

The Imperative and Practice of Fostering the Spirit of Educators Among Counselors in Colleges and Universities

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Abstract: The spirit of educators represents the intellectual and ethical assets accumulated by educators through long-term pedagogical practice. The system of counselors in colleges and universities constitutes a vital component of ideological and political work in higher education and a key link in fulfilling the fundamental task of fostering virtue through moral education. Integrating the spirit of educators into the capacity-building of counselors in colleges and universities serves as a major initiative in cultivating new-generation talents for the era by shaping their moral character. Counselors in colleges and universities must deeply grasp the value implications and operational logic of the spirit of educators, and align their practice with the contemporary mandate of educating people for the Party and cultivating talents for the country, thereby continuously enhancing the appeal and targetedness of ideological and political education.

Keywords: Fostering virtue through moral education; Counselors in colleges and universities; The spirit of educators

Online publication: April 26, 2026

1. Introduction

China's culture of respecting teachers and valuing education has lasted for thousands of years, forming a unique tradition of teacher ethics. In the context of the new era, the spirit of educators, rooted in this profound cultural context and integrated with the practical requirements of contemporary educational development, has both historical inheritance and contemporary innovation. It represents a refined summary and value sublimation of the professional literacy of Chinese educators. This spirit always adheres to the student-oriented educational philosophy, taking the cultivation of students' sense of social responsibility and innovative ability as important goals.

College counselors are the front-line backbone of ideological and political education in colleges and universities, and their work performance is directly related to the healthy growth and all-round development of college students. In practical work, counselors must always abide by political norms and take the spirit of educators as their professional value and code of conduct. In accordance with the requirements of the Professional Competency Standards for Counselors in Colleges and Universities (Interim), practitioners shall fully understand the educational orientation and basic principles embodied in the spirit of educators. By means of ideological guidance, Party and League building, academic tutoring and daily

management, counselors can steer students to establish correct worldviews, outlooks on life and values. Facing the new situation where college students' ideological concepts are increasingly diverse and their developmental needs are more varied, counselors should continuously optimize educational methods and practical tools, take into account students' multi-dimensional demands such as academic development, mental health and physical well-being, promote students' all-round development, and create a positive campus educational environment.

At present, China's higher education has entered a stage of high-quality development, which puts forward higher requirements for the professional level of counselor teams^[1]. However, some college counselors still have problems, such as weak professional identity, insufficient professional ability, and a single educational method, which make it difficult to fully adapt to the needs of ideological and political education in the new era. Based on this, this paper takes the spirit of educators as the main research thread, systematically expounds its value connotation and internal logic when practiced by college counselors, and explores feasible practical approaches combined with the actual situation of current counselor team construction. It aims to provide useful theoretical reference and practical ideas for the professional and connotative development of college counselor teams.

2. The value connotation of fostering the spirit of educators among college counselors

The spirit of educators serves as a spiritual lighthouse for education practitioners, guiding them to advance continuously in educational practice and to strive unremittingly for cultivating more outstanding talents and promoting social civilization and progress. This spirit represents a spiritual pursuit and value concept that, during the process of building a strong educational nation, takes as its mission the cultivation of talents, the transmission of culture, and the promotion of social progress. It is the only way to build a strong educational nation, and it is also the direction and goal that college counselors keep working for. This spirit can be seen in a love for and commitment to the educational cause, and in a deep understanding of and hard work for educational innovation and student development. Building a strong educational nation is a big team effort that needs everyone in society to work together. The spirit of educators is the soul and the driving force of this big effort. So, it helps us keep doing better, reach higher in education, and give quietly to students' growth and success.

2.1. Empowering personalized education to promote students' holistic development

Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences holds that education should design teaching activities according to different types of students^[2]. By focusing on students' individual development, advocating for personalized education, encouraging lifelong learning, and highlighting educational equity, the spirit of educators plays a crucial role in improving education quality and promoting students' holistic development^[3]. The spirit of educators puts students at the center. It helps students learn to think on their own and solve problems. So it makes education deeper and better. It supports personalized education. It looks at each student's special needs and potential. With different teaching and personal guidance, it helps each student do their best in their strong areas. This helps them grow in moral, intellectual, physical, and aesthetic ways.

2.2. Stimulating internal professional motivation to consolidate the foundation of education

The spirit of educators inspires counselors to continuously improve themselves, innovate educational methods, and contribute their strength to cultivating more outstanding talents and driving social progress. From the perspective of counselors in colleges and universities, the spirit of educators is undoubtedly the intrinsic driving force behind the project of cultivating new-generation talents for the era by shaping their moral character^[4]. As a key part of this project, education has the big job of shaping the inner world of young people. The spirit of educators is the inner power that makes this project work well. It pushes counselors to look at each student's growth needs, help them build correct values, and build the skills needed for today's era.

3. The operational logic of fostering the spirit of educators among college counselors

3.1. Systems perspective: The holistic concept of whole-staff education

Austrian biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy argued that any system is characterized by wholeness, with its constituent elements influencing one another ^[5]. The whole idea of whole-staff education says that education must be complete and full. That means education is not just the job of schools or teachers. It is a process where all parts of society join in. This idea breaks down the old wall between schools and society. It puts education inside a bigger social setting.

3.2. Collaborative perspective: The coupling mechanism of value co-creation

The value co-creation theory emphasizes that the relationship between enterprises and consumers is no longer a mere supply-demand dynamic, but has transformed into a relationship of co-creating value ^[6]. From a collaborative perspective, the generative mechanism linking fostering virtue through moral education and the spirit of educators reflects a coupling relationship between the spiritual pursuit of counselors in colleges and universities and the cultivation of students' intrinsic value ^[7]. These two mechanisms depend on each other and help each other in how they work. Fostering virtue through moral education is the basic task of education. Its real process gives good ground for growing the spirit of educators. Counselors take this task as their own duty. They guide students toward all-round and healthy growth by teaching by example and by being role models. The spirit of educators means the spirit shown by educators who have a clear long-term view, a will to try new things, and a readiness to give to their work. In a team-based way of growing together, fostering virtue through moral education and the spirit of educators are tied together and grow with each other. This creates a special way of working.

3.3. Field perspective: The interactive logic of environmental education

Field theory says that the world around us shapes human behavior and by what other people do. These influences come not just from physical space but also from social relationships and interactions. Today's international situation is complex and changes fast. So, counselors in colleges and universities who practice the spirit of educators need to help students understand the global picture. They should help students build a global view and learn cross-cultural communication skills. In the big task of making the great revival of the Chinese nation happen, counselors must take the spirit of educators as their guide. This will help them inspire students to love their country and feel a sense of historical mission.

Counselors are the base and main strength of ideological and political work in higher education. When they give ideological and political education and daily management services to students, they must keep improving their teaching skills and professional abilities. This helps them deal with students' more and more complex ideological concerns and growth challenges. This needs not just a good knowledge of many educational theories, but also real hands-on experience and sharp observation skills. These skills help them quickly find and fix the problems that students face as they grow.

3.4. Historical perspective: The evolutionary logic of teacher ethics inheritance

From a historical perspective, the generative mechanism linking fostering virtue through moral education and the spirit of educators is a profound and complex logical process, as well as a distinctive feature of human development ^[8]. These two ideas are tied together. They show the true nature and worth of education. Together, they write a great page in education and give useful lessons. Teachers have always focused on building public moral character. They help students set up correct values and moral views in ways such as reading classic books and teaching good manners.

4. Practical pathways for fostering the spirit of educators among college counselors

College counselors must build up their confidence in the path, theory, system, and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics. These four together are called the Four-Sphere Confidence. They also need to make their ideals and beliefs

stronger. This confidence comes from a deep understanding of and agreement with the cause of the Party and the country. It also comes from giving themselves fully and always working hard for the educational mission. Counselors should also get students to show the courage to challenge themselves and a strong wish to learn. They should focus on building students' new ways of thinking and hands-on skills. This helps students become the new era's creators and doers. And it helps them give something back to the country's future growth.

Teachers are leaders and soul shapers. So, they play a key role. College counselors are a special group among teachers. They must take fostering virtue through moral education as their main job.

They should not only work hard on ideological and political education. They must also show good skills in professional training, service management, and handling emergencies. The demands on counselors are very strict. They must set a good example in daily life. They must step up when things get hard. They must not back down when handling student emergencies. This way they make great contributions to campus peace and students' all-round growth. Every small action or gesture of a counselor can leave a deep mark on students' minds. It can serve as an important guide on their path to growing up. In the process of building and strengthening professional ethics and conduct among teachers, this must be the top priority. That means starting from the smallest things and taking real actions to push forward every core part of building teacher ethics and conduct.

The core values that all teachers go after—and that good counselors always hold—are summed up in the idea of “nourishing oneself with personal virtue, refining one's heart through public virtue, and forging the soul with great virtue.” When building a skill framework for counselors, colleges and universities cannot miss four key things: deep and solid professional knowledge, great teaching skills, never-ending love for teaching, and science-based new teaching methods. Advanced educational ideas are the heart that guides educational development. Counselors should firmly follow the teaching idea of “helping students think, care for their hearts, and teach them in the right way for each student.” They must keep improving their professional skills and new teaching abilities. They need to stay as lifelong learners, look into new areas of knowledge, and become doers who have research and new-idea skills.

5. Conclusion

Integrating the spirit of educators into the entire chain of college counselors' daily work serves as the core starting point for universities to fulfill the fundamental task of moral education in the new era. The Ministry of Education, education authorities at all provincial and municipal levels, and university party committees have always placed counselor team construction at the top of ideological and political work^[9]. While doing their work, all universities put fostering virtue through education at the core. They add the task of growing the spirit of educators into the whole plan for building counselor teams. They also guide counselors to hold themselves to the standards of “Four Good Teachers” and to learn from great educators of the new era. Counselors should try to become front-line educators who have a firm political stand, solid professional skills, and a deep feeling for education.

At present, both internal and external environments for moral education in universities are undergoing profound and lasting changes. The full popularization of mobile Internet, the rapid iteration of social media, and the diversified development of social ideology and culture have made contemporary college students more active in thinking, more extensive in information access channels, and more diverse in values^[10]. This has raised higher needs for college counselors' ability to give ideological guidance, to handle crises, and to give personalized education. Facing these new situations and new challenges, researchers and practitioners need to look deeply at the professional traits of counselor teams, the complex changes in the education environment, and the growth patterns of college students. They need to do this from many angles. And they need to find more science-based and working paths for building counselor teams.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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