

Research and Practice on the Reform of Art and Design Discipline Platform Courses under the "1+N+1" Framework

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ABSTRACT

In response to the demand for personalized cultivation of interdisciplinary talents in the modern art and design field, this paper analyzes the mismatch between the curriculum system setup in art and design education and industry development, personalized cultivation, as well as local needs. It defines the correlation between foundational professional competency literacy and sustainable competency literacy, analyzing their relationship with art and design talent development and local requirements. Through practical research, it proposes a practical pathway for discipline platform courses to effectively support the cultivation of professional qualities needed by the local talent market and foster personalized development.

KEYWORDS

Art and design major; Discipline platform courses; Personalized cultivation; Serving the local community

1 Introduction

With the development of modern technology and the continuous evolution of industry landscapes, the field of art and design increasingly demonstrates inclusivity and integration, advancement and scientificity, as well as the necessity for personalized talent cultivation serving local cultural and economic development. Higher education, rooted in fostering virtue and nurturing talents, aims to serve local economic and cultural development by cultivating high-level specialists suited to modern technological advancements and industrial operational models. Discipline platform courses (including disciplinary foundation courses and disciplinary elective courses) are crucial links in building the foundational knowledge of the discipline, expanding professional knowledge dimensions, and promoting sustainable development serving the local community. However, limitations exist in the talent cultivation processes of many higher education institutions: Firstly, discipline platform courses often lack systematicness and logical coherence, failing to provide an effective starting point for professional learning or a foundation for sustainable development; Secondly, the connection between talent cultivation and the needs of local economic and cultural development is unclear, failing to form distinctive talent cultivation characteristics that serve the local community. Discipline platform courses are vital for establishing the disciplinary knowledge system and dimensions, and are also important pathways for cultivating interdisciplinary talents and highlighting personalized development. Therefore, curriculum optimization reform addressing these two issues is both practical and necessary.

Over the past decade, foundational platform courses in design disciplines across universities nationwide have undergone significant reform and innovation, yielding a number of experimental cases and outcomes. However, a unified understanding regarding the setup of design discipline platform courses in application-oriented universities has not been formed, especially concerning comprehensive quality cultivation and serving local development. This lags far behind the demands of local economic and cultural development for talent cultivation and the need for talent sustainability. Faced with rapid industrial development and transformation, how to cultivate design professionals with comprehensive literacy and sustainable development capabilities, and how to construct discipline platform courses that adapt to local development needs and individual talent development, are urgent problems for application-oriented universities to solve.

2 The mapping relationship between art and design professional literacy and the professional curriculum system

Throughout the evolution of global vocational education curriculum reform, curriculum objectives have gradually shifted from originally singular skill-based models towards multi-integrated models centered on comprehensive vocational abilities, showing a general developmental trend of "subject-based → competency-based → personality-based". With the proposal and deepening of concepts like "lifelong learning" and "sustainable development", the holistic development and quality enhancement of individuals have gradually become new focal points in vocational education curriculum design. Comprehensively improving students' overall quality, perfecting their personal character, and cultivating successful workers and entrepreneurs have become the overarching goals of vocational education curriculum development in some developed countries and regions in the new century ^[1].

In the talent cultivation process, disciplinary foundation courses, professional courses, and elective courses are the three major modules. Disciplinary foundation courses and elective courses form the two main course platforms for students' professional learning. Both serve as platform courses laying the professional foundation and facilitating quality expansion, mutually supporting professional courses to jointly achieve the ultimate goal of professional talent cultivation. The demand for talent quality and ability in the art and design field has strong interdisciplinary characteristics. Simultaneously, various specializations within art and design also exhibit high integration. Therefore, well-constructed discipline platform courses play a crucial role and hold significant meaning for cultivating comprehensive qualities and sustainable development in talent cultivation.

Regarding disciplinary foundation courses, referred to here as the foundational platform. Zou Lieyan, in the article "Comparison · Selection · Integration — On the Reconstruction of Basic Courses for Art and Design Majors", mentioned that the course content of basic courses should mainly include: ① The concepts, principles, rules, knowledge, skills, and problems to be solved that basic courses aim to impart to students; ② The thinking methods, formal perception, technical behaviors, and other experiences that professional basic courses require students to master; ③ The development and internalization of traits through teaching and learning, such as visual interest, sensitivity to formal schemas, innovative thinking, inclusivity towards multiculturalism, and the cultivation of experimental spirit and attitude. It was also proposed that the basic courses of the art and design discipline should not merely serve as a transitional stage for "pre-professional learning" in art and design but should also fully exert their function in mastering basic knowledge and skills, their role in cultivating basic design thinking and literacy, and their foundational role in professional design initiation ^[2].

Regarding disciplinary elective courses, referred to here as the elective platform. Disciplinary elective courses are important content for expanding students' professional dimensions. The scope, content, timing, and proportion of elective courses are all variable factors influencing the outcome of talent cultivation. The task of the elective course platform is to provide students with multi-dimensional development space based on the cultivation of core professional competencies. It is also a powerful platform for promoting personalized development in talent cultivation, offering space and opportunities for talent sustainability to a certain extent. The disciplinary foundation course platform is the "foundation", and the disciplinary elective course platform is the "wing". The breadth and depth of the foundation, and the fullness of the wings, are all key links affecting the sustainable development and personalized development of talent cultivation.

3 Characteristics of the art and design discipline curriculum system

Curriculum theorists believe that the selection of curriculum content is "a process of choosing curriculum elements from disciplinary knowledge, contemporary social life experiences, or learners' experiences based on specific educational values and corresponding curriculum objectives. These curriculum elements include concepts, principles, skills, methods, values, etc." The formulation of course content for the art and design disciplinary foundation curriculum system is not just the selection of content from the three major foundational courses; the formulation of potential course content within its curriculum system should include aspects such as design awareness, design ethics, multicultural values, economic and management concepts, scientific spirit, and humanistic care. It is reflected not only in the implementation of each type of course but also throughout the entire stage of art and design foundational education ^[3].

Addressing the needs of cultivating application-oriented talents in the new era, solid professional foundations, broad professional perspectives, scientific research methods, innovative and creative abilities, as well as integrated humanistic thinking are the focal points for cultivating interdisciplinary talents. Simultaneously, the cultivation of problem-oriented approaches, systematic thinking, and comprehensive practical abilities is the core of application-oriented talent cultivation. The disciplinary foundation course platform and the disciplinary elective course platform represent the two ends of professional learning. They are the beginning of establishing a professional foundational thinking system and value system, the groundwork for broadening horizons and diversified development, and the key to achieving the goal of cultivating interdisciplinary talents.

Shandong Women's University, as a comprehensive application-oriented undergraduate institution, possesses inherent advantages and resources in cultivating interdisciplinary talents and application-oriented design talents. Leveraging the university's platform, the College of Art and Design has systematically designed the discipline platform courses, positioning talent cultivation towards nurturing interdisciplinary talents with systematic thinking, scientific methods, humanistic care, and potential for sustainable development. The reform dimensions of "problem-oriented, systematic thinking, solid foundation, integrated development" have been clarified. First, determine the overall approach of the talent cultivation plan: cultivating students' basic qualities and theoretical foundations, teaching logic and methodology, conducting research and practice, and focusing on achievement transformation and serving the local community. Second, determining the teaching philosophy for talent cultivation: adhering to problem-oriented and systematic thinking, strengthening interdisciplinary integration and professional convergence, incorporating new

concepts and technologies, and cultivating students' professional thinking abilities to discover, research, and solve problems. Third, determining the setup of the discipline platform course system: establishing an "I-shaped" curriculum system comprising the disciplinary foundation platform + professional core courses + disciplinary elective platform, emphasizing a thick foundation and broad scope, breaking down professional boundaries while developing individuality, enabling students to possess a more integrated professional foundation and broader space for personalized development.

4 Discipline platform course system integrating local talent needs and university characteristics

This project's outcomes address issues such as inaccurate nature positioning, unscientific systems, and misalignment of talent cultivation with local needs in art and design discipline platform courses. The main innovative contents are as follows:

4.1 Theoretical clarification of the nature and positioning of design discipline platform courses

Based on the nature and cultivation objectives of design professional education, an innovative concept for constructing art and design discipline platform courses is proposed. Following the reform philosophy of "solid foundation, serving the local community" and the reform plan of "problem-oriented, systematic thinking", a "1+N+1" curriculum system is constructed, namely "Disciplinary Foundation Platform + Various Professional Course Systems + Disciplinary Elective Platform". Disciplinary foundation courses and elective courses together form the discipline platform courses, laying the professional foundation for professional courses and building an expansion platform, meeting the needs of cultivating interdisciplinary talents. This curriculum system reform theoretically clarifies the function, nature, and positioning of design platform courses, affirming the important status and role of the platform course system in the talent cultivation process.

Professional foundation courses break the long-standing pattern of the three major foundation courses. Based on foundational professional cognition, they emphasize the cultivation of disciplinary professional cognition, design awareness, scientific thinking, and humanistic spirit, establishing the logical foundation for design education. The elective platform course breaks professional boundaries, offering diverse theoretical, knowledge, technical, practical, and interdisciplinary personalized courses as resources for students' sustainable development and personalized choices, meeting the needs of students' individualized development.

4.2 Constructing the "1+N+1" curriculum system to achieve organic integration of discipline platform courses and professional courses

Under the premise of disciplinary professional logical thinking, aiming for disciplinary guidance and quality expansion, a disciplinary thinking mode and foundational abilities are established, professional dimensions and personalized space are broadened, and the "1+N+1" discipline platform curriculum system is constructed. This system emphasizes both interdisciplinary integration and the establishment of logical thinking, as well as the multi-dimensional connection between platform courses and professional courses, achieving organic integration between them and facilitating the formation of design thinking logic within the logical relationship.

Optimization reform of disciplinary foundation platform courses under the concept of interdisciplinary integration. Disciplinary foundation courses pave the way for disciplinary knowledge and are the starting point of thinking logic. These courses focus on establishing a comprehensive disciplinary knowledge pedigree, building logical thinking modes, and forming design thinking and innovation awareness. They include four modules: disciplinary theory system courses, disciplinary foundation courses, interdisciplinary courses (university advantage courses), and local characteristic courses.

Professional courses are the main theories, knowledge, and skills for professional learning within the disciplinary system, including professional theory courses, professional technical courses, and comprehensive practical training courses.

Optimization reform of disciplinary elective platform courses under the concept of professional integration. Disciplinary elective courses expand professional knowledge, serving as a platform for students' personalized development and a channel connecting to local needs. The elective platform focuses on the structural layout of disciplinary elective courses, professional integration and multi-dimensional expansion, and personalized cultivation serving the local community. It includes six modules: cutting-edge theory courses, skill enhancement courses, local characteristic courses, social practice courses, studio courses, and experimental courses.

5 Interdisciplinary integration teaching model between professional courses and platform courses

5.1 Platform courses serve as the foundation and expansion for professional courses, supporting the depth and breadth of professional learning

Based on the "1+N+1" curriculum structure, disciplinary foundation courses lay the disciplinary knowledge base and theoretical foundation for professional learning, establish design thinking modes, and form foundational professional cognition. Disciplinary elective courses expand the learning dimensions for professional studies, develop personalized space, and create various possibilities for talent cultivation. Through the disciplinary elective platform, boundaries between specializations are broken down. Based on mastering core professional knowledge and abilities, students can choose courses from different modules, ensuring the systematization of disciplinary knowledge while broadening the range and space of choices, better meeting the needs of personalized talent development.

5.2 Mutual integration of disciplinary foundation courses and professional courses, organically blending disciplinary knowledge with professional knowledge

Disciplinary foundation courses lay the framework for professional learning. The integration of professional knowledge into foundation courses helps students establish preliminary professional cognition and expectations, stimulating their interest in professional learning. Simultaneously, consistently revisiting the content of disciplinary foundation courses within professional courses further deepens foundational abilities and knowledge, helps understand the role and significance of foundational theoretical knowledge in professional learning, and applies foundational theoretical knowledge to examine, analyze, and assist professional learning, achieving organic integration of foundational disciplinary knowledge and professional learning, highlighting the systematization of disciplinary knowledge.

5.3 Cross-implementation of professional courses with elective platform courses, emphasizing diverse integration and personalized development

While learning core professional skills, students choose elective platform courses based on their respective interests. This reflects different professional characteristics during the professional learning process, enriches and diversifies students' knowledge backgrounds, and establishes pathways for personalized development and platforms for diversified development. That is, students, from the same starting point, present possibilities for diverse combinations due to the variety of selections, thereby stimulating learning interest, leveraging student strengths, highlighting their advantages, and achieving diversified and sustainable talent development.

5.4 Highlighting university disciplinary characteristics and serving local development

Integrate the university's disciplinary characteristics and advantageous resources into the platform courses, allowing every student access to the university's superior disciplinary resources, while simultaneously establishing the university's distinctive educational characteristics. For example, based on the university's characteristics and advantages, integrate Women's Studies courses into general education, helping students establish correct gender views, thereby guiding them in defining their personal positioning. Based on the university's comprehensive disciplinary foundation focused on humanities, integrate relevant courses from sociology and marketing into the discipline platform courses, helping students establish scientific thinking modes and sound market concepts, laying a solid foundation for serving the cultural and creative industries, and also establishing a basis for students' sustainable development.

Integrate local talent needs into the platform courses, enabling students to cultivate professional characteristics and form areas of professional advantage targeted towards their professional studies. For instance, within the elective platform, add directional module courses based on local market and talent demands. Example 1: Serving the development of causes for the elderly, women, and children is a key area for the university's service to the local community. The Art and Design discipline has established a children's wear design direction within the Fashion and Apparel Design major, which has become a distinctive talent cultivation direction within the province over recent years. Example 2: As Shandong is a major cultural province and the core region of Yellow River culture, education in traditional culture and arts is also listed as a characteristic cultivation area at Women's University. The college has set up a "Traditional Chinese Women's Handicrafts (Nühong)" course cluster, allowing students to inherit excellent traditional Chinese culture and arts through course learning, understand fine Chinese family culture, shaping the educational characteristics of both the university and the local region.

6 Main achievements of the discipline platform course reform

This reform project forms disciplinary characteristics by optimizing professional education through discipline platform courses. Simultaneously, it utilizes the university's disciplinary advantages to form disciplinary professional strengths within the university's broader academic context. By combining these with regional talent demands, it constructs a regional talent demand model, cultivates distinctive talent cultivation features that meet local needs, and establishes an interdisciplinary talent cultivation model under the concept of New Liberal Arts. In recent years, the College of Art and Design at Shandong Women's University has focused on characteristic talent cultivation and application-oriented talent cultivation. Under the "1+N+1" talent cultivation reform model, it has achieved "one specialty with multiple wings" talent cultivation outcomes: "One specialty" refers to cultivating specialized talents with a solid professional foundation and outstanding practical abilities; "Multiple wings" refers to cultivating talents with integrity, a strong sense of social responsibility, Comprehensive disciplinary knowledge and professional literacy, especially interdisciplinary talents capable of sustainable development and meeting local needs, providing talent support for local economic and cultural development.

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References

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