Optimization Pathways for Talent-Cultivation Programs in Humanities Majors within Higher Education from the Perspective of New Liberal Arts Development

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Abstract: Guided by serving national strategies and responding to the needs of the times, the construction of New Liberal Arts emphasizes that humanities majors should pursue interdisciplinary integration, adhere to integrity-based innovation, and empower abilities through practice, which guides the reform of talent training in humanities majors in higher education institutions. At present, the talent training programs of humanities majors in colleges and universities have problems such as unclear goal orientation, outdated curriculum systems, single teaching models, and rigid evaluation mechanisms, making it difficult to meet the requirements of New Liberal Arts Construction for cultivating talents with comprehensive capabilities, innovative abilities, and practical skills. Closely linking the essence of New Liberal Arts Construction, this paper analyzes the current deficiencies of talent training programs in humanities majors and explores optimization paths from four aspects: goal reconstruction, curriculum improvement and optimization, teaching innovation and practice, and evaluation reform and improvement. Thus, it provides practical reference for colleges and universities to promote the transformation and upgrading of humanities majors and improve the quality of talent training.

Keywords: New liberal arts construction; Humanities majors in higher education; Talent training program; Optimization path

1. Introduction

Most traditional talent training programs for humanities majors focus on the imparting of single-discipline knowledge, lacking responsiveness to the times, interdisciplinary integration planning, and cultivation of practical abilities, resulting in a disconnect between talent training and the needs of social development. With the advancement of New Liberal Arts Construction, optimizing the talent training programs of humanities majors has become a key point for colleges and universities to achieve high-quality development of liberal arts education and cultivate talents meeting the needs of the times. Based on this, this paper comprehensively explores the optimization directions and specific paths of talent training programs for humanities majors from the perspective of New Liberal Arts, so as to provide support for the practical work of colleges and universities.

2. Core requirements of New Liberal Arts construction for talent training in humanities majors of higher education

2.1. Focus on comprehensive and innovative talents

The construction of New Liberal Arts proposes that humanities majors should establish the talent training goal of "comprehensive + innovative." In terms of literacy, it is necessary to cultivate students with both profound humanistic accumulation and a broad interdisciplinary perspective. Students should not only master the core theories and methods of their majors but also understand the basic logic of other disciplines, thereby building a multi-dimensional cognitive framework. In terms of abilities, it is necessary to enhance students' innovative thinking and practical operational capabilities, enabling them to solve real-world problems through humanistic knowledge—for example, transforming traditional cultural resources through cultural creativity and conducting research in the humanities field using digital technologies.

2.2. Emphasize interdisciplinary integration and era adaptability

New Liberal Arts Construction requires humanities majors to build a curriculum system featuring "interdisciplinary integration and era adaptability." In terms of content design, it is necessary to break through traditional disciplinary boundaries, increase the proportion of interdisciplinary courses, and promote the full integration of the humanities with science and technology, as well as the humanities with social sciences. For instance, offer humanities courses integrated with digital technologies and cultural industry courses combined with economic theories. In terms of structure optimization, it is necessary to construct a hierarchical curriculum module of "basic, core, and characteristic": basic courses are used to consolidate humanistic literacy, core courses to strengthen professional abilities, and characteristic courses to align with the needs of the times and regional development [1].

2.3. Highlight interactive participation and practice empowerment

New Liberal Arts Construction puts forward new requirements for humanities majors to innovate the teaching model of "interactive participation + practice empowerment." In terms of teaching methods, it is necessary to break the traditional single model of "teacher lecturing + student listening" and adopt interactive teaching methods such as case teaching, group discussions, and project-based learning to stimulate students' active thinking abilities. In terms of technology integration, it is necessary to actively apply modern educational technologies, for example, reproducing historical scenes with virtual reality technology and conducting humanistic research through big data analysis, to enrich the presentation of teaching forms and content [2].

3. Existing shortcomings of talent training programs for humanities majors in higher education

3.1. Ambiguous training goals and disconnection from the needs of the times

The training goal orientation of humanities majors in some colleges and universities is not clear enough, making it difficult to align with the requirements of the New Liberal Arts Construction. From the perspective of orientation, most training goals focus on "cultivating talents with professional knowledge", lacking clear definitions of interdisciplinary abilities, innovative abilities, and practical skills, resulting in an ambiguous direction of talent training. In terms of adaptability, the training goals have not fully connected with the needs of social development and industry talent standards, for example, failing to consider the demand for comprehensive talents in fields such as the cultural industry and digital humanities, thus leading to a disconnect between talent training and market needs. From the perspective of characteristics, the training goals of humanities majors in some colleges and universities are highly homogenized, failing to combine school positioning, regional characteristics, and professional advantages, making it difficult to build differentiated talent training advantages.

3.2. Outdated curriculum system and insufficient interdisciplinary integration

The curriculum system of traditional humanities majors shows obvious deficiencies, making it difficult to meet the actual needs of the New Liberal Arts Construction. From the perspective of structure, the current curriculum system is still dominated by single-discipline courses. Interdisciplinary courses account for a low proportion in the entire system, and most of them are "formalized" elective courses that fail to achieve in-depth integration. In terms of content, the update speed of curriculum content is slow, still mainly composed of classic theories and traditional knowledge. Cutting-edge theories, contemporary issues, and practical cases are not sufficiently integrated into the courses, resulting in a disconnect between curriculum content and real-world situations. Regarding practical courses, they account for a low proportion in the overall curriculum system and are single in form, mostly in the forms of visits and internships, simple social surveys, etc. There is a lack of systematic and innovative practical projects, making it difficult to effectively improve students' practical abilities [3].

3.3. Single teaching model and low student participation

The teaching models of humanities majors still mainly rely on traditional methods, which are difficult to stimulate students' learning enthusiasm and innovative abilities. In terms of teaching methods, most courses still adopt the one-way knowledge transmission model of "teacher lecturing + student note-taking." Interactive and inquiry-based teaching methods are not fully utilized. In this case, students can only passively accept knowledge, with few opportunities for active thinking and in-depth exploration. From the perspective of technology application, the use of modern educational technology in teaching only stays at the initial stage of "multimedia courseware display." Advanced technologies such as virtual reality and big data are not sufficiently integrated into teaching, leading to difficulties in enriching teaching forms and effectively improving teaching effects. In terms of practical teaching, most of it is led by teachers, and students have limited space for independent design and implementation, making it difficult to give full play to their subjective initiative and innovative potential.

3.4. Rigid evaluation mechanism and single evaluation dimension

The evaluation mechanism for talent training in humanities majors has significant limitations, making it difficult to comprehensively measure the quality of talent training. In terms of evaluation content, the assessment of professional knowledge is still the core, while the evaluation of humanistic literacy, interdisciplinary abilities, innovative achievements, and practical performance is insufficient, resulting in one-sided evaluation content. In terms of evaluation methods, final exams and course papers are still the main evaluation forms. Diversified evaluation methods have a limited scope of application, and formative evaluation is lacking, making it difficult to reflect on students' growth and progress throughout the learning process. From the perspective of evaluation subjects, teachers are still the sole evaluation subject. External evaluation subjects, such as industry experts and practical units, have insufficient participation, making it difficult to measure the quality of talent training from the perspective of social needs.

4. Construction of talent training programs for humanities majors in higher education from the perspective of New Liberal Arts Construction

4.1. Reconstruct training goals and clarify the orientation of comprehensive and innovative talents

In accordance with the requirements of the New Liberal Arts Construction and social needs, reconstruct the training goals of humanities majors. Clearly define the "three-dimensional integrated" training orientation, taking "humanistic literacy + interdisciplinary ability + practical innovation" as the core training direction, and further clarify the specific requirements included in each dimension. For example, humanistic literacy includes cultural inheritance ability and value judgment ability; interdisciplinary ability includes the ability to integrate multi-disciplinary knowledge and the application ability of interdisciplinary thinking; practical innovation includes problem-solving ability and creativity transformation ability. Align

training goals with social needs and industry standards, conduct research on the talent demand in fields such as the cultural industry, digital humanities, and public cultural services, and integrate the industry's ability requirements for talents into the training goals to ensure that talent training can match market demand. Highlight school and regional characteristics, and design differentiated training goals in combination with the school's educational positioning, disciplinary advantages, and regional cultural resources. For instance, local colleges and universities can focus on regional cultural inheritance and rural cultural revitalization, while industry-specific colleges and universities can focus on cultivating applied humanities talents in specific fields [4].

4.2. Optimize the curriculum system and construct interdisciplinary integration modules

Taking era adaptability and interdisciplinary integration as core points, optimize the curriculum system of humanities majors. Increase the proportion of interdisciplinary courses in the overall curriculum and build interdisciplinary course sections such as "Humanities + Technology" and "Humanities + Social Sciences." For example, offer courses like Introduction to Digital Humanities, Cultural Industry Economics, and Artificial Intelligence and Cultural Inheritance to promote the organic integration of multi-disciplinary knowledge. Optimize the curriculum structure and construct a hierarchical curriculum system of "basic layer + core layer + characteristic layer": the basic layer focuses on cultivating humanistic literacy, such as courses on classic literature and Introduction to Philosophy; the core layer is committed to strengthening professional abilities, such as courses on professional theories and research methods; the characteristic layer aligns with the needs of the times and regional characteristics, such as courses on cultural heritage protection and local cultural research. Strengthen practical courses, increase the proportion of practical course credits in the total credits, and build a practical curriculum system of "curriculum practice + project practice + social service". Curriculum practice includes in-class case analysis and small-scale research projects; project practice includes cultural and creative projects and field investigation projects; social service includes rural cultural construction and community cultural services. Through these measures, students' practical abilities are improved.

4.3. Innovate teaching models and promote interactive practice and technology integration

To achieve the goal of enhancing students' participation and practical abilities, innovate the teaching models of humanities majors. Implement interactive teaching methods, extensively adopting case teaching, project-based learning, group discussions, etc. For example, use the case teaching method of "work interpretation + social issue connection" in literature courses, and adopt the learning model of "project-driven + group collaboration" in cultural research courses to encourage students to actively think and explore. Integrate modern educational technologies: use virtual reality (VR) technology to reproduce historical scenes and cultural heritage sites to help students intuitively understand humanistic knowledge; conduct humanistic research with big data analysis tools, such as sorting out social trends in literary works through data analysis, to improve students' technical application abilities. Build practical teaching platforms, jointly establish practical teaching bases with cultural institutions and enterprises, and carry out practical teaching in the form of "university-enterprise cooperation" and "university-local cooperation." For example, cooperate with museums to carry out cultural heritage protection practices, and collaborate with cultural enterprises on cultural and creative projects, enabling students to improve their practical abilities in real scenarios. Additionally, VR can be used in history courses to restore ancient court meeting scenes, allowing students to immerse themselves in analyzing institutional evolution; cooperate with local literary federations to carry out the "intangible cultural heritage (ICH) oral history" project, where students use digital tools to record ICH inheritance, strengthening the "Humanities + Technology" practical abilities.

4.4. Reform the evaluation mechanism and establish a multidimensional, comprehensive evaluation system

Aim to comprehensively measure the quality of talent training by innovating the evaluation mechanism of humanities majors. Expand the evaluation content and build a comprehensive evaluation system of "knowledge + ability + literacy."

Among them, knowledge evaluation focuses on the mastery of professional knowledge and interdisciplinary knowledge; ability evaluation centers on innovative ability, practical operational ability, and interdisciplinary application ability; literacy evaluation mainly concerns humanistic literacy, social responsibility, and value judgment ability. Enrich evaluation methods by adopting a combination of "formative evaluation + summative evaluation." Formative evaluation includes in-class participation, group report performance, and records of practical activities; summative evaluation includes course papers, creative works, and practical reports. Introduce multiple evaluation subjects and construct a multi-subject evaluation system of "teachers + students + industry experts + practical units". Teacher evaluation focuses more on knowledge and ability; student self-evaluation and peer evaluation emphasize the learning process and teamwork; industry experts and practical units focus on practical ability and job adaptability, thereby comprehensively measuring the quality of talent training (**Table 1**).

Table 1. Concise table of core measures for optimizing talent training in humanities majors

Optimization dimension	Core goals	Specific measures
Reconstruct Training Goals	Clarify the orientation of comprehensive and innovative talents	1. Establish the three-dimensional goal of "humanistic literacy + interdisciplinary ability + practical innovation"; 2. Integrate market ability requirements in combination with social needs and industry standards; 3. Highlight school and regional characteristics and design differentiated goals
Optimize the Curriculum System	Construct interdisciplinary integration modules	1. Add "Humanities + Technology/Social Sciences" interdisciplinary courses; 2. Build a hierarchical system of "basic layer + core layer + characteristic layer"; 3. Strengthen practical courses and increase the proportion of practical credits
Innovate Teaching Models	Promote interaction and technology integration	1. Implement interactive methods such as case teaching and project-based learning; 2. Integrate technologies like VR and big data to assist teaching; 3. Cooperate with institutions to build practical platforms and carry out university-enterprise/local cooperation
Reform the Evaluation Mechanism	Establish a multidimensional, comprehensive system	1. Expand the evaluation content of "knowledge + ability + literacy"; 2. Adopt the combined evaluation method of "formative + summative"; 3. Introduce multiple subjects of "teachers + students + industry experts + practical units"

5. Conclusion

The construction of New Liberal Arts has created a key opportunity for the reform of talent training in humanities majors in higher education institutions. Optimizing talent training programs is the core method to achieve the upgrading and transformation of humanities majors. At present, the talent training programs of humanities majors in colleges and universities have some problems, such as unclear training goals, outdated curriculum systems, single teaching models, and rigid evaluation mechanisms, which need to be gradually solved by reconstructing training goals, optimizing curriculum systems, innovating teaching models, and reforming evaluation mechanisms. In the future, higher education institutions should further combine the in-depth advancement of New Liberal Arts Construction, continuously improve relevant safeguard measures, and promote the active participation of multiple subjects through effective means of collaboration. In this way, the optimization and smooth implementation of talent training programs can be effectively guaranteed, to achieve the expected results, ultimately improve the quality of talent training in humanities majors, and provide solid support for cultivating professional talents in the humanities field who meet the needs of the times, with comprehensive abilities and innovative spirits.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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