

Research on Construction and Operation Strategy of "Industry Customized" Employment Practice Base in Applied Universities

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Abstract. Against the backdrop of the popularization of higher education and increasingly prominent structural contradictions in the job market, the construction of employment internship bases in applied universities faces practical challenges such as homogenization and detachment from industrial demands. This study takes the collaborative project between the Visual Communication Design program at Liaoning Communication University and Liaoning Hongdong Cultural Development Co., Ltd. as a case study, proposing an "industry-customized" model for internship base development. Centered on deep industry-education integration, this model achieves seamless alignment between talent cultivation and industrial needs through precise alignment with corporate demands, customized development of practical teaching resources, and establishment of a collaborative management mechanism between both parties. The research systematically elucidates the connotation, characteristics, construction pathways, and operational mechanisms of the "industry-customized" model, while building a comprehensive support system encompassing hardware infrastructure, faculty development, and evaluation frameworks. Practical implementation demonstrates that this model effectively enhances students' practical skills and employment competitiveness, providing replicable experience paradigms for applied universities to deepen industry-academia collaboration and innovate talent cultivation models.

Keywords: Application-oriented Universities; Industry Customization; Employment Internship Bases; Industry-education Integration; Operational Strategies.

1. Introduction

As China's higher education enters the massification phase, the continuous expansion of college graduates has highlighted structural contradictions in the employment market. Relevant documents from the Ministry of Education explicitly identify internships as a crucial pathway to enhance employability. However, traditional internship models often suffer from issues like superficial engagement and detachment from practical applications, failing to effectively improve students' professional competencies and employment competitiveness. Applied universities, committed to serving regional economic development, bear the important mission of cultivating high-quality applied talents. Liaoning Communication University, as an independently established undergraduate institution specializing in media arts in Northeast China, maintains a large cohort of students in its Visual Communication Design program, graduating over 100 students annually. In response to the rapidly evolving demands of the digital creative industry for design professionals, the university has partnered with Liaoning Hongdong Cultural Development Co., Ltd. to explore a new model of "industry-customized" internship bases. Annual project data from Hongdong Culture reveals growing client demand for dynamic visual design and brand end-to-end solutions, providing data-driven support for curriculum customization. This study, using this collaborative project as a practical case, systematically examines how applied universities can establish high-level internship bases, offering significant value in addressing internship challenges and deepening industry-education integration[1].

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Basis

The development of overseas internship bases has established a relatively mature theoretical framework. Germany's "dual system" emphasizes the dual-subject status of enterprises and schools, with students spending approximately two-thirds of their time in corporate practice, achieving integration of skills training and vocational qualifications[2]. The U.S. cooperative education (Co-op) model deepens the integration of theory and practice through work-study alternation, with institutions like the University of Cincinnati validating its effectiveness. Shi Weiping (2020) pointed out that industry-education integration requires overcoming institutional bottlenecks and building a community of shared destiny between schools and enterprises. Chen Jin (2021) proposed from the perspective of collaborative innovation that the driving mechanism of industry-education integration lies in knowledge sharing and interest coordination. Wang Hongcai (2021) analyzed the practical challenges of industry-education integration in applied undergraduate universities, suggesting that the breakthrough path lies in establishing a collaborative mechanism between dual subjects. Existing research provides theoretical support for base construction, but systematic studies focusing on customized designs for specific industries are relatively scarce. The "industry-customized" model emphasizes specialized design based on industry business characteristics, market demands, and competitive trends, aligning with the market-oriented and project-based features of the visual communication design industry.

Industry-education integration constitutes a mutually beneficial system formed through resource sharing and functional synergy between industries and education[3]. The "industry-customized" model achieves teaching-production alignment by transforming real corporate projects into instructional resources, transcending the superficial "teaching-led, enterprise-cooperative" collaboration. Collaborative innovation emphasizes multi-stakeholder cooperation to aggregate innovative elements. As a school-enterprise collaborative platform, employment internship bases require establishing effective knowledge-sharing mechanisms and benefit distribution systems to stimulate innovation vitality. The "dual-subject" management mechanism developed in this study represents a concrete application of collaborative innovation theory. Competency-based education (CBE) designs teaching content guided by job competency requirements. The "industry-customized" model embodies the core concept of competency-based education by constructing modular practical teaching systems through precise industry demand analysis. The three-dimensional competency model proposed by Hongdong Culture—"design expression ability, management ability, and innovative practice ability"—provides direct basis for curriculum system reconstruction.

3. Analysis of the Construction of Employment Practice Base in Applied Universities

The Visual Communication Design program at Liaoning Media College has established a distinctive industry-academia-research integration model through partnerships with over 20 enterprises. In the past three years, it has won more than 20 national design awards, developed over 10 project-based courses, with practical teaching accounting for 33%, and the employment rate of graduates staying in Liaoning has steadily increased, providing strong talent support for the development of local cultural and creative industries.

There are still prominent issues in current base construction. Most internship bases only engage in superficial cooperation such as listing, visits, and lectures, lacking in-depth customization. The positions provided by enterprises are not sufficiently aligned with the core competencies of majors, and students' internship content is mostly auxiliary work such as typing and typesetting, making it difficult for them to gain exposure to core design processes such as brand strategy and creative conception. This phenomenon of "pseudo-internship" leads to a weak sense of gain for students and fails to effectively select talents for enterprises. Traditional curriculum settings lag behind industry development, with insufficient coverage of emerging fields such as UI/UX design, dynamic visuals, and AIGC design. Corporate mentors are not deeply involved in teaching, often only responsible for

entrance education or graduation defense, without being embedded in the entire teaching process including curriculum design, process guidance, and outcome evaluation. The integration of research and teaching is not close, and teachers' research projects are not effectively transformed into teaching resources. There is a lack of a dual-subject collaborative management system, and the monitoring of the internship process is not in place, posing certain safety hazards. Assessment and evaluation are primarily conducted by schools with low participation from enterprises, and evaluation indicators tend to focus on textual materials such as design reports and internship logs, making it difficult to truly reflect students' professional ability levels. Base construction lacks sustainable planning, and the enthusiasm of enterprises to participate is decreasing. There is a lack of a dual-subject collaborative system, and process monitoring is insufficient. Assessment and evaluation are dominated by schools with low participation from enterprises, making it difficult to truly reflect professional abilities. There is a lack of long-term planning, and the enthusiasm of enterprises to participate is decreasing.

4. The Connotation and Characteristics of Industry Customization Mode

The "Industry-Specific" model is tailored to the unique demands of the cultural and creative design sector, where universities and enterprises collaborate to design and optimize internship base development plans[4]. This model establishes a mechanism of "joint demand research, shared resource development, collaborative talent cultivation, and mutual benefit sharing," integrating corporate work scenarios, project workflows, technical standards, and evaluation systems into practical teaching. It facilitates the transition from simulation to reality and from academic disciplines to industrial logic[5].

This model demonstrates four key features. First, precise demand alignment. By analyzing industry characteristics, market trends, and talent specifications, it identifies students' competency gaps. Data from Hongdong Culture projects shows dynamic visual design demand growing over 35% annually, with AIGC-assisted design demand increasing by 50%, providing data-driven support for curriculum customization. Second, resource integration and sharing. A school-enterprise collaborative platform is established, where enterprises provide real projects and schools assign dedicated instructors for conversion, forming a closed-loop system of "enterprise projects→course modules→student works→commercial applications." Over 100 cases have been accumulated, with regional Liaoning culture cases accounting for over 30%, reinforcing the model's local service orientation. Third, dual-track teaching implementation. A dual-mentor system adopts the "1+1+1" model: first-year theoretical learning at school, second-year joint school-enterprise project training, and third-year on-the-job enterprise internships. Enterprise mentors provide weekly guidance exceeding 8 class hours to ensure industry logic permeates teaching. Fourth, multi-dimensional collaborative evaluation. A four-dimensional evaluation system integrates "work presentation + project defense + enterprise assessment + market validation." Enterprise mentor evaluations account for no less than 40%, ensuring alignment with professional competencies.

5. Implementation Path of Base Construction

The implementation path of the base covers the construction of environment, the development of teaching resources, the construction of management mechanism and other aspects.

Establish a professional environment through three key approaches: creating work scenarios, implementing collaborative platforms, and conducting vocational culture training. Develop a 200m² internship base on campus equipped with professional hardware including graphic workstations and output devices, along with mainstream industry design software. Design the space to mimic a design company layout, featuring creative, design, and customer service zones to foster a professional atmosphere and establish realistic work environments. Utilize existing online collaboration tools to

build a collaborative platform with project management channels, enabling online task allocation, progress tracking, and outcome feedback. Integrate corporate material libraries and template resources to support students' self-directed learning, breaking geographical and temporal barriers. Strengthen vocational culture education. Align the corporate value of "Transforming the Future with Creativity" with the school's mission of "Cultivating Talents for the Nation and Delivering Industry Elites," embedding these values into the base's cultural development. Organize regular design salons, expert lectures, and exhibition of outstanding works to cultivate students' professional identity and responsibility, while reinforcing ethical education. Guide students in participating in faculty research projects, using student works as interim research outcomes to deepen the integration of research into teaching.

Through optimizing the curriculum system, building dynamic case libraries, and promoting learning through competitions, we develop project-based teaching resources. Three major course modules have been established based on enterprise business restructuring: Brand Visual Identity, Digital Media, and Cultural Creative Products. Each module features a three-tiered curriculum structure: "Basic Skills-Project Practice-Comprehensive Application." For example, the "Brand Image Design" course connects with real enterprise projects, enabling students to complete full-process design practices. In response to the AIGC technology wave, we have added the "AI-Assisted Design" course to cultivate students' ability to utilize new technologies. Enterprises regularly provide typical case studies, including complete documentation such as requirement documents, bidding proposals, modification records, and customer feedback. The case library is updated quarterly to stay synchronized with industry trends, currently accumulating over 100 effective resources. Design competitions are held with topics derived from real enterprise needs. Award-winning entries are incorporated into enterprise project databases, granting winners priority access to internships and employment opportunities. Over the past three years, 67% of participants have secured internship opportunities through competitions, with gold medal winners achieving a 100% employment conversion rate.

Through organizational restructuring, collaborative institutional development, and enhanced incentive mechanisms, a dual-subject collaborative management framework is established. An Industry-Education Integration Management Committee is formed, with representatives from both institutions conducting regular strategic planning consultations. An executive office oversees daily operations. Jointly developed policies include project management guidelines, dual-mentor protocols, and internship safety agreements. Clear responsibilities are assigned: corporate mentors fulfill teaching obligations while school faculty complete industry internships, with quantifiable performance evaluations. Base achievements are incorporated into faculty assessments, and corporate mentorship hours are officially recognized. Recognition and opportunity incentives sustain active participation across all stakeholders.

6. Research on the Management Mechanism of Operation

The operational management framework has been refined through establishing a project-driven operational model, progressive competency development pathways, quality monitoring systems, and dynamic optimization mechanisms. The base implements a full-cycle project management system: "Enterprise project requirements→Faculty team evaluation of teaching suitability→Decomposition into course tasks→Student group assignments→Dual-mentor guidance→Corporate review→Outcome delivery→Post-implementation optimization," effectively converting corporate projects into teaching tasks. In 2023, the base undertook 12 Red Culture projects and 5 commercial applications. The participation rate of student projects reached 100%. The project-driven model enabled students to experience the complete workflow and adapt to the professional pace in advance. A four-stage competency development path is designed: "Cognition-Imitation-Innovation-Entrepreneurship." Freshmen establish industry awareness through observation and research; sophomores participate in project-assisted design, emulating established processes; juniors

lead sub-project design to cultivate innovation capabilities; seniors can register for “design studios” to undertake social projects, achieving entrepreneurial incubation. A three-tier quality monitoring system is implemented: “Weekly reports-Monthly inspections-Quarterly evaluations.” Weekly progress reports, monthly joint inspections, and semester-end comprehensive assessments cover student satisfaction, corporate feedback, project quality, and employment conversion outcomes. Monitoring results guide continuous teaching and management improvements. Project types and course directions are adjusted promptly based on industry developments and technological changes. Examples include adding AIGC design applications and enhancing dynamic visual training. Through regular discussions and evaluations, ensure teaching content remains aligned with market demands.

7. Construction of Safeguard System

The support system encompasses hardware, faculty, institutional frameworks, and resource allocation. In terms of hardware, schools and enterprises jointly invest in constructing internship facilities and equipment. Schools provide basic teaching venues, while enterprises offer specialized equipment support or software licensing. An equipment renewal mechanism is established to annually upgrade technical platforms, ensuring teaching requirements are met. Regarding faculty structure, schools select experienced teachers as supervisors; enterprises assign key designers to participate in teaching; and industry experts are flexibly hired for guidance. The enterprise practice system for teachers is implemented to enhance the industrial literacy of teaching teams. Teaching certification is granted to participating enterprise mentors. For base management, regulations including operational guidelines, fund usage standards, student internship safety protocols, and achievement protection rules are established. A shared fund management mechanism is clarified with standardized procedures. Safety management is strengthened through internship insurance to protect student rights. The resource system adopts a diversified investment mechanism. Schools guarantee basic operational funding, while enterprises provide project and technical resources, with project revenues appropriately reinvested into teaching. Budgets are rationally allocated, prioritizing urgent teaching needs to maximize resource utilization efficiency.

8. Conclusion and Prospects

This study, based on the collaborative practice between Liaoning Communication University and Hongdong Culture, has established a framework for constructing “industry-customized” employment internship bases in applied universities. Practice has demonstrated that this model effectively addresses issues such as homogenization and overemphasis on virtual elements in traditional bases, significantly enhancing students’ practical skills and employment competitiveness. In the three years of project implementation, students majoring in Visual Communication Design have won more than 20 national awards. The employment rate of graduates has remained above 96%, the rate of staying in Liaoning for employment has steadily increased, and enterprise satisfaction has reached 98%. Limitations include case studies focusing on the cultural and creative industries, requiring further validation of generalizability; the need to improve long-term operational mechanisms; and strengthening the objectivity of evaluation systems. Future directions include exploring cross-industry transfer pathways, researching intelligent transformation of bases in the AI era, developing internship achievement certification systems, and promoting policy incentive mechanisms. The “industry-customized” model provides a practical and feasible solution for deepening industry-education integration in applied universities, demonstrating exemplary value in serving regional economic development. The next step will involve expanding collaboration scope, optimizing operational mechanisms, and promoting the implementation of this model across more disciplines to provide robust support for cultivating high-quality applied talents in the new era.

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