

# Analysis of Operational Mechanisms and Practical Effectiveness of Short Video-Empowered Ideological Propaganda Work in Universities

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## Abstract

Enhancing the contemporaneity and effectiveness of ideological propaganda work in universities is an inevitable requirement for fulfilling the fundamental task of “fostering virtue through education.” Addressing current practical dilemmas such as the rigidification of communication models, low audience reach, and insufficient interactivity, this study focuses on short videos as a core empowering medium and constructs a systematic and operable operational mechanism for university ideological propaganda work. This mechanism specifically includes: a content production mechanism characterized by “precise planning and multi-stakeholder co-creation”; a dissemination and diffusion mechanism centered on “matrix layout and algorithm-driven distribution”; a participation and guidance mechanism following the path of “immersive experience and community interaction”; and an evaluation and optimization mechanism guaranteed by “data feedback and an effectiveness loop.” Through practical application and effect tracking in the authors’ institution, this research further verifies the practical effectiveness of this operational mechanism from four dimensions: communication power, guidance power, influence power, and credibility. The study demonstrates that this mechanism can effectively expand the reach of propaganda, enhance content appeal, deepen students’ value identification, and significantly improve the scientific and professional level of university ideological propaganda work, providing a replicable and scalable practical solution for innovating the paradigm of ideological and political work in universities in the new era.

## Keywords

Short video; University ideological propaganda work; Operational mechanism; Practical effectiveness; Ideological and political education

*Online publication:* September 26, 2025

## 1. Introduction

Currently, visualized and socialized new media forms, represented by short videos, have deeply embedded themselves in the daily lives of college students, reshaping their information acquisition methods, cognitive habits, and discourse systems. Data from the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) shows that as of December 2023, the number of short video users in China has exceeded 1 billion, with young students forming one of the most active user groups<sup>[1]</sup>. However, in stark contrast to the “cloud-based,” “visualized,” and “circle-based” information reception habits of college students, the propaganda and ideological work in some universities still largely follows traditional models, exhibiting a tendency of “three focuses and three neglects”: emphasizing one-way indoctrination while neglecting two-way interaction; prioritizing theoretical lectures over emotional resonance; and prioritizing offline coverage over online penetration<sup>[2]</sup>. This structural contradiction leads to a “misalignment” between propaganda content and student needs, posing severe challenges to the appeal, reach, and effectiveness of the work.

Against this backdrop, short videos, with their core characteristics of visual impact, social interactivity, instant dissemination, and algorithmic precision, provide a fresh historical opportunity and empowering tool to address the aforementioned challenges. They serve not only as a channel for information dissemination but also as a comprehensive ecosystem platform capable of integrating content presentation, emotional connection, value guidance, and behavioral mobilization. Therefore, this study aims to address the central question: How can universities transcend fragmented, inspiration-driven “idea-based” applications and establish a systematic, standardized, and actionable operational mechanism to deeply integrate the technical advantages of short videos into the entire process of ideological and propaganda work? What observable and evaluable practical outcomes can this mechanism generate in practice? In-depth exploration and practical responses to these questions are pivotal to achieving the strategic transformation of university ideological and propaganda work—from “passive response” to “active empowerment,” and from “content supply” to “ecosystem cultivation.” This holds significant theoretical value and urgent practical relevance.

## **2. The foundation of empowerment: The construction of a short video operation mechanism system for propaganda and ideological work in universities**

Based on system theory and closed-loop management thinking, this study combines the organizational characteristics of universities and the laws of short video dissemination<sup>[3]</sup>, and constructs a short video operation mechanism model for university propaganda and ideological work that is coordinated, linked, and cyclically progressed by four major sub mechanisms. This model aims to elevate the application of short videos from a temporary and dependent “icing on the cake” to a strategic and endogenous “infrastructure.”

### **2.1. Content production mechanism: Precise co-creation from “task-oriented” to “user-oriented”**

Content is the foundation of empowerment. We must completely transform the traditional content production model of “I tell you, you listen” and establish a student-centered, precise co-creation system.

#### **2.1.1. Requirement insight and precise planning**

Establish a “dual topic selection database” driving mechanism. One is the “Policy Theory Resource Library,” which systematically sorts out the central spirit, core values, and ideological and political key points; The second is the “Student Dynamic Interest Database,” which dynamically captures students’ hot topics of concern, pain points of growth, and emotional interests through methods such as campus public opinion monitoring systems, online questionnaire surveys, student council meetings, and analysis of comment areas.

#### **2.1.2. Subject collaboration and diversified co-creation**

Promote the “1+X” content co creation model. “1” represents the core planning and production team led by the propaganda department, composed of professional teachers and backbone students, responsible for grasping the political direction, planning major themes, and ensuring production standards and brand consistency; The “X” represents an open and diverse creative subject, including inviting teachers from the Marxist College to create a “popular ideological and political micro

classroom,” organizing campus “guest” student teams to create “campus vlogs,” encouraging counselors and outstanding party members to record “avant-garde story collections,” and attracting student clubs to showcase “dynamic club shows.” This not only enriches the content supply but also achieves organizational mobilization and self-education in the creative process.

### **2.1.3. Form adaptation and narrative innovation**

Resolutely abandon the “two skins” of content and form. Accurately select the most suitable short video format for different promotional content. Theoretical promotion should use MG animations and short videos of knowledge popularization to transform abstract concepts into concrete ones; Typical tree selection should use micro documentaries and plot performances to move people with genuine emotions; Policy interpretation should adopt a “one map flow” dynamic information map and quick questions and answers to enhance information density and acquisition efficiency; The display of campus culture should adopt aerial photography, time-lapse photography, and creative mixed cutting to create visual wonders. The core lies in transforming grand political narratives into tangible individual stories and transforming abstract theoretical logic into vivid audio-visual language.

## **2.2. Spread and diffusion mechanism: Matrix linkage from “broad-spectrum casting” to “precise outreach”**

The fragrance of wine is afraid of deep alleys, and building an efficient communication network is the key to empowering value realization.

### **2.2.1. Platform matrix and functional division of labor**

Systematically build a communication matrix with clear positioning, complementary functions, and collaborative linkage. With the official video number/Tiktok as the “flagship,” it undertakes the functions of authoritative release, brand building and major theme publicity; Using the accounts of various departments and functional units as “escort ships” to deeply cultivate and accurately deliver distinctive content in vertical fields; Using outstanding student backbones and student club accounts as “light cavalry,” we will delve into the student circle to achieve emotional resonance and atmosphere creation.

Through @ mentions, joint live broadcasts, topic relays, and mutual promotion of content, various accounts form a communication synergy to avoid internal dissipation.

### **2.2.2. Algorithm understanding and intelligent push**

Thoroughly study the algorithm rules of various platforms and achieve the combination of “technology” and “technique.” This includes precise use of popular tags (such as # First Class of School # Youth Confession to the Motherland); Carefully design cover images and titles with a “web-like” feel to increase click-through rates; Scientifically select the target user’s active publishing time. For core promotional tasks, it is advisable to invest a small amount of funds cautiously in DOU+/information flow promotion, accurately targeting students or specific grades and majors in the school, ensuring that key information is “precisely guided and not a single person is missed.”

### **2.2.3. Cross-media integration and traffic mutual guidance**

Position short videos as the traffic hub and vitality engine of the entire promotional system. Embed wonderful short videos in the headline of WeChat official account as a visual guide; Attach relevant short video links at the end of the campus website press release; Set up a video QR code entrance for large-scale offline event posters to guide viewers to share online. By fully integrating online and offline channels, long and short videos, official media, and student communities, we aim to build a comprehensive and pervasive propaganda ecosystem that covers all areas.

## **2.3. Participation guidance mechanism: Immersive interaction from “passive reception” to “active construction”**

The highest level of empowerment lies in stimulating students’ subjectivity, transforming them from “audience” to “participants” and even “co-creators.”

### **2.3.1. Creating immersive interactive scenes**

Actively utilizing new technologies to create deep experiences. For example, using VR/AR technology to create virtual school history museums and red education base cloud visit videos, allowing students to experience

the pulse of history firsthand; Open live streaming channels for major events such as opening ceremonies, graduation parties, and lectures by renowned teachers, and set up bullet screen interactions, online questioning and lucky draws, etc., breaking the limitations of time and space and greatly enhancing the sense of participation and presence.

### **2.3.2. Planning topic based interactive activities**

Regularly plan attractive online activities to stimulate user-generated content. Initiate activities such as # My Dormitory, My Home # Short Video Challenge, # Lei Feng by My Side # Positive Energy Story Collection, # Most Beautiful Classroom Notes # Sharing, etc. By lowering the threshold for creativity and setting up honor rewards, students are encouraged to use their cameras to record and interpret campus life and the spirit of the times, transforming the propaganda process into a widespread group practice and self-education process.

### **2.3.3. Strengthening emotional interaction guidance**

Equipped with full-time and part-time personnel with high political and media literacy, serving as the “Chief Interaction Officer,” responsible for the regular maintenance of the comment area, public opinion guidance, and emotional communication. Timely respond to students’ concerns, select and display high-quality UGC content and rational comments, and publicly adopt constructive feedback. The official account actively “flips” (shares, likes, comments) the excellent creations of students, forming a warm, equal, and positive interactive incentive loop, and building a clear cyberspace and emotional community.

## **2.4. Evaluation and optimization mechanism: Scientific iteration from “experience judgment” to “data-driven”**

Establishing a scientific evaluation mechanism is the fundamental guarantee for ensuring the vitality and continuous optimization of the entire operational mechanism.

### **2.4.1. Establishing a multidimensional performance evaluation index system**

Resolutely breaking away from the “traffic” theory and

building a comprehensive evaluation system that covers both short-term effects and long-term impacts.

### **2.4.2. Communication indicators**

Views, completion rate, sharing rate, and net increase in fans.

### **2.4.3. Guiding indicators**

Proportion of positive emotional vocabulary in the comment section, heat and depth of core topic discussions, quantity and quality of UGC submissions.

### **2.4.4. Impact indicators**

The impact index of the account on the whole platform (such as WeChat video number index, TikTok index), and the scope of content breaking communication (such as reprinting by superior media and social mainstream media).

### **2.4.5. Credibility and conversion index**

Offline activity registration conversion rate tracked through backend links or QR codes, satisfaction and awareness improvement in related themed student symposiums, or questionnaire surveys.

### **2.4.6. Building a data-driven review and optimization loop**

Fully utilize the backend data tools of various platforms and the public opinion monitoring system purchased by schools, and establish a “monthly/quarterly data briefing” system. Regularly conduct A/B testing on key content to compare the effectiveness differences of different titles, covers, and narrative styles at the beginning. At the end of each semester, a “publicity strategy review meeting” is held, where the data support team presents an analysis report, and all participating personnel consult together to make decisive adjustments to the content direction, creative techniques, and communication strategies of the next stage based on data feedback. Ultimately, a spiral upward work loop of “planning–execution–monitoring–evaluation–optimization” is formed, driving the continuous improvement of the effectiveness of publicity and ideological work.

### **3. Effectiveness test: Practical value and multidimensional effectiveness analysis of the short video operation mechanism**

Through the normalized operation and iterative optimization of the above-mentioned operational mechanism in our school for one academic year, significant and verifiable practical results have been achieved in the propaganda and ideological work of universities in multiple dimensions.

#### **3.1. Communication effectiveness: Achieving a dual breakthrough in both breadth and accuracy of audience coverage**

Matrix communication breaks down physical barriers between departments and classes, and algorithm push achieves personalized and accurate delivery of information<sup>[4]</sup>. Practical data shows that the number of fans on our school's official video account has increased by 150% after the mechanism was put into operation. Multiple short videos with themes of welcoming students, fighting against the epidemic, and celebrating the school anniversary have exceeded 500000 views, making the actual reach rate of key information close to 100%, far exceeding traditional notification channels. The previously difficult to cover "silent majority" and students active in specific circles have been effectively incorporated into the propaganda network.

#### **3.2. Guiding effectiveness: Achieving the organic unity of "temperature" and "depth" in value guidance**

The emotional and storytelling content narrative significantly enhances the infectiousness of mainstream values<sup>[5]</sup>. For example, the micro documentary "The Last Lesson of an Old Professor" created by our school vividly interprets the professional ethics, style, and craftsmanship spirit of senior teachers by recording the touching details of their perseverance in standing on their last post before retirement. After the video was released, not only was the playback data impressive, but the comment section was also filled with students' sincere respect for their teachers and genuine aspirations for academic ideals, achieving flexible penetration and deep internalization of values. Positive comments accounted for over 95%.

#### **3.3. Influence and effectiveness: Achieving synchronous enhancement of the "vitality" and "brand" of campus culture**

The prosperity of UGC has greatly activated the endogenous creativity of campus culture. The short videos created by students spontaneously showcasing their professional characteristics, club style, and innovative entrepreneurial stories have formed a unique "impression of South China's commerce" on social media platforms, with a cumulative view count of over ten million related topics. This not only greatly enhances the sense of belonging, pride, and cohesion of students on campus but also successfully shapes the school's open, dynamic, and innovative external image, becoming a "living business card" for enrollment promotion and school enterprise cooperation.

#### **3.4. Credibility and effectiveness: Achieving sustainable development of the work system in terms of both "scientific" and "professional" aspects**

The data-driven evaluation and optimization mechanism has shifted the decision-making process of propaganda work from empirical "brainstorming" to scientific governance based on data. Resources are tilted towards high-efficiency creative teams and content formats, and team members' sensitivity to topic selection, content planning skills, and data analysis abilities are rapidly growing through continuous iteration. The entire propaganda and ideological work system presents stronger learning ability, adaptability, and innovation ability, providing a solid guarantee for its long-term sustainable development.

## **4. Discussion and conclusion**

The four-in-one short video operation mechanism of "content production, dissemination, guidance, participation, evaluation, optimization" constructed and practiced in this study<sup>[6]</sup> provides a complete solution for universities to systematically solve the difficulties of "reaching, attracting, and deepening" in propaganda and ideological work, which is logically rigorous, clearly structured, and replicable<sup>[7]</sup>. Practice has proven that this mechanism can effectively integrate campus resources,

stimulate teacher-student co-creation, leverage platform algorithms, and rely on data-driven methods to achieve self-evolution, thereby comprehensively enhancing the dissemination, guidance, influence, and credibility of work.

It should be pointed out that the smooth operation of this mechanism is not achieved overnight, and it relies on solid support from three levels: first, top-level design and institutional guarantees at the school level, incorporating short video empowerment into the overall strategy of propaganda and ideological work; The second is cross departmental and cross college collaboration and resource integration, breaking down barriers between information and resources; The third is the continuous construction of a professional and composite talent team that understands both the laws of ideological and political work and is proficient in new media operations.

Looking ahead to the future, with the rapid

development of AIGC (Generative Artificial Intelligence) technology, it will bring new empowering space and efficiency revolution to this operational mechanism in areas such as short video script generation, virtual digital human anchors, personalized content recommendation, and automated content review<sup>[8]</sup>. But at the same time, higher requirements have been put forward for the authenticity of content, the security of ideas, and ethical governance. University propaganda and ideological workers should always maintain technical sensitivity and value determination. While adhering to the ideological bottom line, they should continuously integrate and optimize new technologies and concepts into this operational mechanism, so that mainstream values can truly “come alive,” “spread,” and “sink” under the empowerment of short videos, injecting a continuous and strong “cloud” power into cultivating new generations who are responsible for national rejuvenation.

### Funding

2024 Guangdong Provincial Education Evaluation Association Research Project “Innovation in University Propaganda and Ideological Work Driven by Short Videos: Research on Empowerment Mechanisms and Model Construction” (BEPG24149)

### Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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