

# Research on the Role and Mission of University Teachers in the New Era and Their Cultivation

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**Abstract:** This paper aims to explore the role and mission of university teachers in the context of the new era and the ways to cultivate them. Taking into account various key characteristics of the new era, such as the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, the new stage of socialist construction, the international competitive landscape, industrial chain security, the Belt and Road Initiative, the impact of new technologies on work and lifestyle, and changes in social psychology, the paper analyzes how university teachers can understand and fulfill their roles and missions in the new era, and proposes corresponding cultivation strategies.

**Keywords:** New era; University teachers; Role and mission; Cultivation strategies

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## 1. Introduction

With the advent of the new era, China stands at a crucial juncture in its journey toward the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation<sup>[1-3]</sup>. This era not only witnesses the entry of socialist construction into a new phase but also reveals new trends against the backdrop of increasingly fierce international competition. Rapid advancements in science and technology are profoundly transforming people's work patterns and lifestyles, posing new challenges and missions for university teachers.

In the torrent of this new era, the Chinese nation is steadily and powerfully marching toward great rejuvenation<sup>[4-7]</sup>. Socialist construction is no longer solely about economic development; it now encompasses comprehensive progress in politics, culture, society, ecology, and other aspects. In the new landscape of international competition, the security of China's industrial chain has become an important consideration for national development. The in-depth implementation of the "Belt and Road" initiative not only strengthens economic cooperation with countries along the route but also injects new impetus into China's opening up and international influence.

The wave of technological progress is sweeping through, with new technologies such as the internet, big data, and artificial intelligence emerging endlessly, dramatically disrupting traditional lifestyles and work patterns<sup>[8-10]</sup>. The proliferation of technologies like smartphones, smart homes, and autonomous driving has brought about tremendous changes in people's lifestyles. Concurrently, workers in the new era are undergoing profound psychological transformations, characterized by their desire for freedom, pursuit of achievement, and a sense of uncertainty arising from the rapidly changing social environment—all unique hallmarks of this era.

In this broad context, university teachers, as key players in nurturing the pillars of future society, shoulder increasingly significant missions and responsibilities. They are tasked not only with imparting professional knowledge but also with cultivating students' innovative thinking and critical reasoning abilities to adapt to this rapidly changing era. This study aims to delve into the roles and missions of university teachers in the new era and analyze how to shape and enhance their professional competence and educational capabilities within this context, providing valuable insights for the reform and development of higher education.

## **2. The impact of the new era on university teachers**

As the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and the socialist construction entered a new stage, they not only set new goals for national development but also posed higher requirements for higher education and university teachers<sup>[3, 11-13]</sup>. As a crucial link in cultivating high-quality talent, the quality and direction of higher education are closely related to the country's future development. University teachers are no longer merely imparters of knowledge; they are also guides of values, worldviews, and outlooks on life. They need to integrate the overarching concept of national development into their teaching, fostering students' sense of social responsibility and historical mission.

In the context of increasingly fierce international competition, the security of China's industrial chain has become an important consideration for national development<sup>[14-17]</sup>. In this new situation, university teachers shoulder the heavy responsibility of cultivating compound talents with an international perspective and professional skills. They need to continuously update teaching content and methods to ensure that students possess the ability to solve complex problems, adapt to the needs of future international competition, and contribute to the country's industrial chain security and economic development.

The implementation of the major "Belt and Road" initiative not only strengthens economic cooperation between China and countries along the route but also provides new opportunities for the internationalization of higher education<sup>[18-20]</sup>. University teachers play an important role in this initiative. They need to promote academic research and cultural exchanges through international cooperation and exchanges, cultivating talents with an international perspective to support the country's opening up and the enhancement of its international influence.

The continuous emergence of new scientific and technological achievements is profoundly changing people's work and lifestyles. University teachers need to closely monitor technological development trends, not only introducing the latest technological achievements into teaching but also guiding students on how to remain competitive amid technological changes, fostering their innovative thinking and practical abilities<sup>[21,22]</sup>.

The enhanced senses of freedom and fulfillment, as well as the increased sense of uncertainty among

workers in the new era, reflect the impact of social changes on individuals' psychological states <sup>[23-25]</sup>. These changes pose new challenges to university teachers' teaching and educational methods. Teachers need to pay more attention to student's mental health, using flexible and diverse teaching methods and a human-centered educational philosophy to help students establish a positive mindset and ability to cope with social changes.

In summary, the impact of the new era on university teachers is comprehensive. It not only requires them to possess higher professional competence but also demands that they have a keen sense of the times and an international perspective, adapting to and leading the new development of higher education.

### **3. The traditional role and mission of university teachers**

In the traditional higher education system, the role and mission of university teachers primarily revolve around "teaching, imparting knowledge, and resolving doubts" <sup>[26,27]</sup>. This encompasses not only the imparting of pure knowledge but also the education and guidance of students' moral character. As paragons of learning and virtue, university teachers shoulder the heavy responsibility of fostering students' comprehensive development. Through classroom instruction, tutoring, and answering questions, they not only systematically and accurately impart professional knowledge to students but also subtly guide them in forming correct worldviews, outlooks on life, and values.

In addition to teaching and educating people, university teachers also play a pivotal role in academic research and innovation <sup>[28]</sup>. They are the pioneers of academic exploration, constantly pushing forward the development and progress of their disciplines through in-depth scientific research. University teachers must not only infuse the latest academic achievements into their teaching but also cultivate students' innovative thinking and ability to solve problems independently. In the process of scientific research, they guide students to participate in research projects, stimulate their research interests, and nurture future academic stars.

Overall, the traditional role and mission of university teachers are comprehensive and far-reaching. They must strive for excellence in both knowledge impartation and moral education, while also constantly breaking through in academic research and innovation, contributing their strength to social progress and academic prosperity.

### **4. The mission entrusted to university teachers in the new era**

As the new era approaches, the role and mission of university teachers are becoming increasingly rich and profound. In this era, they are not only held to high expectations but also face unprecedented responsibilities and challenges.

Cultivating innovative talents has become one of the important tasks entrusted to university teachers <sup>[29,30]</sup>. In the wave of the new era, society's demand for talent is becoming more diversified, and the pursuit of quality is becoming increasingly stringent. This shift requires university teachers to go beyond traditional knowledge impartation and instead dig deep into cultivating students' innovative thinking and practical abilities. To this end, teachers must be innovative and constantly explore new teaching methods, such as project-based learning and flipped classrooms, to stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning and their desire to explore. Simultaneously, providing abundant practical opportunities is also crucial, whether through laboratory research on campus, internships and practical training off-campus, or various innovation and entrepreneurship competitions, all of which can serve as stages for students to showcase themselves and

exercise their abilities. Through these practices, university teachers are committed to cultivating compound talents who possess independent thinking skills, excel in teamwork, and are imbued with an innovative and practical spirit.

On the other hand, university teachers also bear the lofty mission of promoting the core socialist values [26,27,29]. They are not only knowledge disseminators in the academic realm but also guides for students' spiritual growth. In daily teaching, university teachers need to skillfully integrate the core socialist values into the classroom, so that while students learn knowledge, they can also deeply understand the importance of core values such as integrity, friendliness, and dedication. Through vivid classroom instruction, rich social practice, and the teachers' own words and deeds, students can gradually develop positive moral qualities and grow into responsible, caring, and passionate youth of the new era.

Furthermore, university teachers must closely integrate their research and teaching work with the country's long-term development and actively respond to and serve the needs of national strategies [27, 29,30]. They should always pay attention to major national strategic deployments and key development areas, such as technological innovation and green development, and provide strong intellectual support and talent guarantees for the country's development through in-depth scientific research and technological innovation. At the same time, university teachers should also encourage students to actively participate in research topics closely related to national strategies, which not only exercises students' research abilities but also cultivates their sense of national identity and mission. In this way, teachers and students jointly contribute their efforts to the prosperity and progress of the country.

## **5. Strategies for shaping university teachers in the new era**

In the context of the new era, university teachers not only bear the mission of imparting knowledge but also need to continuously shape and enhance themselves to respond to society's diverse expectations for higher education. Therefore, it is essential to delve into the strategies for shaping university teachers, aiming to construct an image of university teachers that better aligns with the development needs of the new era.

Firstly, enhancing professional competence and educational teaching abilities is undoubtedly the core component of the strategy for shaping university teachers [31,32]. With the acceleration of knowledge renewal and the deepening of interdisciplinary integration, university teachers must embrace the concept of lifelong learning. By participating in professional training, reading cutting-edge literature, attending academic seminars, and other means, they should continuously enrich and update their knowledge reserves. Simultaneously, they should strive to improve teaching effectiveness, and actively explore and practice new teaching methods, such as blended learning and case-based teaching, to stimulate students' learning interest and cultivate their innovation capabilities and critical thinking.

Secondly, strengthening the construction of teaching ethics and style is equally crucial for shaping university teachers [33,34]. Teachers are not only imparters of knowledge but also guides of students' values and models of moral character. Therefore, university teachers should focus on their moral cultivation and professional ethics, conveying positive values and outlooks on life to students through their daily teaching behaviors and words. Concurrently, universities should establish and improve a teaching ethics evaluation mechanism, regularly assessing teachers' performance in teaching ethics to motivate them to continuously enhance their ethical standards.

With the continuous advancement of globalization and the implementation of international strategies such as the Belt and Road Initiative, expanding international vision and cross-cultural communication skills have become essential qualities for university teachers in the new era<sup>[35-37]</sup>. To this end, university teachers should actively participate in international academic exchanges and cooperation projects to improve their foreign language proficiency and cross-cultural communication abilities. This not only injects new inspiration and ideas into teachers' teaching and research work but also helps cultivate students' international vision and cross-cultural communication skills, laying a solid foundation for their future career development.

Furthermore, paying attention to student's mental health and growth needs is also an important responsibility that university teachers in the new era cannot ignore<sup>[37-39]</sup>. With the rapid development of society and increasing competition, university students face more and more psychological pressures and challenges. University teachers should closely monitor students' psychological dynamics and provide timely and effective psychological counseling and support. At the same time, teachers should also provide personalized guidance and services based on students' personality traits and interests, helping them discover their potential and interests, and achieve comprehensive and personalized growth.

In summary, the strategy for shaping university teachers in the new era is a multi-dimensional and comprehensive systematic project. Through the implementation of strategies such as enhancing professional competence, strengthening the construction of teaching ethics, expanding international vision, and paying attention to student's mental health, we can expect to cultivate a high-quality, professional, and innovative team of university teachers, injecting new vitality and impetus into the cause of higher education in the new era.

## 6. Conclusion

In the context of the new era, the roles and missions of university teachers have far exceeded the traditional scope of imparting knowledge, teaching skills, and resolving doubts. They are not only disseminators of knowledge and researchers in academics but also participants in national strategies, promoters of core socialist values, and guardians of students' mental health. By analyzing the new requirements for university teachers in the new era, this paper reveals the diverse missions they bear and the shaping strategies they need to adapt to fulfill these missions.

In the face of new trends in international competition, the impact of technological advancements on lifestyle, and changes in social psychology, university teachers must continuously enhance their professional competence and educational teaching abilities to better cultivate innovative talents. Simultaneously, strengthening the construction of teaching ethics and style is not only related to the healthy growth of students but also embodies the professional dignity and sense of mission of university teachers. In the context of internationalization, expanding international perspectives and cross-cultural communication skills have become essential qualities for university teachers. This not only helps enhance the international influence of China's higher education but is also key to cultivating talents with an international perspective. Furthermore, paying attention to student's mental health and growth needs reflects the humanistic care and educational responsibility of university teachers.

Therefore, the roles and missions of university teachers in the new era are diverse and challenging, requiring them to possess not only profound professional competence but also broad perspectives and noble

teaching ethics. By implementing effective shaping strategies, university teachers can better fulfill their roles and missions, making greater contributions to higher education and social development in the new era. Looking ahead, we expect university teachers to continue to play a significant role in talent cultivation, technological innovation, and social services, contributing to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

## Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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