Study on Construction of Open Network Teaching in University

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ABSTRACT

The network teaching is no longer a strange noun. However, the level of network teaching in various University is uneven now, the effects obtained from networking teaching construction of many schools are not satisfactory. For digitization of university campuses, the network construction is the foundation, the modern network teaching platforms shall be utilized to organize and manage the teaching, so as to provide better services for students and teachers.

Keywords: Network teaching; Teaching quality; Open teaching; Talent cultivation

The information construction is an important part for promoting the education reform and improving the teaching level and quality of talent cultivation, which is a basic, long-term, and regular work (Chen, Z., 2008). Its construction level is one of the important symbols of overall school-running standard. With the continuous progress of information technology around the world and continuous development of China’s higher education scale level, many domestic universities have listed the campus information construction in the schools’ priorities for early implementation one after another, which have constructed the relatively complete campus information infrastructure and accumulated quite abundant campus network information resources. The information construction of University is moving towards the objective of “wisdom”. To achieve the wisdom of university campuses, the network construction is the foundation, the resource construction is the core, the talent cultivation is the objective, and the management system is the guarantee. Therefore, an extremely important work task in information construction in University is how to utilize the modern network teaching platforms to organize and manage the teaching, so as to provide the students and teachers with better services and improve the school-running standard. This paper takes the construction of BlackBoard-based network teaching platform of our school as an example to make a relatively deep discussion on the contents, existing problems, and implementation strategies of network teaching, and put forward some good construction thoughts.

I. Significance of Network Teaching Construction

With the popularization and development of modern information technology, particularly the
mobile Internet technology, the teaching has become an important direction of modern education reform by using the abundant information resources of computer network. For the ordinary University, the network teaching construction has very important practical significance (Qiu S., 2012).

1. The network teaching construction can promote the continuous improvement of overall teaching quality of University (Shen W., 2016). In recent years, with the continuous expansion of enrollment scale in University of China, the average teaching objects of each teacher have also been continuously increased. It’s difficult for teachers to conduct the individual coaching and teach students in accordance of their aptitudes, so the communication between teachers and students has been less and less, and the improvement of teaching quality has also run into the bottleneck. The network teaching can become an important supplement to the existing teaching methods. The teachers can provide different learning materials for the students with different knowledge backgrounds and different intelligence levels by utilizing the network teaching platforms. Rather than being merely limited to the classrooms, the teachers can answer the questions and communicate with students on the platforms through network anytime anywhere, which is conducive to enriching the teaching means and further improve the teaching quality of schools.

2. The network teaching construction can facilitate the construction of excellent courses in University (Chen J., 2016). The active promotion of development of network teaching resources and construction of sharing platforms is conducive to constructing the excellent courses facing the University in China and digital resource center for three-dimensional teaching materials, so as to realize the on-line opening of teaching materials, including the teaching plans, outlines, exercises, teaching documents, and reference materials etc. of excellent courses, provide all the teachers and students with free-sharing quality education resources, and perfect the supporting service system for lifelong learning. Through the network course construction, the on-line opening of excellent courses can be realized, thereby giving full play to the educational functions and demonstration effects of excellent courses, which is conducive to developing more excellent network courses more conveniently and efficiently.

3. The network teaching construction is conducive to improving the level of multimedia teaching and open teaching. At present, the multimedia teaching resources are relatively limited (He P., Liu X., Jin L., 2017). However, on the other hand, several course teachers using the multimedia teaching haven’t fully utilized the multimedia teaching resources, who have only considered the multimedia as the “blackboard without the need to write”, thereby far from giving full play to due roles of multimedia teaching. The network courses require the complete electronic teaching plan, multimedia courseware with high coverage, and various network learning materials, which can give full play to the advantages of multimedia teaching. At the same time, the utilization of advanced network technology makes the teaching activities no longer be limited to the class time and classrooms, the teaching activities can be conducted in any place that is connected to the campus network, thereby expanding the openness of teaching.

4. The network teaching construction can speed up the process of "smart campus". The network course construction is an important part of "smart campus" construction in University (Pan L., Meng C., He B., 2016). The network course platforms can realize the interconnection and resource sharing with other existing digital platforms, so as to improve the information level of teaching and overall management of the school.

5. The network teaching construction is conducive to inter-school cooperation and international cooperation (Xie X., Yu S., Cheng G., Huang Y., 2015). At present, the cooperation and exchange between domestic and international education circle are increasingly close. The exchange and
cooperation among University are limited to the method and concept level, more has entered the practice level. For example, the rise of cooperation forms of school credit bank, alliance of University, transnational cooperation in running schools etc. are affecting the education development to a great extent. However, if we make a general survey of these changes, we’ll discover that the information technology is the support, particularly the network platforms are utilized to share the high-quality education resources. By utilizing the network platforms, the teachers and students can conveniently and efficiently upload and download the course materials, and interact with teachers and students from other schools across the regions, time, and space, so as to realize the interschool and international sharing of resources, as well as exchange and cooperation.

II. Classification and Selection of Network Teaching Platforms

According to the current status of network teaching platforms being used in University at present, there are mainly three types of network teaching platforms: the first kind is the commercial platform, such as BlackBoard, Peking University network teaching platform, Tsinghua network teaching platform, network teaching resource library etc.; the second kind is the excellent large-scale sharing course platform (Moocs), such as the open learning platforms of Coursera, edX, and udacity etc.; the third kind is the network teaching platform used within the scope of each college or university based on the urgent needs of network teaching, which has the development capacity to research and develop the platform according to its own application demands. The commercial platform has been adopted by some schools with its emphasis on the latest theory and standard application, focus on component-based architecture design, system stability and openness, and support to various teaching modes, which is also equipped with the corresponding resource library management etc. to form a system, however, the price is expensive, and the foreign teaching platform also has the disadvantage of not adapting to the teaching habits of Chinese people; however, the advantage of teaching platform systems developed by some schools themselves is the low development costs in accordance with the demands of local teaching, and the disadvantage is the limited functions that cannot form the complete system with other teaching materials; the free open teaching platform has obvious advantage, which has the most abundant resources and advanced teaching concept, but is short of solutions for individualizations of different schools. Therefore, in order to truly give play to the role of online teaching platform, for the selection of network platform, our school has selected the BlackBoard online teaching platform as the foundation platform for online teaching of our school by integrating the characteristics of system stability, normalization, and practicability etc.

III. Practice of BlackBoard-based Network Teaching Platform

1. Main Construction Means

(1) We’ve established the normalized network teaching construction work group to manage the related matters. The school has set up a leading group for network course construction, which are comprised by Vice President of teaching, Director of Office of Teaching Affairs, Director of Modern Education Center, and responsible persons of colleges (departments). The main functions of leading group are to macroscopically manage the school network course construction, integrate the network teaching resources of school, realize the sharing of high-quality resources, and promote the school course construction and teaching reform. The leading group of network course construction has the network course construction office, which is comprised by related personnel of Office of Teaching Affairs.
(2) During the network teaching resource construction, first we must change the traditional teaching concept. Without this prerequisite, the result must be “wearing new shoes to walk on the old path”. At present, the integration of information technology and courses of various disciplines under the network environment cannot be separated from the original traditional teaching, which of course cannot be stagnated in the name of inheriting the traditional teaching. Making the matter-of-fact accurate evaluation to the original traditional teaching and theoretical basis to inherit its essence and abandon its dregs shall be the correct attitude; and we shall also not blindly worship the advanced networking teaching and theoretical basis, we need to matter-of-factly and objectively conduct the research and analysis to absorb its advantages and abandon its disadvantages, so as to realize the high-quality integration of two teaching methods through complementing each other’s various advantages with the quality-oriented education concept as the governance.

(3) Strengthen the campus information construction to meet the network teaching requirements. Through strengthening the work in various aspect of network construction in campus, upgrade of networking conditions in student dormitories, and multimedia construction in classroom etc. to create the good physical conditions for network teaching promotion.

(4) Give full play to the advantages in all aspects to integrate the power for complete construction. The advantages include the advantages of industry (IT enterprises, scientific research, and education), advantages of various places (particularly the advantages of developed areas), the advantages of various professionals (education experts, experts in various disciplines, and IT industry experts etc.), the advantages of various carriers (network, television, disks, as well as books and periodicals etc.), and the advantages of resource libraries with different scales (comprehensive type, special topic type, and discipline type).

(5) Realize the opening, sharing, and development when strengthening the online teaching construction. Unify the protection of intellectual property rights and opening and sharing, that is, protect various types of resources and teaching materials of all the teachers to be legally used; and unify the encouragement of diversification and avoidance of repeated development to develop the diversified course forms. Establish the communication mechanism with various forms, encourage teachers to positively participate in the exchange of experiences and teaching methods, realize the sharing with various forms, and construct the dynamic development mechanism with self-perfection.

(6) Establish the reasonable training, evaluation, and motivation mechanism to facilitate the good development of network teaching construction. First, through training, comprehensively improve the discipline teachers’ capabilities on editing and managing the education and teaching resources in the process of lesson preparations and teaching, so as to improve the communication capabilities of teachers and students through network interactions, and improve the discipline teachers’ development capabilities on integrating the media materials and creating the network resources by learning, grasping, and using the advanced tool software. Second, regularly conduct the work evaluation to the related personnel participating in the construction of online education teaching resources, the evaluation results shall be linked together with this person’s year-end assessment to implement the principle of rewarding the good and fining the bad, so as to make everyone take a correct attitude toward the work, deepen the understanding, and really put the work into practice. Only the harmonious development of construction, training, evaluation, maintenance, and application can facilitate the construction of education and teaching materials of our school to form the scale with benign development, thereby realizing the modernization of education driven by the informatization of education, so as to preferably guarantee the teaching quality and improve the teaching level.
2. Existing Problems and Insufficiency in Construction

(1) Some teachers and students have lacked enthusiasm in network teaching. In the process of network teaching, some teachers and students have rarely spent the energy to study on the network after completing the teaching and learning in class, the network teaching and learning concept have not gone deep into the daily study life with insufficient certain restriction mechanism and incentive measures.

(2) The students’ online conditions need to be further improved. Because there are differences of popularity of computer usage rate in our school among specialties, the computer usage rate in some arts specialties is not high, the students have been subject to certain restriction in networking learning. Therefore, the school shall increase the investment in construction of school’s public network resources, so as to ensure the normal promotion of network teaching.

(3) Through the advancement of network teaching, a great deal of valuable data information has been generated from the exchanges among students and teachers. This information is not merely the result of an exchange or an assessment, which has very important function for the future teaching. The students don’t need to repeatedly ask questions, and the teachers also don’t need to be busy with answering the same questions all in the same key. Therefore, it is imperative to complete the work of information classification and summarization.

(4) The network teaching needs to be strengthened in open construction. At present, the network teaching information of our school is only limited to the school, which is an independent individual comparing with other peer colleges. We shall pay full attention to the exchanges with peer colleges in the future construction, so as to completely share the network teaching resources and promote the mutual improvement of teaching level.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Through more than five years of network teaching construction, our school has basically constructed the network teaching system including various disciplines and specialties. The traditional teaching modes of some courses of our school have been changed through network teaching, the teaching activities have been extended to the time after class, the limitations of time and region have been broken, the students have more opportunities to study according to their own situation, and the teachers have more time to coach the students. The transformation of teaching mode has also improved the students’ initiatives of learning, changing the passive acquisition of knowledge to active acquisition and learning of knowledge, so as to transfer the center of talent cultivation to students’ learning ability cultivation. The network teaching cannot completely replace our traditional teaching modes, but the new ideas and new methods brought by it will play a huge promotion role in strengthening the education and teaching reform and continuously improving the school-running standard.

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