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2025 Volume 3, Issue 10
Educational Innovation Research
ISSN: 3029-1844(Print) ISSN: 3029-1852(Online)

Analysis of the Current Situation and Optimization Path of Piano Basic Course Teaching in Colleges

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Abstract: As a cornerstone of music education, piano foundation courses in higher education institutions play a pivotal role in cultivating professional musicians, with their teaching quality directly shaping students 'technical proficiency and holistic development. However, current challenges—including monotonous classroom instruction, uneven resource distribution, and inadequate personalized guidance—impede students' comprehensive growth. This study examines the current state of piano foundation courses, integrating modern educational technologies and pedagogical approaches to propose optimization strategies. These include refining the curriculum framework, innovating teaching methodologies, leveraging digital tools, and enhancing evaluation mechanisms, thereby providing actionable insights for improving the quality of piano foundation education in universities.

Keywords: Basic Piano Course; University Music Education; Teaching Optimization; Curriculum Reform; Teaching Innovation

Online publication: November 26, 2025

1. Introduction

As the cornerstone of music education, piano foundation courses in higher education institutions play a vital role in cultivating students 'professional skills, musical literacy, and comprehensive abilities. Current teaching practices predominantly rely on classroom instruction and traditional practice guidance, resulting in rigid course content and limited opportunities for interactive learning or self-directed study. Meanwhile, significant differences in students' abilities make it challenging for conventional teaching methods to accommodate learners at different levels, leading to certain limitations in educational outcomes. With the introduction of micro-lectures, flipped classrooms, and digital teaching tools, piano foundation courses are now equipped to achieve personalized, interactive, and efficient instruction. Furthermore, the integration of ideological and political education concepts and the exploration of blended teaching models provide theoretical and practical support for innovating piano foundation courses. In this context, universities should systematically analyze the current state of piano foundation course teaching, combine modern educational philosophies with technological approaches, and propose scientific optimization strategies to enhance teaching quality and students' comprehensive development capabilities.

2. Current status of piano foundation course teaching in universities

2.1. Course structure and teaching content

Currently, piano foundation courses in universities predominantly adopt a teaching model that integrates theory with practice. The curriculum primarily focuses on fundamental performance techniques, systematic sight-reading training, and comprehensive enhancement of musical expressiveness. However, the current curriculum design exhibits notable deficiencies. The content disproportionately emphasizes technical drills while lacking systematic instruction in music theory fundamentals. In-depth analysis of the cultural context and artistic essence of musical works remains insufficient, and there is inadequate attention to cultivating students' innovative thinking and creative abilities. This imbalance in teaching content results in students achieving practical skill improvement while lagging behind in developing comprehensive competencies such as musical theoretical literacy, cultural understanding, and artistic innovation capabilities[1]. Consequently, they struggle to meet the comprehensive requirements for musical talents in the new era.

2.2. Single teaching method

In terms of teaching methodologies, current piano foundation courses in higher education predominantly rely on traditional teacher demonstrations and student imitation, with insufficient design of teacher-student interaction segments and inadequate implementation of personalized tutoring and differentiated instruction. Given the significant disparities in students' pre-enrollment piano proficiency, standardized teaching schedules and methods fail to meet the diverse learning needs of students at different levels. This results in weaker students struggling to keep up with the teaching pace, while more proficient students lack sufficient opportunities for advancement[2]. Such non-targeted teaching approaches hinder students from developing systematic and personalized skill development pathways, ultimately undermining the overall improvement of teaching effectiveness.

2.3. Insufficient application of teaching resources and technology

In the development of teaching resources, many universities 'piano foundation courses still adhere to traditional teaching models, lacking up-to-date digital teaching materials, intelligent online practice platforms, and modern multimedia-assisted teaching tools. The limited application of information-based teaching methods fails to fully leverage the potential of modern educational technology to enhance classroom instruction. This lag in resource development not only hinders the improvement of teaching effectiveness but also severely restricts students' opportunities for self-directed learning and personalized development after class, making it difficult to meet the diverse learning needs of students in the digital era.

2.4. Student learning motivation and evaluation mechanism

In terms of student learning, the limited scope of course content and teaching methods has resulted in significant disparities in interest among students in piano foundational courses. Some students exhibit issues such as insufficient motivation, low classroom engagement, and lack of enthusiasm for post-class practice. Meanwhile, the current course evaluation system overemphasizes final skill assessments while neglecting continuous monitoring and comprehensive evaluation of the learning process. There are notable shortcomings in assessing integrated competencies like musical literacy, artistic expression, and innovative thinking. This singular evaluation mechanism fails to objectively reflect students' true learning progress and developmental levels, and also hinders the stimulation of their learning enthusiasm and creativity[3].

3. Optimization path of piano foundation course in universities

3.1. Improving the curriculum system

Higher education institutions should establish a scientific, systematic, and multi-tiered piano curriculum framework that seamlessly integrates technical training, music theory fundamentals, artistic expression development, and innovative thinking cultivation. The curriculum structure should be rationally organized with tiered difficulty levels and modular

teaching components. While emphasizing core competencies such as basic fingering techniques, sight-reading proficiency, and rhythmic awareness, it should progressively enhance students 'musical comprehension, repertoire interpretation, and improvisational abilities. Through phased and progressive course arrangements, this approach ensures the coordinated development of students' musical knowledge, practical skills, and artistic literacy.

3.2. Innovation in teaching methods

Integrating modern pedagogical approaches—including micro-lectures, flipped classrooms, task-based learning, and inquiry-based learning—enhances teacher-student interaction and boosts student engagement. Educators should transition from traditional lecturers to facilitators who provide tailored guidance based on individual learning needs and progress. Furthermore, establishing a tripartite teaching framework (teacher guidance, student autonomy, and AI support) fosters a dynamic, open environment that nurtures personalized growth.

3.3. Informationization and technology assistance

By fully leveraging intelligent practice software, multimedia interactive courseware, and open online educational resource platforms, we can expand classroom teaching boundaries and support students in conducting systematic and efficient extracurricular practice. Artificial intelligence technology can be introduced to analyze students' key performance data such as pitch accuracy, rhythm, and dynamics, and generate customized practice plans based on individual progress. Through technical means, real-time feedback and dynamic teaching adjustments can be achieved, helping students identify improvement directions and enhance practice efficiency and overall learning outcomes.

3.4. Optimization of evaluation mechanism

Develop a multidimensional evaluation system that assesses process performance, skill proficiency, and innovative capabilities. Beyond final performance assessments, greater emphasis should be placed on evaluating students 'daily practice, progress milestones, musical expression, and artistic comprehension. The evaluation criteria should holistically assess students' technical mastery, musical expressiveness, and comprehensive artistic literacy, fostering integrated development of teaching, learning, and evaluation. This approach truly realizes the dual objectives of enhancing teaching through evaluation and promoting learning through assessment.

4. Challenges and development directions

4.1. Challenges and enhancement pathways in the integration of teachers' professional competence and technology

Teachers must not only possess solid professional skills in piano instruction but also proactively adapt to the trends of educational informatization. They should master various digital teaching tools and deeply understand the concept of personalized education. Currently, some teachers exhibit noticeable shortcomings in technology integration, which may limit the effectiveness of teaching reforms. Therefore, future efforts should focus on enhancing teacher training, promoting the deep integration of technology and education, and helping teachers improve their comprehensive teaching capabilities to more effectively implement innovative teaching practices[4].

4.2. Student learning differences and adaptability issues and coping strategies

Students exhibit significant variations in foundational piano skills, cognitive styles, and learning capacities, resulting in differing levels of acceptance for innovative teaching methods and digital tools. This often requires an adaptation period. To address this, educators should implement tiered instruction, personalized guidance, and step-by-step mentoring to help students overcome adaptation challenges. By doing so, educators can simultaneously spark their interest in learning, strengthen self-directed learning awareness and skills, and ultimately facilitate their seamless integration into the digital

learning environment.

4.3. Current status and development needs of resource construction and curriculum support

In advancing piano pedagogy reform, higher education institutions must substantially enhance resource allocation. This includes developing high-quality digital teaching materials, establishing intelligent practice and feedback platforms, and deploying advanced multimedia support systems. Such resources form the foundation for effective implementation of optimized teaching approaches. Only through systematic resource development and comprehensive curriculum support can educators and students receive robust support, thereby driving comprehensive improvements in teaching quality.

4.4. Shortcomings and improvement directions of the teaching evaluation system

The current piano teaching evaluation system overemphasizes technical skills assessment while neglecting students 'comprehensive musical literacy, innovative capabilities, and learning processes. To address this, there is an urgent need to establish a more scientific and diversified evaluation framework. By incorporating dynamic monitoring and feedback tools, we can achieve continuous tracking and optimization of students' skill development. This approach will better reflect learning outcomes, provide evidence-based teaching improvements, and ultimately elevate the overall quality of piano education.

5. Conclusion

Higher education piano foundation courses currently face challenges including rigid curriculum structures, outdated teaching methods, inadequate resource utilization, and underdeveloped evaluation systems. By refining the curriculum framework, adopting innovative pedagogical approaches, leveraging digital technologies, and implementing diversified assessment mechanisms, we can significantly enhance both teaching quality and student competencies. Moving forward, universities should persistently explore personalized, technology-integrated, and innovation-driven teaching models for piano fundamentals, thereby advancing the modernization and high-quality development of music education.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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