

A New Attempt of Topic-Based Teaching Method in Ideological and Political Courses in Colleges and Universities

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Abstract: Against the backdrop of rapid social changes, the urgency of reforming ideological and political education courses in colleges and universities has become increasingly prominent. As an innovative approach, the topic-based teaching method can significantly enhance the appeal and effectiveness of ideological and political education courses. This paper delves into the application of the topic-based teaching method ideological and political education courses in colleges and universities, analyzing its implementation steps from aspects such as topic selection and classroom guidance, exploring its advantages in stimulating students' interest and developing their comprehensive abilities, and dissecting challenges such as the difficulty in topic selection and uneven student participation. It also proposes corresponding strategies based on teaching practice, providing a valuable reference for the reform of college ideological and political education courses.

1. Introduction

In the higher education system, ideological and political courses in colleges and universities hold a pivotal position[1]. They are key to cultivating students' correct worldviews, outlooks on life, and values, and are essential for providing society with high-quality talents who are both morally upright and competent. However, a review of the traditional teaching model of ideological and political courses in colleges and universities reveals numerous problems that need to be addressed urgently. In terms of teaching methods, the long-standing teacher-centered one-way lecture approach dominates[2]. Teachers merely read from textbooks on the podium, while students passively listen and mechanically take notes below, lacking effective interaction and communication. This makes it difficult to stimulate students' interest and initiative in learning. From the perspective of teaching content, some ideological and political courses are disconnected from reality[3]. The theoretical knowledge is not closely integrated with current social hotspots, students' actual lives, and the new trends and changes of the times. As a result, students find the learning process abstract and obscure, making it hard for them to connect the knowledge they acquire with real life and truly understand the practical value and guiding significance of ideological and political theories. These issues directly lead to low enthusiasm and participation among students in ideological and political courses[4].

Many students view these courses as a burden and merely study to pass exams, lacking the intrinsic motivation to deeply explore ideological and political knowledge. The teaching outcomes are also unsatisfactory. Students' understanding of ideological and political theories often remains superficial, making it difficult for them to internalize these theories as their own ideological concepts and behavioral norms, thus failing to effectively achieve the educational goals of ideological and political education.

Against this backdrop, the introduction of the topic-based teaching method has brought new hope and light to the reform of ideological and political courses in colleges and universities. This method takes the hot topics that students care about as the entry point for teaching, ingeniously integrating abstract ideological and political theories into vivid and life-related topics. These topics not only closely follow the teaching syllabus and core content of ideological and political courses but also closely align with social reality and students' interests, such as social fairness and justice, technological innovation and social responsibility, cultural confidence and inheritance, etc. They can quickly capture students' attention and stimulate their curiosity and thirst for knowledge.

Through the topic-based teaching method, students transform from passive recipients of knowledge to active participants and explorers. During topic discussions, they think actively, exchange ideas enthusiastically, and integrate their life experiences and cognitive insights with ideological and political theories, thereby gaining a deeper understanding and grasp of the essence and substance of ideological and political knowledge. This teaching approach not only enlivens the classroom atmosphere, enhances the appeal and influence of ideological and political courses, but also effectively improves students' learning outcomes, enabling ideological and political education to truly take root and thrive. It injects new vitality and vigor into the teaching of ideological and political courses in colleges and universities, promoting the development of ideological and political education towards higher quality and efficiency.

2. The Implementation Steps of the Topic-based Teaching Method in Ideological and Political Courses in Colleges and Universities

2.1 Topic Selection

Topic selection is a crucial step in the topic-based teaching method[5]. Teachers should closely integrate the teaching content of ideological and political courses with the actual needs of students, choosing topics that are contemporary, controversial, and thought-provoking. When making the selection, it is necessary to fully consider students' knowledge reserves, interests, and current social hotspots. For instance, choosing "The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Employment Structure and Responses" is appropriate. With the rapid development of technology, artificial intelligence has become a hot topic among students, and they can come across related information in their daily lives, having a certain cognitive foundation. This can easily spark their enthusiasm for discussion. Combining it with the theoretical knowledge about economic development and social employment in ideological and political courses can enable students to deeply understand the connection between theory and reality.

2.2 Pre-class Preparation

After determining the topic, the teacher should guide students to make preparations before class. The teacher can provide relevant reading materials, video resources, etc., to help students understand the background of the topic and related theoretical knowledge. For instance, when discussing "The Impact of Online Public Opinion on Society", the teacher can offer relevant chapters from the book *The Crowd* about the relationship between group psychology and public opinion, as well as in-depth

reporting videos on some online public opinion events. At the same time, students are required to independently collect materials and form their own viewpoints and opinions. Students can collect recent online hot event reports through news websites, academic databases, etc., and analyze the role and influence of online public opinion in the event development process, such as the one-sided guidance of online public opinion in the early stage of the Chongqing bus plunge incident and its subsequent reversal, etc., allowing students to think about the characteristics and influence of online public opinion from different perspectives.

2.3 Classroom Discussion

Classroom discussion is the core link of the topic-based teaching method. Teachers should create a relaxed and democratic classroom atmosphere and encourage students to actively participate in discussions. Forms such as group discussions and class-wide discussions can be adopted to allow students to fully express their views and opinions. In group discussions, students can fully exchange ideas and cultivate teamwork skills; class-wide discussions can broaden students' horizons and expose them to more diverse viewpoints. For example, when discussing "How can college students realize their personal value?", teachers can guide students to start from daily life, study, social practice, etc., and explore specific ways of practice. During the discussion process, teachers should play a guiding role. When students' discussions deviate from the topic, they should be brought back on track in a timely manner; when students' viewpoints are one-sided, they should be guided to think about the problem from multiple perspectives to help students deepen their understanding of the issue.

2.4 Summary and Evaluation

After the discussion, the teacher should summarize and evaluate the students' performance. The evaluation should cover aspects such as their level of participation, the originality of their viewpoints, and the logical coherence of their arguments. Students who actively participate and speak up should be affirmed, those who present novel viewpoints should be commended, and those who have rigorous arguments and clear logic should be given focused comments. At the same time, the teacher should also point out the problems and shortcomings of the students, such as viewpoints lacking theoretical support and logical loopholes in the argumentation process, and offer suggestions for improvement. Through this summary and evaluation, students can understand their performance in the discussion, clarify the direction of their efforts, and it also helps the teacher to improve teaching methods and enhance teaching quality.

3. The Advantages of the Topic-based Teaching Method in Ideological and Political Courses in Colleges and Universities

3.1 Stimulating Students' Interest in Learning

The topic-based teaching method takes topics that interest students as the entry point, breaking away from the dullness of traditional teaching models and stimulating students' interest and curiosity in learning. Traditional ideological and political education classes mainly focus on theoretical indoctrination, where students passively accept knowledge and are prone to feeling bored. In contrast, the topic-based teaching method integrates abstract theoretical knowledge into vivid topics. For instance, it uses the different era stories in the popular film *My Motherland And I* as topics to explore the manifestation of patriotism in different periods. This approach enables students to start from familiar film plots and experience the charm of ideological and political theories, fully exerting their

initiative and enthusiasm, and significantly improving their learning outcomes.

3.2 Cultivating Students' Thinking Abilities

During the topic discussion process, students need to think deeply about the problem, analyze the causes and impacts of the problem, and propose their own solutions. This helps cultivate students' logical thinking ability, critical thinking ability and innovative thinking ability. For example, when discussing the topic of "How to deal with global climate change", students need to analyze the causes and impacts of climate change from different perspectives such as politics, economy, culture and technology, and propose corresponding countermeasures. During the analysis process, students need to use logical thinking to sort out the cause-and-effect relationship, use critical thinking to examine different viewpoints, and use innovative thinking to propose unique solutions, thus comprehensively exercising and improving their thinking ability.

3.3 Enhancing Students' Practical Abilities

The topic-based teaching method emphasizes the cultivation of students' practical abilities. During the process of collecting information and participating in discussions, students need to apply the knowledge they have learned to solve practical problems, which helps to enhance their practical abilities and overall qualities. For instance, when discussing "Opportunities and Challenges for College Students' Entrepreneurship", students can understand the actual situation of college students' entrepreneurship by investigating and researching entrepreneurial cases around them and interviewing successful entrepreneurs, and then put forward their own entrepreneurial ideas and suggestions. This not only improves students' practical abilities but also lays a foundation for their future entrepreneurial practices.

3.4 Enhancing the Teaching Effectiveness of Ideological and Political Courses

The topic-based teaching method makes the content of ideological and political courses more closely related to students' real life and social reality, enhancing the appeal and influence of these courses. Through discussions, students can deeply understand the connotation and value of ideological and political theories and internalize theoretical knowledge into their own ideological concepts and behavioral norms. For instance, taking campus garbage classification as an example to discuss theories related to ecological civilization construction, students can better understand the significance of ecological civilization construction in the process of actually participating in campus garbage classification and combining it with the content of classroom discussions. Thus, they can consciously practice environmental protection concepts in their daily lives, improving the effectiveness of ideological and political courses.

4. Challenges Faced by the Topic-Based Teaching Method in College Ideological and Political Courses

4.1 Difficulty in Teachers' Role Transformation

In the topic-based teaching method, teachers need to shift from traditional knowledge transmitters to organizers, guides and participants of teaching activities[6]. This places higher demands on teachers' teaching abilities and comprehensive qualities. However, some teachers, influenced by traditional teaching concepts, find it difficult to adapt to this role change. They are accustomed to lecturing knowledge on the podium and when organizing topic discussions, they do not know how to

guide students or control the pace of the discussion. In the teaching process, they still mainly rely on lecturing and fail to fully leverage the advantages of the topic-based teaching method.

4.2 Uneven Student Participation

In topic discussions, some students are very active, able to take the initiative to participate in the discussion and express their own opinions and views; while others are relatively passive and have a low level of participation. This may be due to personality differences, with outgoing and expressive students being more willing to speak up actively, while introverted students may be reluctant or afraid to express themselves. It could also be due to differences in knowledge reserves and learning abilities, with students who have strong learning abilities and rich knowledge being more confident in participating in discussions, while those with weak foundations may be reluctant to participate for fear of making mistakes. This imbalance in participation may affect the implementation effect of the topic teaching method.

4.3 Difficulty in Controlling Teaching Time

Topic discussions often require a considerable amount of time, but the teaching hours for ideological and political courses in colleges and universities are limited. Within the limited time, it is necessary to ensure that students have sufficient time for discussion while also completing the teaching tasks, which poses a challenge to the teachers' ability to control the teaching time. If the discussion time is too long, it may result in the failure to complete the teaching tasks; if it is too short, students will not have enough time to fully express their views and engage in debates, making it difficult to achieve the expected teaching effect[7]. For instance, when discussing complex topics, students may need a considerable amount of time to present their viewpoints and engage in debates. It is difficult for teachers to ensure that students have sufficient time for communication and also conduct a comprehensive summary of the discussion within the prescribed time.

4.4 Insufficient Teaching Resources

The topic-based teaching method requires abundant teaching resources, such as relevant books, periodicals, online materials, and cases. However, in some universities, the resources for ideological and political education are relatively scarce. The libraries have a limited number of the latest books and periodicals related to ideological and political courses. The construction of online teaching platforms is not complete, and there is a lack of high-quality teaching videos and case libraries. This makes it difficult for teachers to prepare teaching materials and also affects the in-depth understanding and discussion quality of students on topics, failing to provide strong support for the implementation of the topic-based teaching method.

5. Response Strategies

5.1 Strengthening Teacher Training

Colleges and universities should enhance the training of ideological and political course teachers, helping them update their teaching concepts and master the implementation skills of topic-based teaching methods. This can be achieved by organizing teachers to participate in teaching seminars, observing demonstration classes, and conducting teaching research, thereby improving their teaching abilities and overall qualities and promoting the transformation of their roles. For instance, colleges and universities should regularly invite experts who have successfully applied topic-based teaching

methods to give lectures and training workshops on campus, allowing teachers to personally experience and learn how to effectively organize topic discussions. colleges and universities should also organize teachers to observe demonstration classes at other universities, enabling them to learn advanced teaching experiences. At the same time, colleges and universities need to encourage teachers to conduct teaching research, thereby exploring topic-based teaching models suitable for their own students.

5.2 Encouraging Student Participation

Teachers can adopt various methods to encourage students to actively participate in topic discussions. For instance, when forming groups, they should strive to ensure diversity among group members, allowing students with different personalities and from different majors to communicate and inspire each other. Introverted students may be motivated by extroverted ones, and the collision of ideas among students from different majors can also generate new perspectives. Establishing an effective incentive mechanism, such as giving praise and rewards to students who actively participate in discussions, like adding points to their regular grades or awarding a "Classroom Active Participation Award", can stimulate students' enthusiasm for participation. Teachers should also encourage students to boldly express their viewpoints, respect individual differences, and create a relaxed discussion atmosphere, enabling students to feel confident in sharing their thoughts.

5.3 Reasonable Arrangement of Teaching Time

When designing teaching plans, teachers should fully consider the time needed for topic discussions and rationally arrange teaching content and teaching links. They can formulate detailed discussion plans in advance, clearly define the time limit for each discussion link, and strictly follow the plan during the discussion. For example, the discussion can be divided into presenting viewpoints, group debates, and summary speeches, with a fixed time set for each link. At the same time, teachers should flexibly deal with various situations that arise during the discussion. When students' discussions are too enthusiastic, they should appropriately remind them to speed up the pace; when the discussion reaches a deadlock, they should promptly guide and inspire, adjust the teaching progress, and ensure the smooth completion of teaching tasks.

5.4 Enriching Teaching Resources

Colleges and universities should increase their investment in ideological and political teaching resources and build a rich teaching resource library. This can be achieved by purchasing relevant books, periodicals, and databases, collecting and organizing online resources and cases, etc., to enrich teaching resources. For instance, colleges and universities can subscribe to the latest ideological and political academic journals and purchase authoritative collections of ideological and political teaching cases. In this way, colleges and universities can establish specialized ideological and political teaching resource websites, allowing teachers to better utilize high-quality online teaching videos, courseware, and other resources. At the same time, teachers should also actively develop and utilize local teaching resources, such as visiting patriotic education bases and inviting experts and scholars to give lectures, to provide strong support for the implementation of topic-based teaching methods.

6. Conclusion

The topic-based teaching method has brought significant changes to ideological and political

education in colleges and universities, becoming an important force driving the innovative development of ideological and political education. It breaks the dull pattern of traditional ideological and political teaching, using topics that resonate with the pulse of the times and students' concerns as a link to build bridges between theory and reality, teachers and students, and the classroom and society. From the perspective of implementation results, the topic-based teaching method has greatly stimulated students' enthusiasm for learning. Students are no longer passive recipients of knowledge but active explorers. In the discussion of various topics, they actively seek knowledge and analyze problems, truly becoming the masters of their own learning. This active participation in learning makes ideological and political knowledge no longer abstract but closely connected to students' life experiences and future plans, thus making ideological and political education truly resonate with students' minds.

Although the topic-based teaching method has obvious advantages, it is undeniable that it faces many challenges in its implementation. The transformation of teachers' roles is difficult. The inertia of traditional teaching restricts some teachers from quickly adapting to the new roles of organizers and guides, limiting the effectiveness of the topic-based teaching method. Students' participation levels vary. Factors such as personality and knowledge reserves lead to some students having low participation enthusiasm, affecting the comprehensiveness and depth of discussions. Time management in teaching is challenging. Teachers need to ensure sufficient student discussion while also keeping up with the teaching schedule, which requires high classroom control skills. The scarcity of teaching resources also hinders the implementation of topic-based teaching.

To overcome these difficulties, a multi-pronged approach is needed. Colleges and universities should strengthen the teacher training system, providing support through special lectures and teaching practice workshops to help teachers update their teaching concepts and master topic-based teaching skills. Teachers should focus on guiding student participation, using diverse grouping strategies and incentive mechanisms to mobilize the enthusiasm of all students. In terms of time management in teaching, teachers need to carefully design the teaching process and flexibly control the pace to ensure the smooth progress of teaching tasks. Colleges and universities should increase resource investment, build rich and diverse teaching resource libraries, and encourage teachers to explore local characteristic resources to lay a solid foundation for topic-based teaching.

Looking to the future, with the continuous deepening of educational reform, the topic-based teaching method is expected to play a greater role in ideological and political education in colleges and universities. It will continue to improve and develop, deeply integrate with information technology, expand the temporal and spatial dimensions of teaching, introduce more cutting-edge topics and innovative forms, and continuously enhance the appeal and effectiveness of ideological and political education. It will contribute to cultivating new era talents with firm ideals and beliefs, profound patriotic sentiments, and outstanding comprehensive qualities, promoting ideological and political education in colleges and universities to new heights and writing more brilliant chapters in the cultivation of new era talents.

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