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# The Application Boundary and Ethical Reflection of Artificial Intelligence in Ideological and Political Education in Colleges and Universities

**Aiai Yang\***

Hainan Vocational University of Science and Technology, Haikou 571126, Hainan, China

*\*Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.*

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**Abstract:** With the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) technology, its applications in education have become increasingly widespread, particularly in ideological and political education (IPE) at higher education institutions. The integration of AI in IPE provides innovative teaching methods and new instructional scenarios, enabling educators to deliver personalized and targeted instruction while enhancing teaching efficiency. However, as AI continues to permeate educational systems, defining its application boundaries in IPE and addressing ethical challenges have become critical issues requiring urgent resolution. This paper analyzes potential limitations by examining the scope, functions, and integration of AI with IPE, while exploring ethical considerations in its application. Research indicates that although AI can improve the quality and effectiveness of IPE to some extent, its potential risks in areas such as personalized teaching, data privacy protection, and teacher-student interaction necessitate universities to remain vigilant when adopting AI technologies, implementing effective ethical frameworks, and formulating appropriate policy measures.

**Keywords:** artificial intelligence; higher education; ideological and political education; application boundaries; ethical reflection; personalized teaching

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## 1. Introduction

With technological advancements, particularly the rapid development of artificial intelligence (AI), AI applications across industries have matured, creating unprecedented opportunities for innovation in education, especially in ideological and political education (IPE). AI not only provides more efficient tools for teaching but also enables personalized and precise educational content. In higher education, AI technology assists teachers in instructional design, evaluates student learning outcomes, and even delivers customized educational services through intelligent systems.

However, as artificial intelligence applications deepen, their boundaries in ideological and political education and potential ethical concerns have become focal points in academic and educational circles. How to effectively leverage AI to enhance the quality of ideological and political education while ensuring ethical compliance in its application is a critical issue that universities must prioritize during AI implementation. This paper explores the application boundaries of AI in

university ideological and political education, conducts ethical reflections, and proposes corresponding countermeasures and recommendations.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. Application of artificial intelligence in ideological and political education**

In their 2026 study, Ji Huiwen and Jia Yanning examined the application of artificial intelligence in ideological and political education at universities<sup>[1]</sup>. Their research demonstrates that AI technology provides personalized teaching support for ideological education, utilizing big data analysis to help educators understand students' ideological trends, thereby enabling more precise educational strategies. The findings indicate that AI can enhance the interactivity and timeliness of education, offering new pathways for the innovative development of ideological and political courses.

### **2.2. Innovative path of empowering ideological and political course with artificial intelligence**

Wang Yufu, Wang Jian, and Ma Ying (2026) examined the innovative use of artificial intelligence in university ideological and political education, highlighting AI's role in enhancing teaching effectiveness<sup>[2]</sup>. By leveraging AI technology, these courses can not only provide intelligent teaching support but also achieve personalized and precise learning through data-driven approaches, thereby improving the quality of ideological and political education.

### **2.3. Integration of artificial intelligence and ideological and political education: values and challenges**

In her 2026 study, Ge Limin examined the value and practical challenges of integrating artificial intelligence into ideological and political education at universities<sup>[3]</sup>. She noted that while AI applications can enhance the efficiency of student guidance in ideological education, they also pose ethical dilemmas, particularly regarding data privacy protection and the lack of emotional engagement with students. The research therefore highlights that ensuring AI applications improve teaching effectiveness without compromising the core values of education remains a critical issue to address.

### **2.4. Integration of college counselors and “Big ideological and political course”**

In 2026, Liang Hao examined the roles and practical challenges of university counselors in the “Comprehensive Ideological and Political Education” program, highlighting their pivotal role in contemporary ideological education<sup>[4]</sup>. The study proposed that counselors should leverage AI technologies and big data analytics to monitor students' ideological trends and needs in real time, thereby enhancing the educational outcomes of this initiative.

## **3. Application boundaries of artificial intelligence in ideological and political education in universities**

### **3.1. Intelligentization of educational content and teaching methods**

In ideological and political education at universities, the application of artificial intelligence can be implemented through personalized teaching content and innovative teaching methods. For instance, AI can analyze students' learning performance through big data to customize individualized learning paths, provide differentiated teaching materials, and enhance learning outcomes. This personalized teaching approach can overcome the limitations of traditional teaching models, enabling each student to learn according to their own needs.

However, AI applications have inherent limitations. Ideological and political education transcends mere knowledge transmission—it fundamentally shapes students' values and worldview, a process requiring emotional connection and intellectual exchange between educators and learners. While AI can deliver personalized teaching materials, its inability to convey human emotions and values makes it incapable of fully replacing the guiding role of human teachers in this

educational domain.

### **3.2. Guidance of students' thoughts and data privacy issues**

Powered by AI technology, ideological and political education can monitor students' learning progress in real time and analyze their cognitive patterns through data. By examining learning histories, online interactions, and study habits, AI enables teachers to promptly identify shifts in students' thinking and implement targeted interventions.

However, this also raises concerns about data privacy and security. Protecting students' personal information and academic records has become a major challenge in applying AI to ideological and political education. Over-reliance on data and technology may lead to privacy violations and even potential misuse. Therefore, striking a balance between data utilization and privacy protection to ensure the ethical and legal compliance of artificial intelligence is a critical boundary in its application.

### **3.3. Lack of teacher-student interaction and emotional education**

Higher education's ideological and political education not only focuses on knowledge transmission but also emphasizes emotional cultivation and value formation. While artificial intelligence technology can enhance teaching efficiency, it lacks the human teacher's role in emotional engagement and value guidance. Through teacher-student interactions, students develop core values like social responsibility and collectivism. Although AI supports teaching, it should not completely replace teachers' guiding role.

## **4. Ethical reflection on artificial intelligence in ideological and political education in colleges and universities**

### **4.1. The Matching problem between technology application and educational objectives**

While artificial intelligence technology has significantly enhanced teaching efficiency and personalized services, ensuring its application aligns with the fundamental goal of ideological and political education in higher education—cultivating socially responsible citizens with value recognition—remains a pressing challenge. The integration of AI technology may create a disconnect between educational objectives and technological implementation, potentially leading to an overemphasis on efficiency and personalization at the expense of the core values and humanistic considerations inherent in ideological and political education.

### **4.2. Ethical challenges of personalized education for students**

While AI can provide personalized learning paths and content, over-reliance on individualized education may undermine the cultivation of students' collectivist spirit and social responsibility. AI recommendation systems often prioritize content based on students' interests and habits, which can reinforce their "information cocoons" by exposing them solely to information that aligns with their cognitive frameworks, thereby limiting diverse perspectives. This tendency may result in limitations in students' ideological and political education, making it difficult for them to fully engage with the core values essential for society and collective development.

### **4.3. Data privacy protection and ethical issues**

In AI applications, vast amounts of data are collected and processed, including students' learning behaviors and mental states. The use of such data must strictly adhere to ethical standards to ensure student privacy protection. Balancing data utilization with privacy safeguards, and preventing AI applications from being misused, are critical ethical challenges universities must address when adopting artificial intelligence.

## 5. Conclusions and recommendations

Artificial intelligence has unlocked tremendous potential for ideological and political education in higher education institutions, yet its application boundaries and ethical concerns demand urgent resolution. To effectively integrate AI technology into ideological education, universities must establish clear application parameters and ensure its appropriate implementation within the educational framework. Firstly, institutions should strengthen ethical oversight of AI technologies to guarantee comprehensive student privacy protection. Secondly, when deploying AI, a balance must be struck between personalized education and the cultivation of core values such as collectivism and social responsibility. Lastly, universities should ensure that AI technologies align with the objectives of ideological education, positioning AI as a valuable assistant to educators rather than a replacement for human instructors.

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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