

# Research on the Cultivation and Enhancement of Core Competencies of College Student Leadership Teams in the New Era: A Case Study of Nanchong Vocational College of Culture and Tourism

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**Abstract:** Under the background of the new era, vocational education has ushered in a strategic opportunity period for high-quality development. As the core position for cultivating technical and skilled talents, the quality of talent cultivation in higher vocational colleges is directly related to industrial upgrading and social development. Student cadres, as the backbone of college student groups, are not only the bridge between teachers and students but also important participants in campus governance and cultural construction. In view of this, this paper analyzes the core competencies of college student leadership teams in the new era, conducts research combined with Nanchong Vocational College of Culture and Tourism, and puts forward strategies for cultivating and enhancing the core competencies of college student leadership teams in the new era, starting from the current problems.

**Keywords:** New era; College; Leadership team; Core competencies; Nanchong Vocational College of Culture and Tourism

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## 1. The significance of cultivating core competencies of college student leadership teams in the new era

### 1.1. Aligning with the inherent requirements of high-quality development of vocational education

The reform of vocational education in the new era proposes to “cultivate socialist builders and successors with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor.” As the leaders of student groups in higher vocational colleges, the quality of student cadres directly reflects the effectiveness of the school’s talent cultivation. Nanchong Vocational College of Culture and Tourism focuses on the development needs of “integration of culture and tourism” with cultural and tourism majors as its characteristics. The student

cadres not only need to have basic organizational and management capabilities but also possess cultural literacy and professional spirit<sup>[1]</sup>. By carrying out the cultivation of core competencies of college student leadership teams in the new era, we can better integrate the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education into the entire process of campus management and practical teaching, thereby effectively promoting the transformation of vocational education from “skill training” to “literacy cultivation.” This is in line with the core demands of high-quality development of higher vocational colleges and can invisibly transport more compound talents with both skills and literacy for the cultural and tourism industry.

## **1.2. Improving the efficiency of campus governance and the level of cultural construction**

Carrying out the cultivation of core competencies of college student leadership teams in the new era can effectively improve the level of campus governance and the quality of cultural construction. Student cadres are important participants in college campus governance, and their core competencies directly affect the efficiency and quality of management work<sup>[2]</sup>. At the same time, under the background of the new era, college campus governance is facing new challenges, such as the diversification of students’ ideas and the personalization of needs. This requires student cadres to give full play to the role of self-management, self-education, and self-service, and take the initiative to assist the school in implementing various management measures. For Nanchong Vocational College of Culture and Tourism, student cadres are the core force in the construction of campus cultural and tourism characteristic culture. Through planning and organizing cultural and tourism-themed activities, inheriting local cultural resources and other practices, we can better deeply integrate professional characteristics with campus culture, thereby gradually creating a campus atmosphere of “educating people through culture and nourishing the heart through tourism,” and improving the campus cultural soft power and governance efficiency<sup>[3]</sup>.

## **1.3. Assisting the personal growth and career development of student cadres**

The position of student cadres is an important platform for exercising students’ comprehensive abilities. The cultivation of core competencies can help students achieve a growth leap from “skill-oriented” to “compound.” In the new era, the demand for talent in the cultural and tourism industry has exceeded the single skill dimension, and it pays more attention to comprehensive literacy such as communication and coordination, teamwork, and emergency disposal. The practices such as organization and planning and conflict resolution in student cadres’ work are important ways to temper their literacy<sup>[4]</sup>. Through systematic cultivation, student cadres can not only improve their ability to perform their duties in campus work but also gradually accumulate more core competitiveness required for career development, which can lay a solid foundation for them to engage in the cultural and tourism industry and fulfill the mission of “cultural inheritance and innovation” in the future.

# **2. Existing problems in the cultivation of core competencies of college student leadership teams in the new era: A case study of Nanchong Vocational College of Culture and Tourism**

## **2.1. Vague cognition of core competencies and deviation in cultivation orientation**

In the process of cultivating student cadres, the college has a cognitive deviation of “valuing use over cultivation,” and fails to accurately grasp the connotation and key points of core competencies. In addition, some teachers regard student cadres as “management assistants,” leading them to overfocus on the completion

of transactional work and neglect the cultivation of core dimensions such as students' political literacy and moral literacy<sup>[5]</sup>. Student cadres also have certain cognitive misunderstandings. They regard the position as a tool to "exercise skills," one-sidedly pursue the improvement of organizational and management capabilities, and pay insufficient attention to literacy such as ideals and beliefs and service awareness. This cognitive deviation leads to the unbalanced development of core competencies of the student leadership team. Some cadres have insufficient political sensitivity and utilitarian service motivation, making it difficult for them to meet the comprehensive requirements of the cultural and tourism industry for talents in the new era<sup>[6]</sup>.

## **2.2. Unscientific selection mechanism and shortcomings in team structure**

At this stage, the selection of student cadres in the college is still mainly based on "democratic voting + teacher appointment." The selection mechanism lacks systematicity and scientificity, making it difficult to fully examine the core competencies and development potential of candidates. In the democratic voting link, some students vote "based on familiarity" and "canvass votes," resulting in some students with excellent comprehensive quality but poor communication skills missing opportunities. The teacher appointment link has a strong tendency towards subjective judgment. Teachers mostly rely on students' academic performance or initial performance, lacking long-term observation and comprehensive evaluation of their hidden literacy, such as sense of responsibility and teamwork. This selection method is likely to lead to an unbalanced structure of the student leadership team. Some cadres have certain transaction execution capabilities but lack innovative awareness and a sense of responsibility, making it difficult for them to cope with complex campus management and practical work<sup>[7]</sup>.

## **2.3. Imperfect cultivation system and insufficient training effectiveness**

At present, the college has not constructed a systematic and regular training system for the core competencies of student cadres, and the training work has problems such as "fragmentation and formalization." At the same time, the training content of many teachers lacks pertinence and hierarchy, mainly focusing on general management knowledge and explanation of rules and regulations. It fails to design personalized training content combined with the post characteristics, grade differences, and literacy shortcomings of student cadres, nor does it integrate characteristic elements of the cultural and tourism industry, which easily leads to the disconnection between training content and actual needs<sup>[8]</sup>. In terms of training forms, the current training forms are relatively single, mainly focusing on thematic lectures and meeting communications, lacking interactive models such as scenario simulation, practical research, and workshops. The participation enthusiasm of student cadres is not high, which adversely affects the training effect.

# **3. Strategies for cultivating and enhancing core competencies of college student leadership teams in the new era: A case study of Nanchong Vocational College of Culture and Tourism**

## **3.1. Clarifying the cultivation orientation and defining the connotation of core competencies**

To improve the effect of cultivating core competencies of college student leadership teams in the new era, we should clarify the cultivation orientation and establish a more accurate goal, which can lay a solid foundation for the development of subsequent work. For this reason, teachers can establish a cultivation goal of "simultaneous development of morality and skills, and both literacy" combined with the requirements of vocational education

in the new era and the development needs of the cultural and tourism industry, and cultivate student cadres into compound backbone talents with firm politics and good morality<sup>[9]</sup>. At the same time, we should highlight the cultural and tourism characteristics of the college, strengthen the cultivation of characteristic literacy, such as cultural inheritance and service etiquette, so that student cadres can not only be competent for campus management work but also adapt to the career development needs of the cultural and tourism industry. In addition, we need to clarify the dimensions of core competencies and build a higher-quality core competency system. Moreover, teachers need to do a good job in cognitive guidance, guiding teachers and student cadres to correctly understand the importance of core competency cultivation through thematic lectures, seminars, and other forms, and abandon the previous cognitive misunderstanding of “valuing use over cultivation.” In addition, we can invite some outstanding alumni and backbones of the cultural and tourism industry to share their career development experiences, allowing student cadres to clarify the key role of core competencies in personal growth and career development, and stimulating their internal motivation to actively improve their literacy<sup>[10]</sup>.

### **3.2. Optimizing the selection mechanism and constructing a scientific selection system**

In the cultivation of core competencies of college student leadership teams in the new era, we can try to establish a “trinity” selection standard, clarify the three-dimensional selection rules of “literacy-ability-profession,” take political literacy and moral literacy as the primary inspection content, and focus on students’ sense of responsibility and service awareness. At the same time, we also need to examine students’ competence in performing their duties, such as organization and management, and communication and coordination. Combined with the cultural and tourism characteristics of the college, teachers can examine students’ cultural literacy and professional adaptability to ensure that the selected student cadres have both comprehensive literacy and meet the post needs and professional development<sup>[11]</sup>.

In the selection process, we should innovate the selection method, break through the limitations of the traditional selection model, and construct a selection system of “dynamic investigation + scenario test + multi-evaluation.” Dynamic investigation can run through students’ daily study and life, and observe their comprehensive quality and behaviors through their performance in classrooms and community activities. At the same time, we can create a cultural and tourism characteristic scenario test, simulating scenarios such as cultural and tourism activity planning and tourist complaint handling to examine students’ practical operation ability and emergency response. Moreover, we can try to establish a reserve talent pool for student cadres, absorbing more students with outstanding comprehensive quality and development potential into the reserve pool through daily observation, community selection, and other methods<sup>[12]</sup>. For reserve talents, we can carry out targeted cultivation, provide them with pre-job training, on-the-job internships, and other opportunities, conduct regular literacy assessments and dynamic adjustments, so as to ensure that the student leadership team always maintains vitality.

### **3.3. Improving the cultivation system and enhancing training effectiveness**

In the cultivation of core competencies of college student leadership teams in the new era, teachers can try to construct a “characteristic + hierarchical” training content system, and create a training content of “basic module + characteristic module + advanced module” combined with the cultural and tourism characteristics of the college and the post needs of student cadres. The basic module can mainly include general content such as political theory and rules and regulations, which can further strengthen the theoretical foundation and sense

of rules of student cadres<sup>[13]</sup>. The characteristic module can try to integrate local culture, cultural and tourism etiquette, and other content, and invite experts from the cultural and tourism industry and local cultural scholars to give lectures, which can greatly improve the industry adaptability of student cadres. In the advanced module, we can design personalized content for student cadres in different positions and grades, so as to better achieve precise cultivation. To better break through the traditional lecture model, we can try to adopt diversified training forms such as “practical research + scenario simulation + workshop.” In practice, teachers can lead student cadres to carry out practical research in red education bases and cultural and tourism scenic spots, and temper their political literacy and cultural literacy through field investigations, cultural lectures, and other activities.

### **3.4. Improving the assessment and incentive mechanism and enhancing team stability**

To ensure the effect of cultivating core competencies of college student leadership teams in the new era, we should improve the assessment mechanism to enhance team stability. In practice, teachers can construct an “all-round + process-oriented” assessment system, incorporate core competencies such as political literacy and moral literacy into assessment indicators, refine assessment standards, and assess service awareness and sense of responsibility through daily behavior performance and work accounts<sup>[14]</sup>. In addition, we need to construct a diversified incentive system of “spiritual incentive + material incentive.” In terms of spiritual incentives, in addition to traditional honorary recognition, we can add characteristic awards such as “Cultural and Tourism Characteristic Cadre” and “Service Pioneer.” In terms of material incentives, we can set up a special subsidy for student cadres, and give rewards such as learning supplies and practical funds to outstanding performers. Moreover, we need to establish a reasonable withdrawal and error tolerance and correction mechanism, clarify the withdrawal standards for student cadres, and implement an admonition, transfer, or withdrawal mechanism for cadres who are unqualified in assessment, incompetent in performing their duties, or failing to meet literacy requirements, so as to ensure the overall quality of the team. At the same time, we can establish an error tolerance and correction mechanism, showing tolerance and guidance for mistakes made by student cadres due to innovative attempts in work, helping them better summarize experience and improve deficiencies, which can effectively avoid the situation where they dare not act for fear of making mistakes, and is conducive to creating a good atmosphere of daring to innovate and take responsibility.

### **3.5. Strengthening self-improvement and promoting all-round development of literacy**

In the practice of cultivating core competencies of college student leadership teams in the new era, student cadres should do a good job in self-improvement and strengthening, which can promote the all-round development of their own literacy and provide assistance for subsequent work. For this reason, student cadres should balance study and work. We can guide student cadres to establish a correct concept of study and work through time management training, experience sharing meetings, and other forms, enabling them to learn to allocate time reasonably, so that they can better combine practical experience in work with professional learning, which can effectively realize “promoting work through study and practicing study through work.” At the same time, we can encourage student cadres to set up learning mutual assistance groups to drive other students around them to make progress together, and at the same time, improve their own academic level, allowing student cadres to better play their exemplary leading role. Teachers can encourage student cadres to actively participate in activities such as the “Young Marxists Training Project” and cultural and tourism skills competitions, so that they can temper their core competencies in practice<sup>[15]</sup>. In daily work, we can guide student cadres to strengthen independent learning, enabling them to broaden their knowledge and improve their theoretical literacy and

cultural literacy by reading political theory works, cultural and tourism industry books, etc. At the same time, we should strengthen the physical and mental health and work style construction of student cadres, pay attention to their physical and mental health, and regularly carry out mental health lectures and stress reduction activities, which can better help them relieve their work pressure and enable them to maintain a positive and optimistic attitude. Moreover, we should further strengthen work style construction, guide student cadres to establish a correct view of power through integrity education, case warnings, and other forms, make them abandon self-serving ideas, and consciously accept supervision from classmates, which can better maintain the good image of the student leadership team.

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## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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