

Chapter 9

Study on Professional Education in Liberal Arts Colleges

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Abstract In recent years, in order to bring up qualified military personnel, all the military academies promote the transformation of college education vigorously, transformation and construction of professional teaching have taken solid steps, training level and the quality of bringing up personnel have been promoting continuously. In recent days, the transformation of professional education has entered into critical period, various contradictions intervene with each other, and the task of transformation is still very difficult and important. In order to bring up military personnel who adapt to information war, we must face the appearing contradictions and issues carefully, and we should promote the deep development of professional education vigorously with forward-looking vision, developing perspectives, science initiatives, and strengthen the power of reform and information.

Keywords Military personnel · Professional education · College education

9.1 Introduction

Since 2003, all the military colleges have transformed from basing on academic education to professional education, the prototype of professional education has transformed, in the procedure of transformation, although we reach some inspiring achievement, there are also some problems which need to be solved [1, 2]. This

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article discusses some problems which need to be solved in liberal arts' professional education classes' gap development.

9.2 Numbers of People in Professional Education Classes

One important feature of professional education is to integrate closely with the actual needs of the workplace and improve the ability of students' operational control and taking office. Therefore, professional colleges must choose case study and discussions and other teaching methods [3, 4]. But if we want to make teaching methods achieve effective results with both appearance and spirit, we must adjust and compress the scale of professional education classes. First, it is beneficial to realize various teaching methods [5, 6]. According to the present teaching methods, every class of every time will have about 100 students, every topic will have 150 min, if every learner speak for a minute, the teacher's teaching time will be at most 50 min, while it is unrealistic to teach all the topic and make students master the whole material. Second, we can prevent from the appearance of students who are "in business" or "in holiday", we even have the phenomenon that many cadres in a division-level unites study in a same college [7]. There are many reasons of this case, but the main one is that the quota of people of cadre training is overfull. As to the army, if opportunities of cadre training are overfull, leaders will prevent some capable cadres from studying in colleges with various pretexts, they always think that the organization is very busy, and people are much needed; there are many opportunities for training in the future. As a result, people who want to get training cannot come and the idlers of the training get education instead of them, the important point is that these people do not participate actively in colleges or study vigorously; they go on holiday by the name of study. This not only causes the waste of educational material, but also makes the capable cadres loose the opportunities for further study.

9.3 Issues About Professional Educational Teaching Methods

In order to supply high qualified, very capable and sound proficient military talents for the army, we must reform the present teaching method. Although discussions and case study are advocated, as to the interaction of the class, learners are basically being taught, not participate actively. One of the reasons is that the theme belongs to new knowledge, and students never learn it before, thus they cannot answer the instructors' questions. The second reason is that learners never consider the instructors' questions carefully or look into materials, they are afraid of answering incorrectly, so they choose being silent. The third reason is that

students' learning initiative is not very high; they are not willing to answer the instructors' questions. In terms of this phenomenon, teachers can only force students to answer questions by reading the name list, this will not make atmosphere active, quality and effect of teaching is weakened largely.

Students like case study course, discussion course, and practice course instead of teaching course, the main reason is that in the former courses, they can express their own ideas, acquire other learners' analysis, and have opportunities of debating, while in the later class, they can only listen to the teaching of the instructors, as to practical experiences, they can only pursue by themselves. In order to change this embarrassing situation, we must transform the present teaching method. In order to mobilize the enthusiasm of the students' learning and make them participate in the whole teaching actively, we should make teaching and communication interact with each other, every topic divides into teaching, discussing, topic speaking, and other sections. The time of every morning is divided into two periods, one is teaching period, time is adjusted to 120 min (special courses are not included). The second one is discussing period, time is also 120 min, the discussion is appropriate in the next day or afterwards. In discussion, teachers should base on the last course's questions mainly, speaking should be individual or team as a unit, instructors should organize students have deep discussion combined with forces. To be specific, in teaching period, instructors introduce the general knowledge of the topic, research results, and developing trend and so on. As to the division of the relative contents, we should sum up various topics' actual situation and cannot have interference forcedly. That is to say, to some topics, principles are the focuses, to other topics, research results are the focuses, to some other topics, and further development should be the focus. The questions of every topic should integrate with the current situation of the army, they should be targeted, and teachers should make every student have individual ideas. In discussing period, instructors (professional instructors are not necessarily) lead the students to have discussion of the last course's questions. If the number of people in training class is overfull, the students should speak by team as a unit, each team competes with each other, and we choose the team which has distinguished ideas. As the topics of discussions are overfull, the entire members are required to make preparation carefully. In order to prevent individual students from meeting the job, the speaker of the team every time is chosen at a random. The reason of arranging discussing time in the next day or afterwards is that the new knowledge which is taught by the instructor is still staying in the student's brain, and instructors should give students rich time to prepare, they can search, sort out, analyze, and deal with various references, in this way, students can involve into the discussion and communication actively, the type of study changes from passive study to active study, students' study initiative is thus promoted. In topic discussion, the instructor is only the host who guide the student to discuss problems, as long as there are no issues related to the principle, no staying from the point, no personal attacks, students are allowed to develop freely, instructors cannot intervene forcedly but make comments, reward the active speaker or the team which also has quick thinking, exclusive ideas, they correct the

irregularities appropriately in order to make other topic discussion progress more soundly.

9.4 Issues About Professional Education Course Design

Professional education is the practical education which is based on training teachers' professional ability and its final object is to bring up military personnel who have high quality. Therefore, teaching system of professional system should be focused on the professional ability, constituting course structure according to the ability, choosing teaching contents carefully around ability training, forming innovative training method sticking to ability. At present, the course structure of professional education is generally the standard module structure system. The advantages are that teaching system is very stable, time is rich, teaching quality has been ensured, if the party, country, and army carry out new paths, measures, policies, and regulations and so on, learners will not understand and master them at first time. As a result, we must transform the present course system, and implement "menu" course system. The so-called "menu" course system means increasing the related topic anytime according to the trend of situation and demand of students; this applies to the feature and rules of the development of professional education. While it is unrealistic to take the method of "menu" teaching to all the topics in professional educational classes, although the current new topics stick closely to the current status and students' demand, the number of new topics is limited, the second reason is tight time, and in addition to that, restrictions about various elements cannot ensure the teaching method. Therefore, it is the opportunity to combine standardized module structure with "menu" topics. In order to implement this total new teaching method, we must do the next work well: one is that headquarters' regulations about professional courses' time should stick to the principles of rigor integrating with loose. That is to say, after headquarters determining the entire times of professional education, some individual necessary courses, the rest course time will be determined according to the specific situation of every college's professional educational class, what's more, the set of curriculum can adjust by individual colleges according to the party central committee's decision, the deployment of the central military commission, the developing trend of foreign military, and the time of training classes. The second point is that the set of every college's professional educational courses' topics should stick to the principle of flexibility. At present, every professional educational course's topics and amount of hours are all arranged before the register of the students, and there are no reservation hours, if people want to arrange new topics, students' individual studying time must be occupied. Therefore, the new teaching method requires that except from the low limit of the professional education's amount of fixed hours, the high limit is also needed, that is to say, some proportion of reservation is needed (for example: from 10 to 20 %, that's depending on the times of professional education), and so as to setting up new topics according to the new demand.

The third point is that the increased topics should stick to the principle of putting quality before quantity. Every year, our party, country, and military convene important meetings, in addition to that, the latest foreign developing trend—war theories, tactical strategies, talent training laws and regulations, and so on can all be introduced to the students. There is one point which needs to be noted, the entire “menu” course should be integrated closely with every professional educational time’s guiding principles and training target, focusing on the large instead of the small, prevent from the unqualified setting up. In order to ensure teaching method, “menu” topics should fulfill most trainers’ demand, a month after opening school, new topics and amount of numbers should be determined, and the preparing time should not be less than a month.

9.5 Issues About the Construction of the Team of Teachers in Professional Education

First, we should keep the door of “enter” carefully. In recent days, many instructors of all the military colleges take the office in the army, many officers in the army teach in the college, according to the situation from various aspects, there are quite a lot of advantages, but problems are not less. If we discuss the reason deeply, one is that instructors are required to see more, listen more, say less or no saying before taking office in the army, at this moment, they determine themselves as outsiders, thus the gap between officers and soldiers is widened. The second is that instructors or officers teaching in colleges are mostly regarded as the guests who are stopping for a rest; they focus on life instead of work. The third is that instructors’ posts mostly have the occupation without right; they have no speaking right and decision making right to most of the questions, even if they get some few opportunities to express their ideas, they have to appreciate quite a lot. As to the instructors coming to the colleges, they achieve little; teach a topic symbolically, while officers’ work experiences in the army are rarely taught to the students. Unfortunately, some officers face the issue of changing jobs for they have no post when they return to the army. This phenomenon illustrates that when we study the foreign military, we must understand the deep spirit on the occasion of integrating with our military’s actual situation, regulate the related regulations instead of copying directly. As to the current problems, except from making related regulations perfect, we should make relative adjustment about the time of taking the office. Anyone who comes to a new organization, they should have longer time to understand and know new organizations and their related staffs well. Consequently, in order to ensure instructor and officer work carefully, their working time should be adjusted to 2 years, and their posts will be designated by headquarters’ or the regions’ for the reason that they issue the document. In 2 years’ time, from understanding, knowing well to integrating and involving oneself into a member of the army or the college and taking part in the decision finally. In the working time,

all the relationships (except the file) are transferred into their short term organization, and they involve into the new organization actually, transfer the post, raise the post and their posts are not being influenced. Only in this way, can instructors understand the truth of the army, and acquire some practical experiences. At the same time, instructors can also learn the related principles and knowledge in colleges and direct the work in the army.

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