

Research and Practice of Integrated Knowledge and Action, Art and Craft Fusion in Aesthetic Education: A Case Study of Qingdao Huanghai University

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Abstract: This paper delves into the practical implementation of integrated knowledge and action, focusing on the fusion of art and craft within aesthetic education, with Qingdao Huanghai University as the case study. The paper examines the university's unique "four-culture integration aesthetic education" model, which emphasizes the integration of excellent traditional culture, revolutionary culture, craftsmanship culture, and innovation culture. The university adopts a systematic approach involving top-level design, coupling logic, and implementation guarantees to establish a comprehensive aesthetic education curriculum. Central to this approach is the integration of aesthetics, culture, art, engineering, and technology to cultivate students endowed with profound cultural heritage and innovative prowess. Furthermore, the paper elaborates on the development of an integrated knowledge and action, art and craft fusion aesthetic education system, with a focus on curriculum refinement, practical pathways, and enhancing overall connectivity.

Keywords: Integrated knowledge and action; Art and craft fusion; Aesthetic education

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1. Introduction

Aesthetic education, as an essential component of education, aims to cultivate students' aesthetic concepts, emotions, and abilities, thereby enhancing their comprehensive quality and humanistic literacy. School-based aesthetic education is fundamental to character formation and constitutes a crucial part of comprehensive education, holding significant importance in higher education. Qingdao Huanghai University adheres to the aesthetic education philosophy of "cultivating morality, educating people with aesthetics, beautifying people with aesthetics, and fostering excellence through aesthetics", dedicated to nurturing high-quality talents with comprehensive development in morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics, and labor skills.

As time progresses, there have been innovations in the content of comprehensive aesthetic education. Regarding aesthetic objects, China's outstanding traditional culture and socialist core values are also

important aesthetic connotations besides artistic beauty^[1]. In October 2020, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council issued “Opinions on comprehensively strengthening and improving the work of aesthetic education in schools in the new era”, which put forward higher requirements for aesthetic education in higher education institutions, incorporating school-based aesthetic education into the supervision, evaluation, and assessment system, transforming soft tasks into hard indicators, while also providing important constructive suggestions for higher education institutions to carry out aesthetic education work. In 2021, scholar Xu Na proposed that the aesthetic education system in higher education institutions needs to construct a scientifically complete curriculum system, emphasizing the cross-integration of knowledge between disciplines, promoting the coordinated development of public arts education, professional arts education, and non-art courses incorporating aesthetic elements^[2]. At the same time, more aesthetic practice activities should be designed outside of theoretical teaching, combining art with life, to achieve the aestheticization of college students’ lives and the integration of aesthetic education courses into daily life.

In recent years, Qingdao Huanghai University has continuously explored and innovated on the path of aesthetic education, forming a distinctive “four-culture integration aesthetic education model” that integrates excellent traditional culture, revolutionary culture, craftsmanship culture, and innovation culture. Centered around this educational feature, the college attaches great importance to and vigorously promotes the standardization and institutionalization of aesthetic education, ensuring that aesthetic education work is conducted in a healthy and orderly manner^[3].

2. Establishment and practice of the four-culture integration educational feature

Qingdao Huanghai University adheres to the integration of excellent traditional culture, revolutionary culture, craftsmanship culture, and innovation culture, aiming to cultivate students with profound cultural heritage, firm ideological beliefs, superb skills, and a spirit of continuous innovation. By effectively integrating the concept of integrating knowledge and action with aesthetic education courses in higher education institutions, it fully utilizes disciplinary advantages and geographical advantages, expands educational content and forms, and reconstructs the aesthetic education curriculum system with the theoretical framework and practical pathways of the “four-culture integration” to build a new and practical aesthetic education curriculum system that integrates aesthetics, culture, art, engineering, and technology^[4].

Qingdao Huanghai University, as a comprehensive university in Shandong Province, establishes its aesthetic education training objectives based on the requirements of comprehensive applied undergraduate colleges and the demands of social development and industries for aesthetic education. Guided by the orientation of student learning effectiveness and the concept of “integrating knowledge and action, educating people with aesthetics”, it tailors its aesthetic education to meet the needs of applied talent cultivation at the university. By deeply understanding and decomposing the objectives of aesthetic education, the college constructs a “one-body three-dimensional four-culture” aesthetic education curriculum system.

2.1. Top-level design

The objective of aesthetic education training is defined as “integrating knowledge and action, educating people with aesthetics.” Based on the characteristics of aesthetic education, the focus is on researching the “one-body three-dimensional” aesthetic education curriculum objectives and dimensions, decomposing educational objectives into aesthetic education, moral education, spiritual education, enrichment of imagination, and fostering innovative consciousness.

2.2. Coupling logic

In constructing a “four-culture” aesthetic education curriculum system, a practice plan effectively integrating the concept of integrating knowledge and action with aesthetic education courses in higher education institutions is established. This plan fully utilizes disciplinary advantages and geographical advantages, expanding educational content and forms. Through the theoretical framework and practical pathways of the “four-culture” aesthetic education curriculum system, a new and practical aesthetic education curriculum system is reconstructed, emphasizing the integration of aesthetics, culture, art, engineering, and technology.

2.3. Implementation guarantee

In the implementation of the exploration of the aesthetic education curriculum system, the effectiveness of the curriculum system is evaluated through three aspects: aesthetic theory courses, aesthetic practice, and aesthetic competitions. The learning outcomes are examined from aspects such as understanding beauty, appreciating beauty, and creating beauty, to validate the effectiveness of constructing the aesthetic education curriculum system.

3. Deepening the new model of integrated knowledge and action, art and craft fusion in aesthetic education

Building upon the foundation of the four-culture integration educational feature that integrates excellent traditional culture, revolutionary culture, craftsmanship culture, and innovation culture, Qingdao Huanghai University continually deepens its cultural connotations and enriches aesthetic education practices.

3.1. Construction of aesthetic education curriculum

Aesthetic education is not about allowing only a few to master a specific skill but rather about enriching the thoughts, shaping the character, and drawing strength from the beauty of nature, culture, and life for all students, aspiring them to pursue a life of greater depth, breadth, and refinement of modern time. The college continuously develops a series of aesthetic education courses. The theoretical courses include “Introduction to Art”, “Analysis of Painting Language”, “The Art of Speaking”, “Historical Impressions: Exploring Qingdao’s Old Buildings”, “History of Chinese Calligraphy”, “Oriental Aesthetics: The Beauty of Traditional Chinese Patterns”, “Design Stories of New China”, and more. Practical courses cover appreciation of works such as “Intangible Cultural Heritage at Your Fingertips”, “Qingdao Paper Cutting”, “Decoding Film and Television Editing”, “Decoding Film and Television Post-production”, “Decoding Animation Short Film Production”, and “The Language of the Lens.”

Through the integration of theory and practice, online and offline teaching methods, a holistic aesthetic education teaching system and teaching model are constructed, which plays a certain role in students’ aesthetic education ^[5].

3.2. Construction of an integrated knowledge and action, art and craft fusion aesthetic education system

The exploration of the construction of a cross-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary integrated aesthetic education curriculum system in universities is not only a positive response to the new era but also conforms to the requirements of economic and social development and the comprehensive development of individuals. It is a comprehensive deepening of the reform of aesthetic education courses in higher education institutions, aiming to create a comprehensive, multi-level, and diversified aesthetic education system ^[6].

3.2.1. Establishment of the “one-body three-dimensional” art and craft fusion aesthetic education system

The “one-body” emphasizes achieving aesthetic education goals based on the concept of “integrating knowledge and action, educating people with aesthetics.” The “three-dimensional” involves the integration of the “classroom-school-society” in the aesthetic education of comprehensive universities, achieving the effective integration of aesthetic education and professional and industrial, base and social, artistic and technical aspects, and establishing a multi-level and diversified aesthetic education system.

3.2.2. Establishment of a “four-culture” aesthetic education curriculum system with art and craft fusion, educating people with aesthetics

The “four-culture” refers to the theoretical curriculum system of aesthetic education consisting of traditional culture, revolutionary culture, craftsmanship culture, and innovation culture. With a comprehensive range of disciplines, the college strengthens communication and cooperation among talents from different disciplines, forming a curriculum system integrating arts with engineering and aesthetic education with engineering. This system aims to cultivate talents with comprehensive qualities and innovative abilities that meet the needs of the times and society.

3.3. Expanding the overall connection and dynamic optimization of aesthetic education practice paths

Through aesthetic education classroom teaching, aesthetic education teaching practice, exhibition activities, and the creation of aesthetic education environments, the integration of art and craft in aesthetic education is implemented, permeating the entire process of talent cultivation. Through the integration of theory and practice, online and offline teaching methods, the reconstruction of aesthetic education curriculum systems and teaching practice models is achieved ^[7].

3.3.1. Leveraging the practical role of campus cultural activities in education

Efforts are focused on improving students’ humanistic literacy and artistic cultivation. With the Youth League Committee, School of Design and Fine Arts, School of Film and Television, School of Education, and School of Chinese Studies as the main body, Qingdao Huanghai University has gradually created the “Science, Technology, Culture, and Art Festival” as a unique art brand. In June 2021, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, Qingdao Huanghai University, together with Qingdao Rongchuang Adu Drama Society and Qingdao Zhengxi Drama Society, jointly staged a large-scale stage drama “That Year, the Red Flag, That Year, the Snow”, which truthfully reproduces the “Boli Tragedy” that occurred in Cangma County, Binbei Special District (now the west coast of Qingdao), Shandong Province, from 1944 to 1945. Starting from the perspective of the people, the drama fully reflects the great spirit of selfless dedication and willingness to sacrifice of the people during the War of Resistance against Japan, receiving unanimous praise in Qingdao.

Turning student art clubs into a second aesthetic education classroom allows students to practice aesthetic education through club activities. Currently, the college has more than 90 clubs with nearly 7,000 active members, organizing over 300 activities annually, with 30% related to humanities and arts. Active efforts are made to closely connect extracurricular activities with academic studies, and club activities are flourishing. Highlighting the effectiveness of aesthetic education through exhibitions and competitions, the college strives to create highlights in its aesthetic education work ^[10]. Dance performances “Ink Dyeing” and “Salute to the Most

Beautiful Counter-Attackers” won the second and third prizes, respectively, at the 6th Shandong Provincial University Student Art Exhibition. Choral performances “Under the Flower Tree” and “Map of Dreams” won second and third prizes. Artistic groups such as the Linghai Dance Troupe and the Morning Star Choir have repeatedly represented the college at events such as the China Folk Art Festival and the Qingdao Municipal College Student Art Festival, receiving unanimous praise for their superb skills.

3.3.2. Formation of a strong aesthetic education faculty

The college coordinates the efforts of various faculties and folk artists, with teachers from the School of Design and Fine Arts, the School of Film and Television, and the School of Education as the backbone, supplemented by humanities and social science teachers from other disciplines, and part-time teachers from various professional fields, inheritors of intangible cultural heritage, and folk artists as adjunct teachers. A high-quality, skilled, and structurally reasonable aesthetic education faculty has been established, with 85 full-time and part-time teachers for public aesthetic education courses, including 25 professors, national first-level artists, and national first-level actors, and 28 associate professors, fully meeting the teaching needs of aesthetic education courses^[8]. Meanwhile, around the inheritance of traditional culture, the college has invited nationally renowned Peking Opera performer Ms. Wang Yanyan to undertake the teaching of public aesthetic courses such as “Youth Drama: Learning Peking Opera”, “Peking Opera Performance”, and “Singing Poetry”, and has established the “Peking Opera Research Center”, actively promoting the integration of traditional opera into campus activities.

4. Conclusion

In the ever-changing landscape of education today, aesthetic education is not merely a series of art classes but rather an educational approach that touches the soul. By strengthening the construction of aesthetic education curriculum characteristics and continuously improving teaching quality, there is a need for a richer and more rational structure of public art courses, with more standardized offerings and more thoughtful, valuable, and distinctive content^[9]. Artistic practice teaching activities will effectively drive the development of campus cultural and artistic activities, creating a stronger aesthetic education atmosphere, a more diverse range of artistic clubs, and a noticeable improvement in activity quality.

Through the concept of “integration of art and craft, knowledge and action”, in the construction of aesthetic education curriculum systems in comprehensive universities, this paper has explored scientific methods for integrating art and craft with aesthetic education concepts into curriculum systems. Relying on hybrid teaching methods, students are guided to subtly accept aesthetic education knowledge, transforming from single-classroom teaching to a combination of online aesthetic education resources and offline practical activities. This practice mission guides the benign development of curriculum art and craft integration, achieving the deep integration of different professional courses such as artificial intelligence, big data, and computer science with artistic disciplines, thus promoting the construction and optimization of aesthetic education curriculum systems in universities in the new era.

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