



# The Present Situation and Optimization Path of College General Education in the New Era

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### ABSTRACT

An important part of the higher education system in the new era is the general education. With the deepening of undergraduate education reform, more and more colleges and universities have focused on general education. Our country has been practicing the professional education model for a long time, which has led to some problems, such as a deviation in the education concept, a slow integration in the education mode, and a narrow field of vision in the curriculum. The development of general education in colleges and universities in the new era should go beyond the traditional misunderstanding, recognize the importance of general education, make effective integration with professional education, make full use of its own unique ideological connotation and outstanding characteristics, and strengthen the effective linkage with professional education.

**Keywords:** General education, Implementation status, Optimize the path

In order to further reform undergraduate education in colleges and universities, the Ministry of Education issued the Implementation Opinions on the Construction of first-class undergraduate courses, emphasizing that "a university that does not pay attention to undergraduate education is not a qualified university, a secretary president who does not pay attention to undergraduate education is not a qualified secretary president and a professor who does not participate in undergraduate teaching is not a qualified professor". (education, 2020) Chinese colleges and universities have been exploring and reforming the general education, and have achieved a series of remarkable results in their unremitting efforts. However, due to the professional education mode implemented by Chinese colleges and universities for a long time, general education still faces many urgent difficulties that need to be solved. Further reform and innovation should be carried out in the concept and operation level of general education to constantly improve the quality of general education. In the new era, we will continue to strengthen the infiltration ability of general education in our higher personnel education training, which will lay the foundation for better improving the practical effect of general education in the future.

## I. Current Status of General Education Implementation in Colleges and Universities

### 1 . *The overall curriculum planning is not perfect*

At present, general education courses are offered in the absolute majority of colleges and universities, and general education is included in the talent training plan, but there is a general problem in some colleges and universities that general education "focuses on offering, but ignores planning". Although a certain number of courses have been set up, there is still a lack of overall planning for what courses should be set up, how to improve and guarantee the follow-up, and the curriculum system cannot be dynamically adjusted according to the social needs, student needs, subject development status and other aspects. First of all, due to the serious phenomenon of setting up courses by people, schools only decide the opening of general courses according to the will of the teachers, without considering whether the teachers have the teaching ability. Secondly, the course is set up for events. The school starts the course in a hurry without sufficient demonstration in the early stage due to some temporary needs. Third, the courses are "independent", loose and disjointed, and the curriculum system is not built according to a certain logical relationship. As a result, "general education is a basket into which all courses can be packed", and general education courses have

become the "water course" in students' minds.

### **2 . *The teaching method is monotonous and boring***

At present, many general education courses in colleges and universities are still dominated by traditional classroom teaching. Students just listen passively in class, lacking enthusiasm and active thinking.(Yang, Cheng, & Fu, 2021)Interaction between teachers and students, less research and discussion, coupled with the weak after-class content strengthening system, knowledge can not be extended and practised, and it is difficult to mobilize students' subjective initiative in learning. With the popularization of modern information technology, the teaching scene of "one blackboard and one pen" has become rare. However, many teachers rely heavily on PPT in teaching and copy the teaching content on PPT and carry out one-way indoctrination to students. This ignores students' emotional experience and the process of exploring knowledge, making students' understanding of knowledge float on the surface, students can only in the drowsy devoid of innovation.

### **3 . *The evaluation mechanism is simple***

At present, most colleges and universities still use the traditional written test for the evaluation of general education courses, which mainly consists of in-class examinations and after-class thesis writing. The purpose of general education is to make people become "perfect people in the real sense". Different from professional education, general education pays more attention to the harvest and growth of students in sound personality, humanistic feelings, scientific spirit and social responsibility, which cannot be scientifically and accurately measured by written examination alone. The points-only evaluation method leads to some students blindly pursuing results. The criteria for selecting courses are good or bad, whether the grades are high or not, and whether the teachers are named or not. Other teachers, in order to attract students to choose courses, even to cater to the students who generally give high grades, this apparent violation of rules has also contributed to the general education curriculum in the minds of students. (Xiong, 2021)In addition, quite a few colleges and universities have not set up special general education management institutions, most of which are managed by the Academic Affairs Office as a whole, and the specific teaching contents are delegated to the corresponding departments to determine. The management is relatively loose, and the teaching of general education courses cannot be effectively supervised.

### **4 . *The construction of the teaching staff is not perfect***

Foreign colleges and universities generally conduct strict reviews on the opening of general education courses, with special emphasis on teachers' academic standards and teaching ability. General education courses are often taught by famous professors or teachers. However, the situation in domestic colleges and universities is quite different. Many teachers with senior titles and rich teaching experience lack interest in general education courses and are unwilling to participate in them. As a result, the faculty in this field is obviously weak. Students are unlikely to attach importance to general education courses and have an interest in learning. Inevitably, they will reject the courses. General education courses are likely to become the object for students to collect credits and perfunctory, which will seriously affect the teaching effect of general education courses. (Jiang, 2022)

## **II. The Optimization Path of the Implementation of College General Education**

### **1. *Establish institutions to strengthen the management of general education courses***

A special general education management organization shall be established to study and formulate general education objectives according to talent training objectives and to guide and demonstrate the reform of the general education curriculum. To be specifically responsible for the planning, research, organization and implementation, quality monitoring and evaluation of the general education curriculum of the whole school; to review and formulate the construction plan of general education curriculum; to guide the construction of fine general education curriculum; To conduct regular selection and withdrawal management of general education courses; To guide the teaching construction and research of general education, and promote the reform and development of general education and the overall improvement of the quality of talent training. Establish teacher incentive and evaluation system, especially adding core general education teaching posts, excellent teaching performance awards general education special classes, etc., to provide promotion of green channel and economic support for teachers committed to general education; Strengthen the assessment of teachers in general education courses, and give preference to teachers who rank top in the assessment in terms of merit assessment, promotion of professional titles, in-service learning, etc., so as to improve teachers' enthusiasm in general education.

### **2. *Optimize the curriculum of general education***

To correct the idea of treating general education courses as a "simplified version" of professional courses, to highlight the core values of general education, to change "package" courses into "integrated" courses, to meet the diversified needs of students' development. Emphasis should be placed on exploring the content of general education in professional courses, and on cultivating students' interpersonal communication ability and practical problem-solving abilities. Adhering to the principle of "linking Chinese and Western, combining ancient and modern, radiating breadth and depth, combining knowledge courses with experience courses", we set up two major courses as a whole. One is the courses related to the major, in which teachers recommend the classic works of each discipline, set up the corresponding course of reading classics, and supplemented by special academic lectures reflecting the frontier knowledge of the discipline. The second is practical courses, allowing students to go to society, participate in social practice, and learn from practice, such as participating in teacher research, community service, and visiting well-known enterprises, in the life experience and environment edification of education subtly.

### **3. *Construct a diversified evaluation mechanism***

Taking the improvement of the core literacy in the reconstruction and implementation of the general education curriculum system as the starting point and goal of the comprehensive evaluation, the planning and scheme, objectives and characteristics, conditions and resources, Settings and contents, modes and methods of the general education curriculum system, as well as the implementation process of the general education curriculum are evaluated in terms of science, feasibility and effectiveness. For example, in the general education curriculum objectives, the science depends on whether it conforms to the basic principles of course design, the feasibility depends on whether it conforms to the law of college student's growth and development, and the effectiveness depends on the degree of improvement of comprehensive ability after the end of the course. Adopt a diversified evaluation method, through teaching supervision, teachers, and students to general education curriculum system and online and offline implementation process for a systematic, objective, real comprehensive evaluation, a comprehensive collection of curriculum system construction and implementation information, formulate and improve the curriculum system reconstruction and implementation quality of action plans and programs.

#### **4. Strengthen the construction of general education curriculum teachers**

First, pay attention to the selection of teachers for general education courses. To establish threshold admission standards for teachers, ensure that teachers have a high professional level and academic influence, are familiar with the latest developments in relevant fields at home and abroad, and have outstanding achievements or great contributions in the discipline. Second, strengthen the construction of echelon teachers of general education courses. Encourage young teachers with great academic potential and strong teaching ability to set up general education courses, and organize them to go to high-level universities to observe the teaching of general education courses, learn from experienced experts, and effectively improve the teaching level of general education courses. Third, strengthen the training of teachers in general education courses. Arrange general education experts to give lectures to general education teachers in different subject areas, so that general education teachers can have a thorough understanding of the connotation and characteristics of general education, help teachers develop teaching objectives suitable for their curriculum characteristics, and standardize the preparation of teaching programs.

#### **5. Student-centered promotion of learning interest**

Students are the main body and ultimate beneficiaries of general education. Contemporary college students have a special psychological state, coupled with learning under the traditional education mode since childhood, influenced by subtle so that their understanding of general education is generally less and even less objective. Any theory must be tested in practice, and students are the main object of the practice of general education theory. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the mentality of students who do not pay attention to general education. It is necessary to regularly carry out publicity and education on the general education-related news of our school, so that students can conveniently, comprehensively and timely understand the connotation of general education and its significance to their own development. It is necessary to fully understand students' interests and hobbies, so as to make the curriculum arrangement more attractive. Through extensive questionnaire survey, we can understand students' psychological state, and collect and timely adopt students' good suggestions on general education courses. It is necessary to fully consider the number of professional courses for students in each department, as well as the examination of various certificates, reasonably arrange the professional courses of each semester, reduce the learning burden, and avoid the students because of high-intensity professional courses and general education courses have slack, fatigue psychology.

### **III. Conclusion**

The core concept of general education differs from the goal of contemporary higher talent education. Under the background of the new era, the implementation of general education must do a thorough analysis of the basic characteristics and ideological content without affecting the quality of talent education and training. Centring on the basic needs of general education, the application and popularization of general education should be strengthened, and the advantages of general education and its educational foresight should be highlighted. This will enable general education to give full play to its many advantages in the cultivation of talents in the new era and improve the quality and overall level of higher education in our country.

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