

Exploration on the Teaching Reform of the Environmental Design Practical Course based on Serving Society

Hongqi Zhou, Yuxin Jiang^a

Xianda College of Economics and Humanities, Shanghai International Studies University, Shanghai, 200083, China

^a 2311011@xdsisu.edu.cn

Abstract: Society services is one of the most important functions of universities, and it is also a vital target of talents development in universities. Taking the environmental design practical course as an example, this paper studied the existing problems in practical education nowadays, discussed the principles of practical course construction, and puts forward strategies for establishing a serving-society-oriented environmental design practical course. This study provides certain value for the teaching reform of environmental design practical course.

Keywords: Society Services; Environmental Design; Practical Course; Teaching Reform.

1. Background

In China, *Higher Education Law of the People's Republic of China*, which promulgated in 1998 clarifies the university's social service function. In 2020, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and The State Council jointly issued *Guideline for Deeper Reform of Educational Evaluation in the New Era*, which clearly requires "exploring and establishing the application-oriented undergraduate evaluation standards, emphasizing the cultivation of professional and practical abilities", indicating the direction and key points for application-oriented undergraduate universities to promote the construction of Chinese characteristics in the new era [1]. Nowadays, knowledge inheritance, research achievements and society services have been recognized as the three major functions of the universities, "serving society" has also become an important target of the talents development in universities.

At present, the talent fostering in the major of environmental design in application-oriented universities appear several problems like weak innovation and practical abilities, which disabled the undergraduates adapt to the society and the market efficiently. The environmental design practical course occupied an important position in the overall education system, the main purpose of the practical course is to enable students to comprehend the social developing trend, to understand the real needs of the regional environmental construction and to train their independence, cooperation, innovation and integrated design abilities. The curriculum design of the practical course must be closely integrated with the social and market needs, as well as be at the forefront of the design-application. Giving attention to the construction of the environmental design practical course system, improving undergraduates' innovation ability and the employability have become vital contents of the environmental design teaching reform.

2. The Present Situation of Environmental Design Practical Teaching in Application-oriented Universities

2.1. The Mismatching between Curriculum Design of the Practical Course and Social Needs

Presently, a lot of universities have made an overall planning on the practical teaching, however, the planning mainly starts from the classroom teaching system and lacks the connection with social development and regional construction, resulting in undergraduates' inability to grasp the social and market needs accurately, thus affecting the quality of professional talent fostering.

2.2. The Weak Comprehensiveness of the Practical Course Content

Environmental design is an interdisciplinary and strongly intergraded major, which involves technology, art, ecology and other multidisciplinary fields [2]. In terms of undergraduates' design perception and experience towards spatial interface, scale, materials, overall feelings, that needs to be constantly accumulated and developed in the practical process. For the moment, many universities do not pay enough attention to the environmental design practical course, as well as the less understanding on the practical course, the course content is mainly the reflection of the textbooks and the theories, practical course has been reduced to situations like using design software to produce design proposals in the classroom. Undergraduates lack the understanding of the project construction backgrounds, ignore the investigation and analysis, the ability of use knowledge to solve real problems have not been efficiently fostered.

2.3. Simple Teaching Method of the Practical Course

In the construction of environmental design practical course, the project involves a lot of content and methods.

However, the teaching method in the current educational process are relatively simple, in-class practice is mainly based on theory & practice in the classroom, while the internship and practice process are basically based on investigation, survey and visits. The practice-internship mode mentioned above makes it difficult for undergraduates to harness their independence as well as lack the opportunity to use specialty to solve problems.

2.4. The Ignorance of the Educational Evaluation

The performance evaluation of the traditional practical course is often aimed at the final design proposal and tutor's assessment, undergraduates do not have a clear understanding of the gap and quality differences of the assignment. While tutors tend to concern about whether the assignments are completed or not, whether the productions are aesthetic or not, the ignorance of undergraduates' active learning and integrated ability fostering process, resulting in the lack of innovation and independence, and the evaluation play non-positive role in the education.

3. Principles of the Environmental Design Practical Course System Construction

3.1. The Principle of Serving Social Development

The discipline development positioning, talent training targets, major restructuring and curriculum setting of universities all need to be premised on the goal of serving regional construction and economic development. Through the establishment of the colleges-local integration and colleges-enterprises cooperation mechanisms, universities can timely update the curriculum setting and develop content, expand practical education in environmental design talents fostering according to the local demands. Under the orientation of serving society, deepening the environmental design practical course reform and construction research under the mode of "government-enterprise-colleges cooperation", which can better promote local universities to establish the awareness of local social-economic services, expand the major characteristics according to regional social-economic development and requirements, cultivate innovative skilled talents, encourage the common development, mutual benefit and win-win model of the localities, enterprises and universities.

3.2. The Principle of Integrated Ability Cultivation

The ultimate purpose of the environmental design practical course construction is to enable undergraduates to truly combine theory with practice, apply the learned theoretical knowledge to project creation, and foster the ability of solving real issues. Curriculum design should base on serving the local area, combining the projects related to regional environmental construction with practical course, leading undergraduates to pay attention to on-site investigation and analysis, caring about real issues such as technology, construction, budget, etc. The process of practice is the process of undergraduates to find out and solve the problems, as well as the process that requires undergraduates to exert their subjective initiative and integrate resources in all aspects

for design exploration. Hence, undergraduates' integrated ability and professional quality can be effectively improved through design practice.

3.3. The Principle of Developing Innovative Spirit

The acceleration of the socialization process and the rapid changes in the information age make innovation a point that needs to be implemented in the construction of the environmental design educational system [3]. In the past, in environmental design practical course, several problems are commonly existed, such as undergraduates pay extra attention to skills performance, while less innovation and low using value. Through the colleges-local integration, market and enterprises employment requirements as the starting point of talent fostering, undergraduates can carry out the whole project workflow by themselves which can enhance their innovative ability and common quality, lay the foundation of their employability.

4. Strategies of Environmental Design Practical Education

4.1. Curriculum Design Focuses on Establishing the Value Orientation of "Serving the People"

Serving society as the orientation, local real projects as the main line, utilize the "research subject system" and "project system" as the educational mode to conduct practical design process. In the practical curriculum design process, tutors should lead undergraduates to conduct the fully investigation and analysis of the site and customer groups, understand the actual needs of users, cultivate undergraduates to establish the concept of "people-oriented", and comprehend the fundamental purpose of design is to benefit people, highly unify the value orientation of "people-oriented" and "serving the people" [4].

4.2. Build a Practical Education Model based on Serving Society

The practical course education of environmental design should always direct undergraduates to concern about people's livelihood and regional development, and solve the problems of the space construction in reality through creative design methods. Firstly, practical course should combine with real site projects, by comprehending, investigating and analyzing the regional development and customer characteristics, help undergraduates to start from reality, seek the truth and explore design thinking, therefor to better meet the needs of social development. In the process of practical education, a wide range of industry connection can be adopted to expand the depth of teaching content. After the project design, activities like "Design practice results exhibition" and "project practice exploration seminar" can be held to strengthen the communications between colleges and local area, enterprises, deepen the on-site cultural cognition, enhance undergraduates' sense of achievement and self-confidence, thus lay a solid foundation for the application of integrated skills in both art and design fields.

4.3. Develop Regional Resources to Enhance the Construction of Practical Course Content

Environmental design practical education should be closely integrated with the social requires, the content construction of practical course not only combines extensive theoretical research with inter-discipline, but also requires more attention on local cultural resources, explores regional characteristics and expand regional spatial forms. Through developing the regional resources to improve the construction of practical course content, the colleges-running characteristics can be enhanced and the competitiveness of talents can be reflected. Environmental design contains many aspects like planning, ecology, function, customer and technology, which requires the establishment of multi-disciplinary collaboration and research mode, changes the course content from a single design expression to integrated full-process practical project [5].The content of practical course takes the regional construction as the source and the integrated application of disciplines as the support, providing a great channel for undergraduates to utilize learned knowledge to serve the society and participate in the development of regional construction.

4.4. Build a Diversified Assessment Method as the Premise of Practical Application

The assessment method is an important evaluation mechanism for educational activities, as well as an important aspect of teaching reform and innovation. According to the practical teaching characteristics of environmental design, diversified assessment methods can be adopted, emphasizes the guiding ideology of “pay attention on practical application, investigation and analysis, design process, common performance, ability cultivation and innovative thinking”, detailed assessment content and diversified assessment methods are therefore formulated. Aiming at the requires of regional construction and space design, the practical course evaluation system should focus on undergraduates’ attention on social hot topics and conditions next to themselves, and

advocate using design methods to solve real problems; Focus on investigation and analysis as well as the design process, pay attention to the social significance and the utility value of the practical results, finally form an objective, real and effective diversified educational evaluation system.

5. Conclusion

The practical course is a vital part of the whole environmental design educational system, which reflects the application of basic theories, principles and methods of environmental design in real projects. In this study, by building a serving-society-oriented practical educational system, fostering undergraduates in omni-bearing aspects, such as from classroom to extracurricular, from blueprints to construction, from using brain only to overall practice. The course construction lay emphasis on the combination of innovative design concepts with practical education of “serving society”, therefore to better cultivate undergraduates’ innovative and integrated abilities, which satisfy the talent requirements of social development and regional construction.

References

- [1] Yumei Wu. Exploration of the model of integration of industry and education in applied universities. *Industrial & Science Tribune*, 2021, 20(16): 192-194.
- [2] Ye Tang. Analysis of the project practical teaching reform of environmental design thematic design course. *Art Education*, 2022(10): 192-195.
- [3] Si Yang. Research on the construction of a practical course system for environmental design. *Industrial Design*, 2022(08): 38-40.
- [4] Jia Hou. Exploring the Ideological and Political Teaching of Product Innovation Design Course. *Industrial Design*, 2021 (07): 62-63.
- [5] Shuping Li. Exploring a new model of landscape design practical teaching reform under the construction of new liberal arts: Taking the thematic design course of landscape design as an example. *Art Education Research*, 2021(12): 120-121.