The Specialty of Design (Category of Arts) under the Category-based Enrollment Mode

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Abstract. Inspired by the South China University of Technology (SCUT) in constructing "Double First-Class" disciplines, the characteristics of design-related specialties and the latest talent training targets, this thesis reflects SCUT’s undergraduate training scheme and curriculum system, and probes into problems and countermeasures in the reform of enrollment and training mode for the category of design.

Introduction

Environmental Design, Product Design, and Garment & Accessories Design are specified as applicable specialties of the category of design by the National Standard on Teaching Quality of Undergraduate Specialties in General Colleges and Universities (hereinafter referred to as "National Standard." It has been found by the project leaders and partners, in formulating the comprehensive undergraduate training plan for these three specialties, and in many years enrolling and training talents of design specialties, that how to identify the challenges, in particular, how to discuss, make attempts and take measures to effectively link up the challenges and measures with the "Double First-Class" construction, are of great practical significance.

Benefits and Challenges Brought by Category-based Enrollment to Talent Cultivation

Category-based enrollment is an enrollment mode in which the students would be redirected to different specialties, based on their interests and a two-way selection, after one year of basic training. Compared with other enrollment modes, category-based enrollment is a reform featuring "generalist education" in colleges and universities. The mode was adopted by design schools since many years ago, and the revision of the teaching plan has had the talent training mode adjusted accordingly. From the perspective of talent training, comprehensive reform programs like this are of great help, especially in key comprehensive universities such as the SCUT:

(1) Before entering school, students are not familiar with their specialty. Barely exposed to design in high school, they are confused about the specialty content and future of Environmental Design, Product Design, and Garment & Accessories Design. Allowing them to choose after familiarizing themselves with the specialty for a year gives them a chance to follow the bottom of their hearts. Attention should be paid to the students’ healthy competitions and handing over the right to choose to the students.

(2) The specialty selection is with a greater room. The specialty setting of the design institute is more complete, bringing stronger comprehensive strength. Undergraduate students can choose their specialties through a certain mechanism at the end of their freshman year. It should be noticed that students in a famous university through Gaokao (college entrance examination) are all elites; in other words, the talent quality of the specialty of design will not be affected.

Reform: Targets, Problems, and Solutions

Targets

(1) Cultivating top-notch talents of the specialty of design under the background of "Double First-Class" discipline construction. Completely open elective courses for students to pick at will.
(2) Excavate and enhanced the connotation and attraction of each specialty of design under the category-based education mode. Broadly and deeply spread professional knowledge to provide sufficient support for the redirection.

(3) Integrate the basic courses, optimize the professional curriculum content, and enhance the pertinence of teaching. According to the basic curriculum characteristics and the requirements of each specialty, innovate the basic courses in concept, teaching, framework, and content.

(4) Reform the means and methods of practical teaching, and enhance the effectiveness of teaching and the initiative of students. Make full use of modern information technology to carry out a variety of types of offline learning.

**Problems**

(1) How to redirect specialty. Pick at will, then two-way selection. Choose the best, or depends on the picking speed? The former would lead to intensive examination competition, putting quality education at risk; the later seems to be too random. What is the basis of two-way selection? This is the biggest problem. This requires the leaders of each specialty to think and predict in advance and to dig out the connotation and attractiveness of each specialty in the basic courses of the first-grade training plan.

(2) Students' specialty identity, which influences physical and mental health. After the redirection, except for those get the specialty they want, the others have weak specialty identity, resulting in weak initiative and self-confidence. How to give students the second opportunity to choose after the first-grade redirection is another key problem. To address this problem, the elective courses in the third and fourth-grade training plans must be inclusive and enough.

**Implementation Plan**

According to the training plan of large categories of talents, the "1+1+2" training mode should be adopted. The training program is divided into two stages, namely, the stage of basic education and the stage of professional education (subdivided into the stage of compulsory education and the stage of elective education). In the stage of basic education, the main purpose is to strengthen basic education and learn common subject courses; in the stage of professional education, the implementation of relevant professional teaching, learning the core courses of various specialties, professional direction courses and professional practice courses. The structure of curriculum system is "platform + module," which is composed of general education curriculum platform, subject professional curriculum platform and elective module curriculum.

**Excavate the Connotation of Each Specialty of Design and Enhance the Attraction of Specialty.** (1) Strengthening the characteristics of "Lecture" freshmen Seminar and its MOOC Construction.

"Freshman Seminar" is a first-year course that is required to be taught by subject leaders and well-known professors at school. As a course, there was only one professor in previous years. In the new training program, it is proposed that a professor should be led by inviting a number of professors to participate in a number of seminars with freshmen in the form of lectures on different topics. The course introduces the organic relationship between the majors, the framework of the knowledge system and the relationship between the needs of the country, so that students can have a comprehensive understanding of the connotation of each major in design.

(2) To add more public elective courses in design science in the whole school.

Freshman propaganda or a lecture is difficult to read the full meaning of a major, and through a course of study, students can have a more in-depth and comprehensive understanding of design or a branch of research content. At present, the academic Affairs Office of the school and the School of Design strongly support teachers in setting up public elective courses, which cover environmental design, product design, clothing and clothing design, and will continue to increase quantity and improve quality.

**The Compulsory Courses of the Major should be simplified and the Credits of Elective Courses should be increased.** (1) Compared with the original teaching plan of each major, due to the
addition of a large class of platform courses and some public basic courses. Under the condition that the total credits remain unchanged, the compulsory courses of each major must be compressed. Many of the important basic courses in the first year of each major cannot completely adopt the original syllabus in the large platform courses, but simplify the previous content, add the content of other majors, and form a new class of courses. The rest of the original course is combined with design and experimental courses as a menu elective for the third year.

(2) Due to the limitation of total credit, it is challenging to compress the class hours of specialized courses after the diversion of the second grade. As most teachers have adapted to the content of the original syllabus, it is generally believed that the compression of class hours will reduce the professional training of students. We believe that this adjustment of enrollment and personnel training is a "reverse" process of reforming the traditional teaching content, so some important adjustments may have to be made to teaching concepts and methods. Such as the "classroom teaching" to "after-class learning;" Strengthen the teaching content of practical courses and so on.

(3) Increase the number of elective courses and stagger the time for further study. Due to the limitations of the general academic hours, in order to meet the requirements of "training in large categories" and "top innovative talents," enough elective courses have been set up in the third and fourth grades, and the whole course has been staggered. So that students not only have enough autonomy to choose, but also provide more opportunities for students in need to learn professional knowledge.

Strengthening the Intersection and Openness of Specialized Basic Courses. Through the establishment of the talent training system, the change of the teaching mode and the deployment of curriculum design, the comprehensive reform of the basic courses of design specialty has been carried out. Increasing the intersection of specialties, expanding the openness of specialties, and implementing the specific requirements of science and interest in teaching organization are more conducive to the cultivation of professional talents and the growth of students.

Program Implementation and Expected Results

The First Year: Integration of Broad Basic Courses, Integration of Professional Compulsory Education Courses

Integrating large categories of basic courses, in order to adapt to the basic design education under the background of design specialty, offering large categories of basic courses mainly include Sketch, Color, Basis of flat structure design, Introduction to design, Chinese and foreign design history, Computer aided design and so on. These courses are composed of professional basic knowledge which is closely related to the broad categories of design disciplines, and provide theoretical basis and basic professional skills for the follow-up professional core curriculum learning and personalized development. The construction of this training program breaks the barrier of setting up professional basic courses in different directions, and takes "thick foundation and wide caliber" as the principle. In order to make design major in our school meet the needs of employers for talent knowledge reserve, considering that there are many professional fields and knowledge differences involved in environmental design, in order to ensure the Systematic and integrity of professional knowledge, It is necessary to arrange enough required courses for professional courses, and encourage online learning of theoretical knowledge through MOOC, and increase the number of offline face-to-face, one-to-one design guidance hours (Fig. 1, Fig. 2).
The Second Year: Opening up of Specialized Elective Courses

Respecting the individual development needs of students, the personalized elective module is set up in the new curriculum system, which requires students to take not less than 4 credits per module and at least 32 credits for module courses. In the module, in order to meet the needs of students' personalized development, some preparatory courses for graduate students are set up, including all kinds of special design courses, special seminars, cutting-edge courses, competitive teaching courses, school-enterprise cooperation courses, workshops and so on. In order to cultivate students' professional comprehensive quality and ability (Fig. 3, Fig. 4).

Characteristics and Innovation

(1) Platform foundation long-term construction, coordination and cooperation. Cultivate students' comprehensive quality, highlight the cultivation of artistic innovation ability and thinking.
(2) Practice in a variety of creative ways, open and integrated. Through the multi-system research curriculum, students can apply the basic knowledge to practice.
(3) Large-scale design from foundation to practice, the combination of art and science and
technology. The college has a good technical platform, closely combines theory with practice, explores the interactive teaching practice model of modern art exhibition space course, and emphasizes the construction and implementation of the integration of production, learning and research.

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