

The Educational Philosophy and Methods for Cultivating High-Quality College Students

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Abstract: Pursuing academic excellence is a worthy challenge, but cultivating integrity demands wholehearted commitment. In the realm of education, the principle of leading by virtue, embodied in both words and actions, should remain a constant guide for educators. Ideological and political education must integrate both general instruction and personalized approaches to effectively reach all students. Emotional engagement plays a pivotal role in this process, harnessing the power of empathy and humanistic care to create meaningful connections that support and influence students. This emotional resonance serves not only as a fundamental strategy but also as a necessary condition for success in ideological education. This paper explores how to enhance students' ideological and moral development, as well as promote their overall growth in higher education, through the seamless integration of verbal guidance and exemplary behavior, reinforced by emotional connection. The study concludes that class teachers, as the cornerstone of ideological and political education, should emphasize alignment between what they say and what they do. By fostering emotional rapport, educators can more effectively cultivate students' moral values and support their all-around development—morally, intellectually, physically, aesthetically, and in practical labor.

Keywords: Role models; Personalized education; Emotional engagement; Educational psychology; Educational strategies

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1. Introduction

Ideological and political education in higher education plays a vital role in cultivating students' moral character, shaping well-rounded personalities, and promoting their holistic development. In today's complex social environment, marked by cultural diversity and pluralistic values, effectively integrating ideological and political education into students' daily lives and academic experiences poses a significant challenge for educators. As the frontline facilitators of this mission, class teachers are not only responsible for academic instruction and student management but also serve a pivotal role in shaping students' worldviews, outlooks on life, and core values^[1].

Within this context, the integration of verbal instruction and behavioral modeling becomes especially important. As the old saying goes, "If a person is upright, they act without being told; if they are not upright, even con-

stant instruction is in vain.” Class teachers, serving as role models in both academic and everyday settings, exert a profound influence on students through their behavior, attitudes, and values, often more powerful than words alone. Their actions subtly shape students’ perceptions and conduct, making behavioral teaching an irreplaceable element in the cultivation of students’ moral standards and behavioral norms.

At the same time, verbal teaching remains essential as a primary vehicle for transmitting ideas and imparting knowledge. Through classroom instruction and thoughtful communication, class teachers help students develop sound ideological understanding and reinforce the alignment between their thoughts and actions through meaningful real-life experiences ^[2].

Moreover, emotional connection is a crucial yet often underappreciated component of ideological and political education. Education is not merely the transfer of knowledge; it is also an exchange of emotions and a dialogue of values. When class teachers demonstrate care, empathy, and understanding, they foster a strong sense of belonging and identification among students. This emotional bond enhances students’ receptiveness to educational content and significantly increases its effectiveness. Emotional engagement also allows educators to better comprehend students’ inner thoughts and moral development, laying a solid foundation for deeper, more impactful ideological and political education.

2. Practical approaches to role modeling and value-oriented leadership

Role models exert a profound influence on personal growth and character development. Although most individuals may never fully attain the ideals embodied by their role models, the aspiration to emulate such figures serves as a powerful internal motivator. As the saying goes, “To teach, one must possess both knowledge and moral integrity.” While the pursuit of knowledge can be demanding, upholding moral conduct is a fundamental standard that every educator must continually strive to meet. Teachers are not only transmitters of knowledge but also exemplars of virtue, and their actions often shape students’ beliefs and behaviors more profoundly than their words ^[3].

In the realm of ideological and political education at the higher education level, class teachers and counselors, who interact most closely with students, play a particularly vital role as moral exemplars. By combining articulate verbal guidance with consistent behavioral modeling, these educators can more effectively support students in forming sound values and a constructive outlook on life. The essence of verbal instruction lies in the clear, structured communication of principles, while behavioral modeling provides a living example for students to observe and follow.

As daily-life mentors and managers, class teachers offer students real, tangible demonstrations of ethical conduct, thereby making ideological messages more relatable and impactful. As the renowned educator Tao Xingzhi once said, “Verbal instruction conveys reason; role modeling demonstrates action.” The organic integration of these two elements transforms moral education from abstract ideology into practical experience. This dual approach enables students not only to understand what they should do but also to internalize why they should do it ^[4].

3. Deep cognition and practical engagement with the role of the class advisor

As educators, our responsibilities extend far beyond the transmission of knowledge—we are also mentors and life assistants, guiding students through their personal growth and development. Within every student lies a wellspring of untapped potential and positivity. It is the educator’s role to discover, nurture, and ignite this inner strength. No matter how rebellious or challenging a student may appear, teachers must remain patient and com-

passionate, holding firm to the belief that every individual possesses innate goodness and wisdom ^[5].

In the process of education, teachers should not adopt a confrontational stance toward students. Instead, they must strive to enter the students' inner world, fostering a relationship built on cooperation, empathy, and mutual support. Only through such meaningful connections can students truly feel the teacher's care and understanding, perceiving them not merely as authority figures, but as genuine companions and guides in their life journey.

When addressing students' mistakes or behavioral missteps, the approach educators take is of critical importance. A harsh, judgmental attitude may alienate students, causing them to feel misunderstood or rejected, which in turn can breed resistance and disengagement. On the other hand, if teachers approach these situations with empathy, acknowledging students' strengths while offering thoughtful, constructive guidance, students are more likely to feel supported rather than criticized. They will recognize that the teacher's intention is not to punish, but to assist in their growth and improvement ^[6].

Such an approach helps dissolve barriers between teachers and students, replacing confrontation with connection. When a foundation of mutual trust and support is established, communication becomes more open, collaboration more effective, and the overall impact of education far more profound.

4. Synergistic mechanism of personalized guidance and generalized cultivation

In education, each student is a unique individual, and the process of teaching is much like farming; effective cultivation requires an understanding of each crop's growth patterns, enabling timely and appropriate care. Likewise, educators must recognize the distinctive characteristics of every student and adopt personalized approaches to guide their development effectively. In the realm of ideological and political education, it is essential to strike a balance between respecting individual differences and addressing collective needs to achieve optimal educational outcomes ^[7].

4.1. Theoretical basis and implementation framework of differentiated education

General education aims to reach the entire student body, ensuring broad coverage and efficient use of educational resources. However, the individuality of students must not be overlooked. In a typical classroom of dozens of students, there are vast differences in thought processes, personalities, interests, and learning capacities. Relying solely on standardized teaching methods may raise the overall quality of instruction, but it risks neglecting those with specific needs, whether they are high-achieving students with exceptional potential or those facing academic and personal challenges ^[8].

For such students, individualized education becomes not just beneficial but essential. Teachers must design tailored educational strategies based on a student's particular circumstances to more precisely support their growth. This targeted approach ensures that every learner has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

4.2. Path optimization of generalized cultivation from the perspective of group dynamics

In ideological and political education, individualized instruction and general education are not opposing forces; instead, they complement and reinforce each other. General education offers a unified foundation of ideological values and norms, fostering a shared sense of belief, identity, and behavior across the student group. However, this uniform approach may fall short in addressing the nuanced needs of individuals who require more personalized guidance. Individualized education bridges this gap by catering to students' varying cognitive levels, personal interests, and ideological development stages. By adapting content and methods to fit these specific traits,

educators can offer more effective support that enhances both learning outcomes and personal growth ^[9].

4.3. Model innovation in collective education through feedback from typical cases

Individualized education not only benefits individual students but also contributes valuable insights to the broader practice of general education. By reflecting on successful individualized cases, educators can derive strategies that enrich collective instruction. For instance, when a student exhibits notable progress following personalized mentoring, this success story can be shared with the entire class during meetings or thematic educational sessions. Such examples serve as motivational tools, allowing other students to draw inspiration and practical insights, thereby fostering collective improvement and a more supportive learning environment.

5. Methodology of Ideological and Political Education Integrating Reason and Emotion

For university class advisors, the effectiveness of ideological and political education hinges on a harmonious blend of rational guidance and emotional resonance. Education is not merely about persuading students with theories and principles; it must also move them emotionally and inspire intrinsic change. Only through the seamless integration of logic and empathy can educators achieve both depth and breadth in their teaching, thereby fostering meaningful shifts in students' values and behaviors.

5.1. Logical construction of theoretical persuasion: from knowledge transmission to value identification

“Guiding with reason” refers to the use of sound, evidence-based reasoning to help students develop accurate values and sound judgment. In the realm of ideological and political education, class advisors must possess solid theoretical foundations and be prepared to offer timely, clear guidance on matters of worldview and morality. However, abstract preaching alone is often ineffective. Educators must ground their teachings in real-life examples, historical events, or case studies to make complex theories relatable and easier to internalize. The strength of rational persuasion lies in its clarity and credibility; only when students truly grasp the logic and truth behind the theory will they be motivated to apply it in practice ^[10].

5.2. Practical path of emotional connection: empathetic communication and the building of psychological contracts

“Moving with emotion” emphasizes the emotional engagement between educators and students, using empathy and care to influence attitudes and behaviors. This emotional dimension is not only a cornerstone of ideological and political education but also the foundation of effective interpersonal communication. College students are at a pivotal stage of emotional and personal development; they require not only intellectual instruction but also emotional affirmation and support from those who guide them. When class advisors show genuine concern and understanding, students are more likely to open up, accept guidance, and develop a deeper trust in the educational process ^[11].

5.3. Integrated cognitive-emotional education model: A framework based on the cognition-affect system theory

Modern psychology asserts that reason and emotion are inseparable elements of human decision-making. Ef-

fective judgment arises from the interplay of both. Likewise, in ideological and political education, the optimal results are achieved when rational explanation and emotional support go hand in hand. Reason speaks to the intellect, while emotion touches the heart, only when both are engaged can education leave a lasting impression^[12].

Overreliance on emotional appeal may render ideological education overly sentimental and lacking in intellectual rigor. Conversely, excessive emphasis on theory may distance students emotionally, making the content feel abstract or impersonal. Thus, class advisors must strive to balance the two. When addressing student behavior or ideological confusion, they should first appeal to reason, helping students understand the logic behind the guidance; at the same time, they should provide emotional warmth and support, allowing students to feel understood and valued. This dual approach fosters greater receptiveness and more sustained behavioral transformation.

6. Constructing a united and harmonious class environment for student development

Fostering a positive classroom atmosphere, enhancing class cohesion, and cultivating a harmonious class culture are fundamental responsibilities of university homeroom teachers. The essence of education lies not only in nurturing knowledgeable individuals but also in shaping socially responsible citizens. To empower students to become pillars of society, they must be equipped with a strong sense of civic responsibility, a collaborative spirit, rich cultural and scientific knowledge, and a healthy mind and body. Achieving these objectives requires the formation of strong class cohesion and a vibrant, inclusive learning environment.

6.1. Mechanism for generating class cohesion driven by a shared vision

Class cohesion is built upon the establishment of clear and shared goals. Without a unified direction, students tend to operate in isolation, weakening the collective spirit of the group over time. A well-defined and meaningful common goal not only aligns the efforts of all students but also inspires a collective sense of mission, driving them to work together for shared success and honor. Establishing these goals, however, must begin with a deep respect for each student's aspirations. While class objectives are often constructed atop the personal goals of its members, they must also transcend individualism to serve the collective good. Recognizing the diversity of students' ideals, motivations, and developmental needs, homeroom teachers should integrate personal ambitions with broader class objectives. This synergy enables students to contribute meaningfully to class development while pursuing their own growth^[13].

6.2. Cultural symbol construction of harmonious class ethos and its implicit educational function

A harmonious class culture functions as an invisible yet powerful force that encourages students to continuously strive for excellence. In a cohesive and supportive group, students are more likely to take pride in collective achievements, actively improve themselves, and approach challenges in academics and life with optimism and resilience. The stronger the class culture, the more focused and ambitious students become, willingly contributing to the collective's progress and enhancing the positive momentum of the group^[14].

This culture is reflected not only in students' academic behavior but also in their everyday interactions. A harmonious class resembles a caring family, where students feel warmth, support, and belonging. In such an environment, they can develop holistically, both intellectually and emotionally. When students experience empathy, assistance, and encouragement from their peers and teachers, they become more eager to support the class, con-

tributing to a virtuous cycle of cooperation and mutual growth.

6.3. Research on the cultivation of student self-governance and the guiding boundaries of head teachers

Homeroom teachers and counselors play a pivotal role in shaping class development, not just as academic mentors, but also as life guides. By maintaining consistent communication with students, they can monitor progress, identify challenges, and offer timely interventions. For high-achieving students, well-deserved praise and encouragement can reinforce confidence and motivation. For those struggling with execution or planning, patient guidance and constructive support can help them gradually improve their self-management and planning abilities. In doing so, educators not only promote academic excellence but also cultivate the essential life skills needed for long-term success^[15].

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the effectiveness of education extends far beyond the transmission of knowledge, it depends on the power of role modeling, emotional support, effective communication, and a cohesive learning environment. As educators, teachers must fully recognize our profound influence on students' growth and well-being. By leading through personal example and heartfelt engagement, we can ignite students' inner potential and passion for learning. At the same time, it is essential to respect both the individuality and commonality of students by adopting differentiated teaching strategies that optimize educational outcomes. Furthermore, cultivating a positive class culture and reinforcing collective goals can help students develop strong social responsibility and a collaborative mindset, preparing them to contribute meaningfully to society. Through these comprehensive efforts, teachers not only guide students intellectually but also shape their character and emotional intelligence, empowering them to navigate their futures with confidence, integrity, and purpose.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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