

Research on the Teaching Reform of Tourism Reception Under the Background of National First-Class Undergraduate Specialty Construction

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Abstract: The launch of the “Double Thousand Plan” has greatly stimulated the enthusiasm of major construction in colleges and universities. In order to meet the requirements of the first-class undergraduate major in tourism management, there is a need for an active reform and innovation in its teaching, an improvement in the quality of running this undergraduate major, and an accelerated growth of this undergraduate major. The tourism reception industry is a basic course of the tourism management specialty, and its teaching effect has a vital influence on the construction of this specialty. Taking the hospitality and tourism industry as an example, this paper analyzes the existing problems in curriculum construction, redefines the ideas and objectives of curriculum teaching reform, and expounds the contents and measures of curriculum teaching reform.

Keywords: National first-class undergraduate major; Tourism management; Tourism Reception Industry; Teaching reform

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1. Introduction

Ever since the Ministry of Education officially launched the “Double Thousand Plan” for the first-class undergraduate major construction in April 2019, the application, construction, and acceptance of the national first-class undergraduate major in tourism management has become the concern and focus of the first-class undergraduate education construction of tourism in the new era ^[1]. The plan states that within three years, there will be 10,000 national first-class undergraduate programs and 10,000 provincial first-class undergraduate programs. It is a new policy that emphasizes on the construction of specific majors in colleges and universities following the national double first-class construction, which fully reflects the State’s emphasis on the construction of higher education and further clarifies the development goals of undergraduate majors in colleges and universities in the new era. According to the information released by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in close relation to the plan, there are more than 1,600 colleges and universities that are offering tourism management majors. Among the first national first-class undergraduate majors in tourism management, most of them are 985, 211, and other old and traditional tourism universities. In 2018, the Ministry of Education clearly put forward the plan of “eliminating water

courses” and “creating golden courses” at the New Era Undergraduate Education Work Conference of Chinese Colleges and Universities. As a result from the research on the teaching reform of tourism management, local undergraduate colleges and universities may soon achieve exceptional achievements in the acceptance of national first-class undergraduate majors.

According to the National Standard for Teaching Quality of Tourism Management in The National Standard for Teaching Quality of Undergraduate Majors of Colleges and Universities published by the Ministry of Education in 2018, the Tourism Reception Industry course is offered for the first time at the undergraduate level in tourism management majors of colleges and universities across the country.

Tourism Reception Industry is one of the four core courses for tourism management majors, and it is a fundamental course for learning tourism management. The teaching effect of this course has a direct impact on the training level of tourism management majors. Taking the hospitality and tourism industry as an example, this paper analyzes the existing problems in curriculum construction, redefines the ideas and objectives of curriculum teaching reform, and expounds the contents and measures of curriculum teaching reform, in order to provide some reference and inspiration for curriculum teaching reform under the background of national first-class undergraduate major construction.

2. Research status

Relevant research on the construction and development of colleges and universities under the background of the construction of national first-class undergraduate majors is not only from a comprehensive perspective, but also from the discussion on the learning from foreign experience in the construction of majors as well as the exploration and thinking of improving educational administration management and curriculum construction reform.

Ever since the Ministry of Education put forward the concept of “golden curriculum” and commenced the “Shuang Wan Plan” of constructing first-class professional courses, the research on curriculum reform has garnered widespread attention. The main research directions will be discussed below. The first is the connotation and standard of golden course or first-class course. For example, Wu Yan proposed that the standard of golden course or first-class course is “gender degree,” which embodies high order, innovation, and challenge ^[2]; Zhang Hongwei et al. asserted that first-class courses should have profound thoughts and rich academic characteristics ^[3]; Li Xinglin analyzed the operation mechanism of “Golden Lesson” from two aspects – cognition and practice ^[4]. The second is the construction path of golden course or first-class course. Li Yindan et al. believe that the construction of first-class courses should be jointly carried out by schools and enterprises in terms of course management, developed in a coordinated manner between industry and education, and ensure the intensive cultivation of artisan quality culture ^[5]; Cai Jigang believes that the specific connotation of courses as a major must be restructured with the adjustment of the professional structure; curriculum restructuring, which is the adjustment of curriculum categories and teaching content, should become the direction and guide for the construction of the 20,000 first-class undergraduate courses ^[6]; and Shi Yikai, who discussed the importance of first-class undergraduate course teaching and teaching research from the aspects of teachers’ ethics, teaching philosophy, design, content, and methods, also put forward that the most important thing for the construction and teaching of first-class undergraduate courses is to be equipped with a high-quality professional first-class teaching team ^[7].

In regard to the construction of first-class courses for tourism management major, Yan Wenhua believes that the domestic tourism teaching research has not received the attention it deserves, with a relatively few existing first-class tourism courses and participation in the construction of colleges and universities; additionally, the first-class undergraduate tourism course construction is seriously lagging behind the first-class vocational college curriculum construction and the first-class professional skilled professional core course ^[8]. Huang Zhenfang et al. proposed the “six characteristics and one degree”

standard for the curriculum construction of tourism management under the background of new liberal arts, focusing on the construction of five undergraduate “golden courses” in tourism management ^[9]. Ma Yong et al. analyzed the connotation and characteristics of the “golden courses” in tourism management from the perspective of new liberal arts and the six key points in the construction of these “golden courses.” Three implementation paths for the construction of these “golden courses” have been proposed by taking the Tourism Planning and Development course as an example ^[10]. There are several researches on the construction of first-class courses in the tourism management specialty; however, a mature theoretical system has not yet been formed.

3. Existing problems in the Tourism Reception Industry course construction

3.1. Theoretical course content

The textbook used in this course is *Tourism Reception Industry*, published by Huazhong University of Science and Technology, and edited by Ma Yong. Although relevant cases are discussed in the textbook, it is a challenge to guide students’ practical aspect only through teachers’ explanation based on the textbook. Moreover, students may not learn from the problems they may encounter in practical work through textbook learning, thus resulting in a disconnection between undergraduate learning and actual work after graduation.

3.2. Traditional teaching mode, and lacking participation and initiative among students

With the change of the times and the development of the society, the traditional teaching mode that embodies scripted teaching is incapable of meeting the needs of today’s post-00s students. The new teaching approaches, which include information technology and new media, are still not fully utilized. Moreover, homework management is lax and superficial, and the communication between teachers and students is only limited to class time, lacking effective guidance and communication after class. If classroom teaching is dull and unappealing to students, and students themselves lack self-discipline and learning consciousness, they will not be able to master the necessary professional knowledge and key abilities through this course.

3.3. Insufficient practice and application ability among professional teachers

Speaker teachers are usually professionally trained, but they do not have enough experience in the tourism industry. Therefore, their industry experience, practice, and application ability are weak, and their understanding of the latest development of the industry is poor. They are unable to help students grasp the development trend of the industry forefront, and it is difficult for them to inspire and lead a life filled with learning consciousness and innovation practice.

3.4. Single examination mode, and the inability to fully evaluate students’ comprehensive ability

This course is generally set up as an examination course in colleges and universities across the country, and students’ academic level is assessed through a unified examination at the end of the semester. Although most colleges and universities have included a certain proportion of ordinary class scores and homework scores in the teaching reform, their proportions are not high. It is difficult to assess students’ abilities in a comprehensive manner, especially in terms of mastering and flexibly using knowledge points as well as identifying, analyzing, and solving problems. It is also a challenge to evaluate the learning effect of students objectively.

4. Thoughts and objectives of the teaching reform of Tourism Reception Industry

(1) Emphasis is placed on cultivating students’ autonomous learning ability and consciousness as well as the curriculum concept of lifelong learning. As the main body of the tourism reception industry,

consumers now have higher demands; thus, students need to keep learning after graduation to be able to cope with new situations and challenges at work.

- (2) Emphasis is placed on cultivating students' practical ability of combining theory with practice, so that they not only will master the course content, but also flexibly use what they have learned in daily practice and future work to achieve the effect of applying what they have learned.
- (3) Emphasis is placed on cultivating students' independent thinking and innovation abilities. On the basis of learning classroom knowledge, students need to develop various skills, such as in using the internet, new media, off-campus practice, and other ways, to integrate their own understanding with other knowledge points after class, analyze problems by analogy, and bring forth new ideas when solving problems independently.

5. Contents and measures of the teaching reform of Tourism Reception Industry

5.1. Reform of teaching content

5.1.1. Extensively evaluate the teaching content

Teaching materials are considered an important carrier of the teaching content. Teachers must carefully evaluate their teaching materials, understand the curriculum standards, and identify the inner relationship between the knowledge points and the curriculum standards. Only by fully understanding the teaching tasks, teaching objectives, and teaching structure of the course can we reconstruct and improve the teaching materials on the basis of fully interpreting them. The only way to ensure that students can comprehend the key points in the textbook is to remove any unnecessary complexity and make it as clear and simple as possible. Teachers would be able to instruct pupils more effectively by thoroughly reviewing the important key points and difficulties in the textbook.

5.1.2. Adjust the supplementary course content

In the selection of course content, it is necessary to strengthen the novelty and practicability of knowledge as well as timely remove outdated cases and viewpoints that are difficult for students to apply in their future work. It may be beneficial to introduce the theoretical development and application of the tourism reception industry at home and abroad into the classroom; update, optimize, and enrich the course content; as well as stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning.

5.1.3. Draw connections with other courses

It is imperative to aptly handle the relationship between the Hospitality and Tourism Industry course and other professional courses related to tourism management. While teaching this course, it is inevitable that other relevant subject knowledge is involved, thus requiring teachers to explain the relevant subject knowledge by analogy. This allows students to understand better and expand their knowledge. However, due to the substantive knowledge in each subject and the limited class hours, the reform of the curriculum content should be focused on dealing with the relationship between this course and other courses related to this major, as well as to draw an orderly connection of knowledge points between relevant subjects without excessive overlapping or repetition.

5.2. Reform of teaching methods

5.2.1. Improve the professional level of teachers and form a high-quality teaching team

The premise of cultivating excellent students is to form a team with high-quality teachers. Teachers in the tourism reception industry need to be up-to-date with the latest consultation and status quo of the development of the industry by actively participating in enterprise research or part-time training. Teachers would be able to improve their teaching level and professional quality by actively participating in various

meetings, training, and visits. Teachers who perform exceedingly well should be encouraged to participate in international tourism summits so as to get hold of first-hand information of the industry and learn of the future trends. Following the summit, academic reports and exchanges should be carried out, which will play a radiating and driving role.

5.2.2. Diversify the teaching methods by combining offline classroom teaching with after-school online teaching

In order to guarantee the teaching effect and improve the learning quality of students, it is necessary to optimize the teaching plan through the combination of offline and online teaching, so as to enhance the initiative and enthusiasm of students for learning. Each class can be divided into three stages: pre-class stage, in-class stage, and after-class stage. The pre-class stage includes assignment, pre-class exploration, and live broadcast question-and-answer (Q&A). The assignment involves distributing discussion topics of the next class. Pre-class exploration is based on online resources, such as preview courseware, teaching videos, case analysis, and online resource links. Live broadcast Q&A is a method for both, teachers and students to interact with each other, answer questions, and clarify their doubts. This method stimulates students' thirst for knowledge and desire for exploration. The in-class stage includes classroom teaching, in-class test, and in-class discussion. In classroom teaching, teachers teach relevant knowledge points and analyze certain cases according to the curriculum standards. The in-class test, which involves designing tests on important knowledge points, assesses students' mastery of these knowledge points and the teaching effect. In-class discussion involves group discussions centering on the knowledge points, cases, and topics released before class. It helps students form independent thinking learning habits. The after-class stage includes assigning tasks, homework, and feedback supervision. Assigning tasks after class is to assign specific homework requirements and necessary reference materials. These after-class tasks require students to finish their homework through the online platform after class. At the same time, it urges students to consolidate relevant knowledge points and encourage them to take the initiative to expand their extracurricular knowledge. Feedback supervision involves monitoring students' homework completion through the online platform, correcting and modifying their homework, and contacting students to solve certain problems in time.

As an important platform, students' after-school learning online database content should highlight practicality and applicability. Its purpose should not be confined to only uploading syllabuses and plans, teaching materials, such as e-books, courseware, and other course related materials, but it should be equipped with convenient project learning and network data packets, such as lectures, bulletin board systems (BBS), websites, online courses, and videos. The open education teaching mode is used to cultivate students' consciousness of independent learning.

5.2.3. Establish a high-quality and high-standard training system as well as school-enterprise cooperation mode

In regard to undergraduate course construction, the Ministry of Education clearly pointed out the education concept of "taking students as the center, ability training as the guide." Guiding students to establish a correct way of learning and encouraging students to actively participate in social practice activities, while learning, practicing, and using their experiences and feelings in practice may be beneficial. In order to build a first-class course in social practice, it is necessary to equip theoretical instructors and a stable practice base, in which more than 70% of class hours should be spent at grassroots level ^[11].

Tourism Reception Industry is a course that emphasizes on application and practice as its core content, covering a wide range of specific service and management directions. Social practice courses should be reasonably included. The site at which teaching occurs will be relocated from classrooms to a variety of

simulation training bases or even enterprise sites in order to cultivate students' understanding of professional knowledge, their ability to use the former, and the ability to think independently in the face of practical problems, so as to solve them. The overall structure is shown in **Figure 1**.

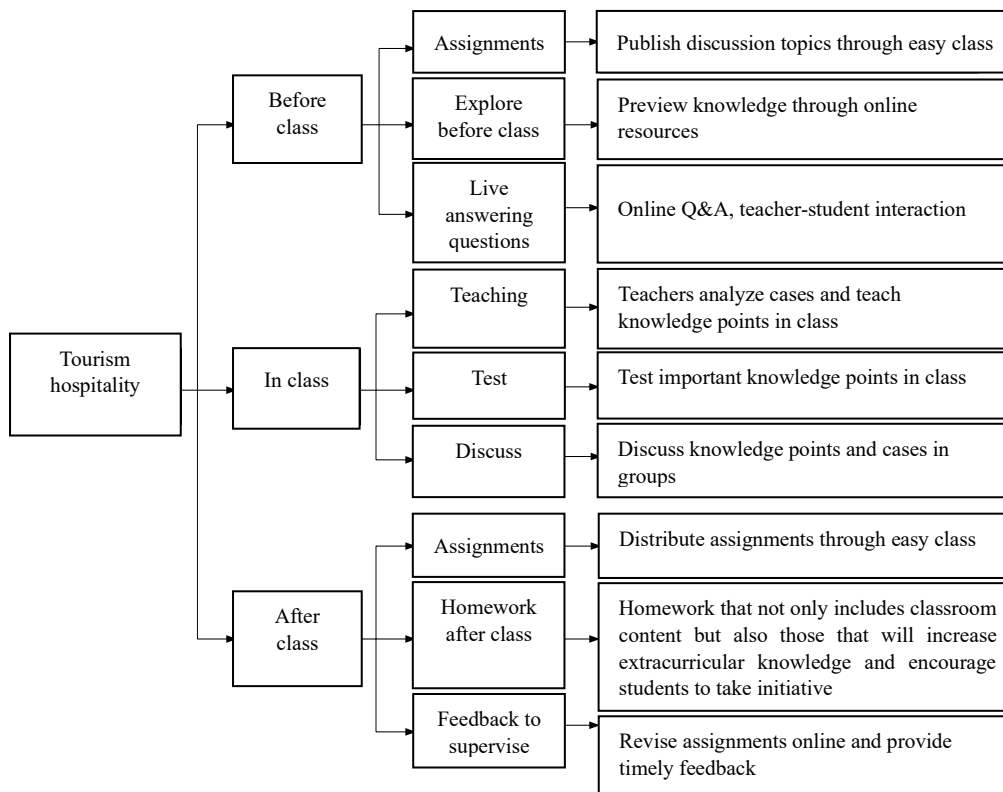


Figure 1. Teaching mode after reform

Colleges and universities should increase the capital investment in the construction of various training rooms and simulation teaching centers, purchase advanced simulation equipment and software, as well as use technical means to establish simulation training rooms that are similar to those of relevant tourism enterprises. It may be beneficial to carry out scene simulation teaching, create specific scenarios, arrange students in groups, and prepare both, team information and personal information that reflect actual scenarios in train stations, hotel rooms, restaurants, scenic spots, and other places. Students should be encouraged to engage in some of these roles, so that they can learn how to deal with practical problems, think independently, and solve them independently, all of which would help students deepen their theoretical understanding of professional knowledge.

Colleges and universities should collaborate with off-campus training bases, encourage students to participate in social practice, arrange visits to hotels and scenic spots, and move the classroom to the real work environment, so that students may come to experience and familiarize with the tourism reception industry, as well as understand various knowledge points and concepts related to it. In this way, students will develop a comprehensive and intuitive cognition. The learning of theoretical knowledge is embodied in the entire process of learning to serve guests in a real environment.

Colleges and universities should strengthen their cooperation with tourism enterprises, realize the integration of industry and school through training contract, and provide students with internship opportunities. During tourist seasons when there is personnel shortage, students should be given the opportunity to practice at these places. On the one hand, it allows students to adapt to the actual development needs of the industry, enhance their communication skills, and improve their understanding of professional knowledge. On the other hand, it alleviates the pressure from the shortage of employees

during peak seasons. Colleges and universities can also obtain first-hand resources in the industry through the actual effect and situation of the annual internship program, and then timely revise the course plan, course content, and teaching methods.

5.2.4. Learn from the advanced experience of foreign countries and actively promote international cooperation while running schools

In terms of the curriculum reform of the tourism industry, continuous innovation, new ideas, and technical support are required. Compared to Lausanne, Switzerland, with a history of more than one hundred education systems in the tourism industry, the tourism industry in China is still very immature. Similarly, establishing professional cooperation in tourism management with Europe and the United States, and applying the experiences from these countries in such a way that is suitable for national conditions would be beneficial.

5.3. Reform of assessment methods

In order to establish a more scientific and comprehensive evaluation system that is related to teaching achievements, the assessment method should be throughout the whole semester, rather than focusing at the end of the semester. The “whole-process” assessment is not only for students, but also for teachers. For students, their assessment is more inclined to assessing their comprehensive quality and ability, whereas that of teachers is more comprehensive and fair.

5.3.1. Teacher evaluation

The supervision office, together with the responsible person of the major and academic leaders, will conduct the initial, mid-term, and final assessment of the teaching implementation, make corresponding assessments and evaluations, as well as discuss and exchange opinions with the teachers. Students should make real-time anonymous comments on their teachers, including their homework correction, practical guidance, and other actual teaching activities, as well as provide timely feedback on these aspects to the relevant person in charge of the school.

5.3.2. Evaluation of course learning

The students' learning ability and comprehensive quality are assessed comprehensively. According to the teaching objectives and requirements, where theory and practice should be combined, an open and whole-process assessment mode is adopted. The assessment objectives of students mainly include the following: understanding the basic theory and content of tourism reception industry; developing a scientific way of thinking and independent thinking ability; developing the ability to collect and sort out professional literature and reference materials as well as produce research results with unique insights; developing the ability to understand theoretical problems in the process of industry practice and to analyze and solve practical problems in professional work. As shown in **Table 1**, the total score is no longer confined to a single paper but rather consists of several modules, in which the attendance rate accounts for 10%, in-class practice performance accounts for 20%, in-class homework accounts for another 20%, and the final exam score accounts for 50%. In order to cultivate independent thinking and divergent thinking among students, drawing inferences from one another may be beneficial. The main focus of the final examination should be on students' comprehensive quality assessment based on their understanding and application rather than just students' theoretical knowledge by rote memorization.

Table 1. Assessment methods and assessment items after the reform

| Assessment methods | Assessment items |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Attendance assessment (10%) | Class check-in Practice punching |
| Process assessment (20%) | Interactive performance in the classroom Internship attitude |
| Task assessment (20%) | Job completion Research reports Internship assessment report |
| Final assessment (50%) | Final exam |

5.3.3. Separation of teaching and examination

If teachers no longer set the final paper for this course, the work of setting the final paper shall be accomplished by the research group. According to the teaching objectives and curriculum training rules, the test question standards and marking standards are formulated, and a standardized question bank is established. This has changed the tradition where teachers draw on key points and miss some questions at the end of the semester, thus increasing the difficulty in learning and examination as well as putting forward higher demands on teachers' teaching and guidance abilities in cultivating students' independent learning ability. The final exam is no longer a formality for both, students and teachers. Teachers have to increase the breadth and depth of teaching, while students have to develop the correct learning attitude to pass the final exam, so that the examination can be used as a just and effective means of assessing the teaching level of teachers and the learning effect of students.

6. Conclusion

Ever since the construction of the first-class undergraduate major in tourism management was proposed in the "Double Thousand Plan" issued by the Ministry of Education in 2019, it has been the direction of development for tourism management majors in various universities. The first-class undergraduate specialty construction would not only improve students' knowledge level and practical ability as well as enable them to adapt to new roles after graduation, but also help to cultivate applied, compound talents that meet the social needs in the new era under the background of the teaching reform research. As one of the four main courses of tourism management, Tourism Reception Industry plays an important role in the training of tourism professionals. In view of the teaching reform of the tourism industry, this paper disclosed a series of problems and proposed several solutions and construction ideas in hope that the subject of tourism will continued to grow, both, professional teachers and scholars will jointly promote the curriculum reform work for tourism management in the national first-class undergraduate acceptance work, so as to lay a solid foundation, and the country will be able to train more talents in the direction of tourism management.

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