustained improvements in educational outcomes.

Keywords: One-stop student community; Universities; Digitalization

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1. Introduction

In 2020, the Opinions on Accelerating the Construction of Ideological and Political Work Systems in Higher Education Institutions, jointly issued by the Ministry of Education and seven other departments, explicitly proposed utilizing residential areas such as dormitories and student halls as platforms to promote the development of “integrated” student communities^[1]. The construction of “one-stop” student communities has long been a key initiative prioritized by numerous universities. Following the release of the guidelines, more institutions and relevant organizations have prioritized this task, with increasing scholarly attention directed toward research on university “one-stop” community development. In 2023, the Ministry of Education convened a conference to advance comprehensive management models for “one-stop” student communities, emphasizing the need for full-scale implementation and comprehensive coverage^[2]. This conference accelerated the pace of “one-stop” community construction across higher education institutions. This paper reviews the

current development progress and operational status of “one-stop” student communities, analyzes challenges encountered during implementation, and proposes targeted solutions to facilitate the future comprehensive development of university “one-stop” student communities.

2. Development process and case studies

2.1. Development of “one-stop” student communities in universities

In 2004, the Ministry of Education emphasized the vital role of university student communities and dormitories in campus cultural development. In 2005, Xi’an Jiaotong University pioneered the “Academy System” initiative, exploring cross-disciplinary community management. The “Wenzhi garden” was established as a pilot project, followed by the official launch of Pengkang Academy as the university’s first academy. These academies focused on advancing general education through specialized lectures and practical courses, cultivating students’ comprehensive competencies in interpersonal skills, communication, and organizational coordination to nurture responsible citizens. In the same year, Fudan University adopted the academy system, integrating Western educational best practices with Chinese cultural elements. Its initial four academies, including Zhide Academy, covered all freshmen. By 2012, the program had expanded to include all undergraduates. Building on the “one-stop” student community model, Fudan developed a comprehensive second classroom system to broaden students’ perspectives and foster practical and innovative abilities. With the advancement of the academy system, a robust general education framework emerged, featuring 7 core modules and 180 courses that became a national benchmark. Fudan’s academy system has provided valuable insights for the development of “one-stop” student communities and general education initiatives. In 2019, the Ministry of Education of China designated 10 universities—including Beihang University and Shenzhen Polytechnic—as the first batch of pilot institutions for the “one-stop” student community management model. As the only vocational college selected, Shenzhen Polytechnic has pioneered innovative practices in this initiative. The university established ten student dormitory-based academies, including Chongli Academy, launched distinctive brand activities, and refined its “One Core, Two Wings, Six Drivers” student management framework. These efforts transformed the student community into a practice ground for the “Three-all Education.” In 2021, the Ministry expanded the pilot program to 31 institutions^[3]. By 2024, more than 2,700 universities nationwide had adopted this comprehensive management model.

2.2. Development trends of “one-stop” student community construction in universities

In recent years, numerous universities have continuously promoted the integration of various resources into student communities through clear guidelines, policy documents, optimized mechanisms, and improved evaluation systems. Regarding the specific construction tasks of “one-stop” student communities, different universities have adopted both common practices and distinctive features. Many institutions have broken down disciplinary barriers by establishing joint Party branches, fostering communication among students from diverse academic backgrounds, and enhancing collaboration in volunteer services. Some universities have developed unique activity brands centered around residential colleges, earning widespread praise from faculty and students. Xi’an University of Electronic Science and Technology, for instance, launched the “Reading Xidian” Community Reading Festival, recommending books and materials by category, grade, and major while coordinating with libraries and teaching departments. Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine

established 36 mentor groups to bring “renowned scholars”, “famous doctors”, and “celebrated experts” closer to students. Some universities have set up administrative and academic staff offices within student communities, facilitating more convenient offline interactions. Heart-to-heart conversations in familiar living environments help students feel more relaxed and natural. The report from the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China emphasized the need to “advance educational digitalization and build a learning society and a learning nation for lifelong learning.” With the emergence of AI tools such as Wenxin Yiyao, Yuanbao, and DeepSeek, the digital transformation of education has become irresistible. As the main platform for education, the digital development of a one-stop student community in universities will become a major trend.

3. The dilemma of “one-stop” student community construction in universities

3.1. Incoherence in the development of university “one-stop” student communities

This inconsistency manifests in three key aspects. First, there is a mismatch between physical infrastructure and core educational functions. The fundamental purpose of “one-stop” student communities is to integrate education, management, and service functions. Although the actual effectiveness of the community is influenced by its physical design, the latter should not override its core educational mission. However, current practices overemphasize physical space, resulting in underdeveloped educational functions. Some universities prioritize size, naming, and architectural aesthetics while neglecting the development of educational programs and governance systems. Second, there is homogenization in community design. Each college should develop unique features through distinct spatial layouts, staffing structures, and design philosophies, and gradually establish distinctive educational brands and activities. Yet most “one-stop” communities adopt similar models—whether creating open fitness areas, café-style lounges, or reading corners—lacking innovation and failing to engage students effectively. Third, there is imbalanced participation. As a long-term systematic project, these communities should empower student involvement by providing integrated platforms for daily life and academic pursuits. Students play a vital role in the community and undertake the task of self-management. However, the current level of student participation in community development is low, and the degree and capacity of self-governance need to be improved.

3.2. The digital governance of university “one-stop” student communities requires enhancement

As high-density student hubs, these communities serve important educational purposes while functioning as platforms for self-management, self-service, and self-supervision. Digital technologies can significantly improve community management and optimize campus development. For instance, student dormitories are key areas in building safe campuses, and optimized governance can effectively address emergencies and fire hazards. Academies have unique advantages in campus cultural development. By organizing students to create signature events, colleges can enrich campus culture. However, student communities still lag in digital platform development, online learning resource sharing, and intelligent service systems. Digital platforms should comprehensively track student activities, including resource usage, schedules, and feedback. Administrators can promptly respond to student needs through real-time data. Current platform development remains inadequate, with insufficient dedicated maintenance teams. Limited digital resources and a lack of smart devices hinder the timely handling of student-related matters and reduce efficiency. Therefore, digital and intelligent tools should be widely adopted in the construction of “one-stop” student communities. Efforts should be made to enhance

the digitalization of “one-stop” student communities to maximize their educational impact.

3.3. The “one-stop” student community in universities fails to consolidate educational synergy

As a crucial educational space, student communities serve important management and service functions ^[4]. The “one-stop” model should provide efficient and convenient services for students’ academic studies, daily life, social interactions, and practical activities ^[5]. A well-structured management team ensures smooth daily operations. Community administrators should include administrative staff, academic advisors, dormitory managers, and security personnel. Collaboration between teachers and dormitory staff improves supervision of students’ living routines and helps freshmen adapt to collective living. This coordinated effort effectively reduces interpersonal conflicts and minimizes disputes caused by student disharmony. Partnerships between teachers and security personnel strengthen overall safety management. Timely communication between teachers and security staff during psychological crises ensures personal safety and reduces the occurrence of extreme incidents. However, the current community staff lacks effective coordination, with isolated actions and insufficient communication. As the main participants in community development and activities, students bear responsibilities for self-management and self-supervision. Establishing student organizations through class leaders and active members is a key governance measure. Leveraging these organizations as catalysts can encourage student participation in governance and foster a sense of ownership. Nevertheless, the current development of community student organizations is incomplete, the level of development is uneven, and governance efficiency needs to be strengthened.

4. Optimization countermeasures of “one-stop” student community construction in universities

4.1. Digital empowerment of “one-stop” student community governance

Student communities serve not only as important spaces for nurturing students but also as crucial platforms for promoting teacher-student integration. The healthy growth, knowledge accumulation, and all-around development of students cannot be achieved without scientifically structured communities. Universities should establish institutional consensus to continuously enhance the educational effectiveness of “one-stop” student communities through digital and intelligent technologies ^[6]. The rapid advancement of digital technologies has compelled universities to accelerate the transformation and upgrading of their “one-stop” community governance models. By leveraging digital solutions, institutions can improve the speed and efficiency of community operations and enable timely responses to the needs of faculty and students. In today’s digital era, smartphones and internet access have become indispensable tools for study and daily life. Services traditionally handled offline should be fully moved online through digital platforms and system improvements, such as applications for financial aid programs and academic status modifications. Procedures that previously required multiple visits can now be completed in a single online session. Digital technologies also facilitate the monitoring of students’ dormitory entry and exit times and daily routines, supporting safety education initiatives. By tracking and analyzing data on students’ community activity patterns, automated alerts can be generated to notify administrators of irregularities. This enables targeted interventions for students who return late to restore dormitory order, while maintaining close contact with those who frequently miss dormitory check-ins. Comprehensive tracking of students’ off-campus activities further strengthens safety education and prevents

potential personal safety incidents. In conclusion, digital empowerment of university “one-stop” student community governance is an inevitable trend of the times. Universities should actively build consensus and use digital technologies to transform community governance approaches and improve operational efficiency. By using digital tools to monitor students’ schedules and activities, institutions can strengthen safety education and management. For students with psychological problems, digital technologies should provide enhanced monitoring and increased social support. These measures enable digital technologies to deliver more precise community services, effectively improving students’ academic and living experiences, thereby providing strong support for the high-quality development of education in universities.

4.2. Building a “one-stop” student community with “joint construction, shared benefits, and collaborative governance”

The development of university “one-stop” student communities should fully incorporate student feedback and respect their subjective opinions. During the construction process, students should be encouraged to offer suggestions and participate voluntarily in related work. The Ministry of Education’s Guidelines for Comprehensive Management Model Construction of One-Stop Student Communities emphasizes “cultivating students’ self-awareness and self-discipline” [7]. In the development of student communities, administrators should foster an atmosphere of equal dialogue and ensure smooth feedback channels. A democratic and open community environment should be created to enhance harmonious relationships between faculty and students, as well as among students themselves. On the one hand, teachers as primary administrators should proactively reduce their managerial dominance. They should engage with student groups, increase dormitory visits, and regularly visit students from financially disadvantaged families. Teachers should actively share community progress and concrete work developments in public forums to stimulate student participation. On the other hand, teachers should guide students in establishing self-governing student organizations. These student-led groups, elected and formed by students, should take an active part in community activities, focusing on cultural events and volunteer services. Teachers should provide guidance to student leaders and allocate resources such as activity funding and venues. Furthermore, teachers should proactively strengthen communication with other community staff, such as dormitory supervisors and security personnel, by establishing working groups and organizing seminars to enhance information exchange. Through multi-staff collaboration, students’ daily lives can become more stable and orderly. Therefore, to build a “one-stop” student community characterized by “co-construction, sharing, and co-governance”, it is essential to fully respect students’ subjective opinions, encourage them to contribute ideas, and promote autonomous participation. Administrators should foster an egalitarian atmosphere and ensure smooth feedback channels. Teachers should not only reduce their authoritative role and engage deeply with students to guide them in forming self-governing organizations, but also strengthen connections with other staff members. By implementing multiple measures and integrating various stakeholders, a democratic and open community environment can be established, fostering harmonious teacher-student and peer relationships, ensuring stable student life, and promoting the sustainable development of the student community.

4.3. Strengthening the connotation construction of “one-stop” student communities in universities

Promoting students’ growth and talent development, and helping them achieve all-around development, is the

ultimate goal of “one-stop” student community construction. In addition to improving the infrastructure and hardware facilities of student communities, the development of a distinctive community culture and educational connotation is a key task. Community construction should integrate the university’s own characteristics, disciplinary features, and traditional Chinese culture. For example, Xinglin Academy at Shenzhen Polytechnic was established based on the School of Medical Sciences. The creation of Xinglin Academy combined the professional background of medical students with traditional Chinese medical culture, enabling students to learn more about traditional Chinese medicine through immersive experiences in the community. Extensive absorption and in-depth study of professional knowledge better prepare students for future internships and employment. Student communities serve as the main platform for general education. During the construction of “one-stop” student communities, full consideration should be given to the forms and content of general education, and general education courses should be rationally designed. Community teachers should actively collaborate with university departments such as the Academic Affairs Office, the Communist Youth League Committee, and the Psychological Counseling Center to integrate educational resources^[8]. The implementation of educational courses or activities in student communities can also fully incorporate urban or regional culture, introducing diverse cultural elements to enhance their appeal. For example, the activity “Walking Through Shenzhen” organized by Chongli Academy at Shenzhen Polytechnic fully explored Shenzhen’s urban elements. Through this activity, faculty and students visited multiple commemorative sites of Shenzhen’s reform and opening-up, expanding their knowledge and broadening their horizons. The event has also become one of the signature activities in the student community, highlighting the connotative characteristics of the college. In summary, strengthening the connotative construction of “one-stop” student communities in universities is of great significance. During construction, it is necessary to integrate university characteristics, disciplinary features, and traditional Chinese culture to highlight a unique community culture. At the same time, emphasis should be placed on general education, rational course design, and coordination across multiple departments to integrate educational resources.

In addition, activities can be combined with urban characteristics and regional culture to innovate content and enhance appeal. Only in this way can a student community with rich connotation and distinctiveness be created, providing strong support for students’ growth.

5. Conclusion

The development of “one-stop” student communities enhances students’ general education, promotes their all-round development, and provides a more convenient and secure living space. This initiative meets society’s practical demand for well-rounded talents. At present, many universities across China have launched such community projects, yet various units encounter unique challenges during implementation. To optimize these communities, it is crucial to identify core problems and distinctive features. Building consensus among stakeholders, strengthening digital empowerment, and enriching cultural connotation are essential. Universities should avoid mechanical replication of other models; instead, they should prioritize independent innovation and highlight local characteristics. By placing students at the center, these communities can gain widespread support and achieve continuous improvement.

Disclosure statement

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