

Analysis on How to Improve Competency of Student-affairs-administrators in Colleges and Universities

Hongde Gao*, Huabiao Wang, Yanli Zhang, Lirui Niu

Hebei University of Architecture, Zhangjiakou, 075000, Hebei, China

Abstract: Facing new situations and development, ideological and political work in colleges and universities presents new characteristics under the new circumstances., which requires student-affairs-administrators to have a correct attitude, grasp the laws scientifically, study new situations, inspiring motivation, broaden work channels, and improve efficiency. Therefore, student-affairs-administrators must enhance their own quality and competency through thoroughly studying the characteristics of college students' ideological work, scientifically grasping the ideological and political laws, and constantly improving the pertinence and effectiveness of ideological and political education.

Keywords: Student-affairs-administrator, Improve, Competency, Channel

Publication date: September, 2019

Publication online: 30 September 2019

***Corresponding author:** Hongde Gao, dhgfly@163.com

1 Introduction

A competency, first raised by professor David·McClelland of Harvard University in 1973, is defined as any characteristic of a person that distinguishes between superior or exemplary performers and other performers in a specific job. Those characteristics might include motives, traits, self-image, attitude, values, knowledge, cognition, behaviors skills and so on. These characteristics can be tested and measured with well-accepted standards to differentiate performance. Competencies of student-affairs-administrators are what the counselors and class teachers who work in student affairs in colleges and universities possess to be qualified for the job. As the saying goes, a teacher

is one who passes on the truth, imparts knowledge and solves puzzles. A student might accept his way of teaching only when a teacher is greatly respected and adorned. In the new era, many new situations and new problems arise in the ideological and political education of colleges and universities. Competencies of student-affairs-administrators are directly related to whether they can promote students' self-cultivation of abilities needed in future workplace. Only by continually enhancing their competencies, can student-affairs-administrators improve their job performance. To enhance the competency, student-affairs-administrators need to thoroughly study the characteristics of college students' ideological work, scientifically grasp the ideological and political laws, and constantly improve the pertinence and effectiveness of ideological and political education.

2 Learning thoroughly and systematically to complete the knowledge system

“If one is to do his work well, he must first sharpen his tools.” If the educator wants to give the educated a bowl of water, he must have a bucket of water or a few buckets of water. A competent student-affairs-administrators must have firm belief, solid theoretical foundation, keen mind, profound professional knowledge, pioneering spirit, and humorous and accurate expression. Therefore, student-affairs-administrators must take learning as a lifelong attitude, responsibility and pursuit.

2.1 Keeping up with the situation to be a learning pioneer

Student-affairs-administrators must fully understand the significance of learning as it is the basis of action

and is needed in work. Student-affairs-administrators must take initiative to learn, know how to learn and implement what has been learned, only by which will they take a lead in building learning-oriented student-affairs-organization, Party, and cadres. Through learning, student-affairs-administrators would establish a correct view of power and status, a positive outlook on life, and an all-encompassing world view. Student-affairs-administrators must resolutely implements the decision and arrangements made by school's party committee and education administration, by combining the cultivation of Party spirit with enhancement of conduct, the Party's educational line, principles, and policies, the Party's leadership and Party members' exemplary functions, and promotion of the educational reform and development of ideological work. First of all, student-affairs-administrators must enhance ourselves by constantly updating our theoretical knowledge, thus to solve the practical problems at the grassroots level by making good use of the theoretical standpoints, viewpoints and methods of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. Secondly, student-affairs-administrators would take a lead acquiring the cutting-edge knowledge and first-hand information which lays theoretical foundation for better ideological and political work. Furthermore, colleges and universities should put greater emphasis on the training of educators, especially the training for student-affairs-administrators, offering them more training opportunities and improving the quality of training. Therefore, student-affairs-administrators could innovate their working methods and enable themselves to be learning-oriented, intelligent and knowledge-based in tackling student affairs.

2.2 Cultivating party spirit to be an intelligent guide

Serving the people wholeheartedly is the fundamental purpose of the Party. The Party Spirit of a student-affairs-administrator will be measured by his job which is whether he does everything for students, for all of them, and for their all. Cultivation of Party Spirit mainly includes political cultivation, theoretical cultivation, ability cultivation and work style cultivation, which is a process of self-education, self-transformation, and self-improvement. Firstly, under the guidance of the nature, platform and purpose of the Party, student-affairs-administrators must strengthen the political cultivation through constantly learning, continuously building character, hardening will and correcting

mistakes, thus maintaining their political firmness, ideological purity and advanced nature of behavior. The second is to strengthen theoretical cultivation. Adhering to the confidence in the path, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the theoretical explanation of ideological and political work to college students, student-affairs-administrators can touch their heart and inspire their passion, enabling the students to distinguish right from wrong, have a correct direction and firm conviction, take a firm political stand, develop a correct attitude to learning and make a practical use of what have been learned in a long run. The third is the cultivation of abilities. Today, facing a world with global political multi-polarization, economic integration, trade liberalization, scientific and technological informationization, diversified thoughts, and complex employment situations, student-affairs-administrators must be able to cope with new problems with knowledge they gain from books and practices, and improve capabilities while learning. The British philosopher Bacon has a well-known saying that "knowledge is power". Every progress and leap in human history comes along with new knowledge, as can be seen that our society is developing from primitive slash-and-burn farming to the wide use of mechanical equipment in agriculture, from inscriptions on bones or tortoise shells to telephones and computers, from ancient weapons like swords and spears to nuclear weapons, and from cart to satellite, etc. The Fourth is to improve the work conduct and achieve unity in thought and action. We must take students' interests into consideration, thinking for students and doing for students, thus finally solving the students' ideological problems.

2.3 Enriching knowledge to be a knowledge-oriented educator

Student-affairs-administrators must attach great importance to broadening new knowledge and studying new situations. The first is to know how to be a knowledge-oriented cadres. A competent student-affairs-administrator must not only have the professional knowledge required for his job, but also broad knowledge in other areas, which will constitute a sound knowledge structure. Only in this way can the cadres take everything into account and deal with various problems in consideration of its interrelationship, thereby avoiding the one-sided view and improving the scientific nature of work. The second is to meet the requirements for the new era. In the new

era, there are many new situations and new problems in the ideological and political education of colleges and universities, and it presents many new features, which requires student-affairs-administrators to study them in depth, grasp the laws scientifically, and gradually improve the pertinence and effectiveness of ideological and political education. Knowledge is the foundation of ability and ability is the extension of knowledge, so ability is more important than knowledge.

3 Having people-oriented working attitude

A correct attitude is the first step for a student-affairs-administrator to do his job well, otherwise it will be a failure. The focus of Ideological and political work is people, to be exact, the college students. Student-affairs-administrators must put people first in their work, understanding, respecting, and caring for the students. Under the influence of market economy, the college students' consciousness of equality, democracy, selfhood and rights has been enhanced unprecedentedly. Faced with such new situations, student-affairs-administrators must take putting people first and democracy as the core principles in implementing the ideological and political work.

3.1 Establishing a sense of service while solving problems

Establishing a correct sense of service is the first step in doing a good job. Student-affairs-administrators must have a correct attitude towards students, which means putting students in an equal position and doing ideological and political work with love and care. In terms of Ideological and political work, student-affairs-administrators should start with the issue that concerns the college students most, which would bring warmth and reassurance to their heart, impressively. On the contrary, if the student-affairs-administrators use the administrative power, instead of ideological education, to instruct with a commanding air, considering themselves superior to the students, there will be hardly any interaction between the educator and the educated which further might exert negative effects on the students. Therefore the ideological and political work will produce no benefit at all.

3.2 Being firm in our ideal and conviction and working with a positive attitude

To be firm in our ideal and conviction and realize the value of life, student-affairs-administrators must adhere

to political beliefs. If the ideals and beliefs are shaken, they will be unable to distinguish between right and wrong and drift away from the right direction. In the face of such complex situations that various ideologies are clashing and problems are arising along with reform and opening up, the college students are likely to present a changing and diverse pattern of thoughts. A student-affairs-administrator, as a tower of strength to college students, on one hand, must have keen political mind, have the consciousness of the need to maintain political integrity, think in big-picture terms and observe the discipline in order to stand all kinds of tests. Student-affairs-administrators must unite with and lead the university students in strengthening their political direction, resolutely maintaining a high degree of unity with the Central Committee and always sharing the fate of the Party Central Committee, with our hearts closely linked together. The second is that student-affairs-administrators should see and fulfill their job responsibilities from a overall and long-term perspective with a responsible attitude towards the Party's education. They must remain true to our ideal, work in high spirits with passion and care, and take everything seriously, therefore creating the best results.

3.3 Inspiring motivation and teaching by personal example as well as verbal instruction

The work of student affairs is to guide their thinking and discipline their behaviors. If "verbal instruction" is to "guide thinking", and then "teaching by example" is to discipline behaviors. The two are inseparable and must be applied together in maximizing the effects of ideological and political work. Therefore, in order to improve the effectiveness of ideological and political work, emphasis must be laid on how the counselors teach by personal example as well as verbal instruction. In the secondary colleges, some student-affairs-administrators are not doing well in instructing verbally due to the lack of theoretical foundation, logical articulation and methods. However, this is not terrible as it can be accomplished by "setting a good example". Students can be influenced positively by a good image, a charming personality or a role model. On the contrary, some of cadres are good at preaching with skills, however, they are not doing what they are preaching, as a result of which the instruction would be a failure. Such inconsistency will compromise not only their own influence, but also the effect of ideological and political education. In order to avoid the inconsistency, firstly, student-affairs-administrators need to be motivated.

Perseverance derives from motivation. It is easier said than done. When it comes to motivation, keeping oneself motivated all the time is even more difficult. If student-affairs-administrators don't enrich themselves with knowledge and keep up with the development of the situation, sooner or later, they will be disqualified for losing the basic attributes of a student-affairs-administrator and not living up to the expectations of the students and the trust of the leaders. Secondly, student-affairs-administrators must strive for self-growth. Learning is a stimulation to one's growth, a major political responsibility in doing student work as well as a glorious mission to surpass ourselves and keep up with the times. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized in many important meetings and speeches that the majority of Party members and cadres must continue to be motivated in their work and firmly believe in the realization of the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation in the process of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. This is the spiritual pursuit of the Communists as well as lifelong cause of the majority of the Party members.

4 Thinking actively and making innovations

Student-affairs-administrators are the new force for student work as well as Party building in schools. They must develop the habit of thinking in depth. It is of difficulty for a student-affairs-administrator who is reluctant to think to adapt to the development of higher education.

4.1 Renewing thoughts and ideas in finding problems

Vision will decide how people look at things. In today's rapidly changing era, thinking will enhance one's ability. Student-affairs-administrators will accumulate a large amount of practical experience in their work. Reflection on the previous experiences and existing problems will enable them to find the inner cause of the problem. Keeping their mind current and analyzing objectively and subjectively will enable them to find the key to problems in ideological and political work. Thinking saves detours. Student-affairs-administrators can't put aside the problems they find, but think twice before they act. Those who know the essence of the ideological and political work and can scientifically analyze its characteristics will finally solve the problems with efficiency. Insufficient thinking will lead

to a vain attempt.

4.2 Grasping scientific methods in finding problems

First-hand information gained from field research is the foundation of successful students work, the precondition to start a good communication with students, and the basic way to launch ideological and political work. At present, some student-affairs-administrators attend to students' affairs without due care, unknowing the truth; some think too highly of themselves and take or discard the students' advice as they please. Student-affairs-administrators should be down to earth and practical to make research with the scientific spirit and to find problems by understanding the students' thoughts and listening to the students' voices. Thinking before doing will give rise to unexpected results. On one hand, one must think more. Student-affairs-administrators should calmly ponder over the problems from multiple perspectives in order to do their job well. Furthermore, considerable deliberation is needed. Without it, student-affairs-administrators are not able to make innovations in management, as a result of which, an adverse effect will be exerted on both the students and the work.

4.3 Having a broad vision in finding problems

Student-affairs-administrators must have comprehensive quality, having a broad vision, thinking in big-picture terms, learning from history, keeping up with the times and working in a democratic way. Firstly, a student-affairs-administrator should always keep in mind the bigger picture, think outside the box and reject tunnel vision and short-sighted attitude, when doing ideological work of college students. Secondly, Student-affairs-administrators shall look at problems from a historical perspective, finding the starting point, cause and background of ideological and political work from the relationship of origin and flow, and accurately grasping the depth and development direction of ideological and political work. Thirdly, student-affairs-administrators shall keep their mind current when looking at problems, together with the courage to challenge the difficulties. They shall make an early start when finding the ideological and political problems, examine the way and measures on the basis of their well-accumulated experiences, with a sense of urgency and innovative thinking, and finally find out the nature and origin of the problems and solutions to the problems. Fourthly, student-affairs-administrators shall tackle problems in accordance with demands of

democracy. Even when they deal with a small issue, they shall give a full consideration in terms of its effect on the whole school. They must emphasize the need to analyze inner links of problems, seize the principal contradiction, follow the mass line, ponder over the problem from multiple perspectives and put forward the problem-solving methods featuring both centralism and democracy. They must strive to find ways to mobilize students' enthusiasm, initiative and creativity in education management, and have the work well done, pursuing comprehensive, balanced and sustainable development of student work.

5 Building a good image and teaching by personal example

In this regard, student-affairs-administrators must consciously observe the Party's purpose and look at the problems with a long-term historical perspective. It is necessary to keep a good reputation, put an end to unhealthy trend and misconduct, spread positive energy, accumulate experiences and leave less regrets and mistakes.

5.1 Keeping “Three Senses” in mind to have a good reputation

When will one know if an official has a good name? Some say it is “when an official resign from office”. As the saying goes that after an official resigns from office, you will find out in the chitchat of his people whether he has a good reputation. Others say it is “when an official just takes his office”. Rui Chang, Grand Secretariat of Qing Dynasty, said in his book *Officialdom Scripture* that “the conclusion whether an official has a good reputation is finally determined after he leaves his office, but this conclusion takes its form at the beginning of his tenure. Therefore, when officials take office, they must uplift their spirits, exercise self-discipline and reject undesirable practices. Otherwise it will give a cause to people for ill gossip”. In fact, both sayings are correct but incomplete. The reputation of an official is gained both when he is in office and he resigns from his office. That is to say, after an official resigns, how people comment on his conduct is based on his performance during his term. A student-affairs-administrator shall win a good reputation not by the special dominance over his students once in a while, but through setting an example for students with good morals and consistently doing so. It is of great significance that student-affairs-administrators

have a sense of fear, a sense of shame and a sense of right and wrong. With a sense of fear, one may have concerns when making unreasonable demands; with a sense of shame, one will be unwilling or even fear to be someone who is not doing his job or to do things that violate laws, discipline and social ethics, especially when those things might cause damage to students' interests; with a sense of right and wrong, one will be fair when it comes to what students concern most, such as award candidacy, postgraduate entrance examination, and admission to the Party, and thus getting sincere respect from the students.

5.2 Carrying forward “Three Ways” spirit, impressing people with positivity

Every college or university has its own tough issues, some of which are still existing for historical reasons and some emerge presently. Some issues can be settled with their own efforts and some require external help. In either case, it is necessary for student-affairs-administrators to carry forward the “Three Ways” spirit that is to do one's job by all means, through patient consultations, with all efforts, which not only shows their ability but also their responsible attitude. Those issues cannot be ignored because they are left behind by the predecessor or there is position adjustment and job changes. Don't let nature take its course just because of difficulties. These issues must be tackled with such positive energy as a pioneering spirit of innovation, enterprising spirit and team spirit. No historical problems should be left, no problem student should be ignored and no new problems and teacher- student conflicts should arise in my term.

5.3 Standing the “Three Tests” and accumulate experiences

The first is the proper exercise of power. The power in the hand of student-affairs-administrators bestowed by the Party, the school and the duty must be used to bring as much benefit as possible to the students. In addition to exercising power in accordance with the law and regulation, student-affairs-administrators must conscientiously accept the oversight of the Party organization, leading officials, fellow teachers, students and the general public. To teach is to vitalize. Student-affairs-administrators must convince the student by concrete actions that can stand the trial. The second is to have a proper attitude towards money. Fairness leads to cleanness and integrity leads to authority. In order to gain the trust and support of college students,

the student-affairs-administrators must be honest and upright. Some of them, accepting gifts or money from parents and dealing with students' affairs by unfair means, as a result of which, come to a disgraceful end. The lessons should never be forgotten. Therefore, the student-affairs-administrators shall always remain the political nature of educators, keeping in mind the "Two Musts" that they must remain modest and prudent, guard against an arrogant and rash work style, and must continue to live plainly and work hard. The third is to associate in appropriate social activities. In recent years, some student-affairs-administrators entertaining themselves in places of ill repute have been frequently reported online and there are even sex video exposed, which brings a negative impact upon public opinions on educators. On the one hand, it is necessary to be away from activities of low tastes through fostering a good moral character and cultivating refined interests and hobbies. On the other hand, student-affairs-administrators should strictly exercise self-discipline, strengthen their moral self-cultivation and especially purify their "life circle", "social circle" and "entertainment circle", which means to be careful about the people that one is making friends with and to keep away from the places one should not go. Student-affairs-administrators should strive to remain upright and uncorrupted while dedicating to the cause in case that one single slip might bring eternal regret.

Funded project: Hebei Social Science Fund, Research on Education of Mass Entrepreneurship and Innovation

from the Perspective of Improvement of College Student's Job Competency. (No. HB18SH036).

References

- [1] Wang Huabiao, Analysis on Misunderstandings in College Talents Building [J], Education and Vocation, 2016 (18)
- [2] Wang Rui, Strategies of Hebei Talents Training under the Integration in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei Region [J], Manager Journal, 2014(33).
- [3] Wang Huabiao, Jia Shaoning, Strategies on How College Teachers Cultivating and Practicing Core Socialist Values[J], Education and Vocation, 2015
- [4] Wang Lin. Empirical Research on Competency of Student Affairs Administrators in Colleges or Universities -- An Evaluation Based on Factor Analysis[J]. Journey of Jishou University (Social Sciences),2016(37)
- [5] Fang Yinghan, Cui Wenjie, Wu Xia. Connotation, Difficulties and Strategies of Competency of Adult College Teachers in the Context of Professional Transformation [J/OL]. Journal of Jiangxi Open University, 2019(01).
- [6] Chen Chunxiao, Wang Jinjian. Reserach on College Students' Entrepreneurial Competency: A Model Constructing and Empirical Research[J/OL]. China Adult Education, 2019(01).
- [7] Zhao Zhongjun, Zheng Qing, Zhang Weiwei. Empirical Research on Model Constructing Competency of Young College Teachers under Smart Learning Environment[J]. China Educational Technology, 2019(02).
- [8] Jiang Xinlan. Investigation and Reflection on Competency of Young Colleges Teachers in the West Area of China, [J]. Chongqing Higher Education Research, 2019,7(01).
- [9] McClelland, D.C. 1973. Testing for competence rather than intelligence. American Psychologist 28.