

# *Practice of the Construction of Grass-Roots Organizations in Colleges: Taking Ningbo University of Finance & Economics as an Example*

Yi Jing

*Ningbo University of Finance & Economics, Ningbo, China*  
*Yijing@nbufe.edu.cn*

**Keywords:** University Construction, Grass-Roots Teaching Organization, Higher Education

**Abstract:** Grass-roots level teaching organizations, as the basic units for universities to carry out teaching and research activities, their construction and management level are directly related to the university's overall teaching level and educational quality. Adopting Ningbo University of Finance & Economics as an example, this paper explores the practice in construction of grass-roots teaching organizations for universities. For the three different orientations of universities, the corresponding structures of grass-roots teaching organizations are analyzed, the meanings for construction and constructional paths of grass-roots teaching organizations are summarized. The presented results can be employed as reference for the practice of grass-roots teaching organization construction in universities.

## 1. Introduction

In October 2019, "The implementation opinions of the Ministry of Education on the construction of first-class undergraduate courses" of Ministry of Education and the requirements of the 2020 work plan of the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education pointed out: "consolidate the grass-roots teaching organizations and improve teachers' teaching ability", "realize the full coverage of grass-roots teaching organizations and the inclusion of all teachers in grass-roots teaching organizations." Taking the construction of grass-roots teaching organizations as the main means of first-class undergraduate course construction is the main way to improve teachers' teaching ability.

In January 2020, "The notice of Zhejiang Provincial Department of Education on strengthening the construction of grass-roots teaching organizations in ordinary undergraduate colleges and universities" issued by Zhejiang Provincial Department of Education pointed out: "grass-roots teaching organizations are the basic units for colleges and universities to carry out teaching and research activities", "the construction and management level of grass-roots teaching organizations are directly related to the teaching level and talent training quality of colleges and universities." First of all, grass-roots teaching organizations are the most basic teaching units of undergraduate majors in colleges and universities[1]. They play an important role in implementing education and

teaching tasks, promoting teaching research and reform, and promoting teachers' teaching growth and development; secondly, grass-roots teaching organizations are the basic teaching organizations that connect teachers and students, disciplines and majors, majors and courses, and implement the "last mile" of teaching work.

## **2. The Meaning of Grass-Roots Teaching Organization**

China's College grass-roots teaching organizations have experienced three different historical periods: the initial establishment stage after the founding of Peoples' Republic of China[2], the exploration and development stage after the 1960s, and the gradual decline stage after the 1980s. Grass-roots teaching organizations have played an important role in ensuring the normal development of teaching order and improving the quality of talent training. Many scholars have put forward unique opinions on grass-roots teaching organizations: Baocun Liu believes that "it is a team composed of individuals with clear division of labor and cooperation, mutual responsibility and complementary knowledge and ability to complete a teaching goal with teaching and education as the common vision goal"[3]. Tingqi Ma believes that "it is composed of teachers who take improving teaching quality and effect and promoting teaching reform as the main task, and take mutual responsibility for the common goal of teaching reform"[4]. Lina Sun believes that "it is a group of teachers composed of teachers of a certain specialty or some course who cooperate with each other and share responsibilities with the goal of improving teaching quality"[5].

The above three scholars mentioned "joint responsibility" in the connotation expression of grass-roots teaching organizations. Therefore, the author believes that each member of grass-roots teaching organizations has the responsibility and obligation to undertake teaching tasks. Through teaching cooperation, team members systematically carry out teaching research and reform, form an open, developing, cooperative and shared teaching development mechanism, comprehensively improve teaching ability and levels, and improve talent training quality, which is the common goal of grass-roots teaching organizations.

## **3. Types of Grass-Roots Teaching Organizations in Universities**

At present, there are more than 3000 colleges and universities in China, which cultivate talents of different levels and types, respectively. The positioning of colleges and universities mainly includes three categories: research universities, teaching and research universities, and teaching universities. Therefore, the construction of grass-roots teaching organizations in colleges and universities is also different. The common types are:

### **3.1. University - School - Department - Institute**

The orientation of research universities is mainly academic research, and the teacher team is established in the direction of discipline research. Usually, the grass-roots teaching organization is constructed in the form of Research Institutes. Table 1 shows the basic teaching organization structure of the School of Computing of a research university in China.

The research institutes in the grass-roots teaching organization are not affiliated with a department or major, but provide the teaching of corresponding course groups for each department or major of the school. The Department of Computer Science and Technology, the Department of Software Engineering, the Department of Internet of Things Engineering and the Department of Network Engineering of the College all offer computer network courses, which are undertaken by the Institute of Computer Network. Its advantage is that it is conducive to feeding the latest

research results of the Institute back to teaching, and improving the quality of course teaching through strong scientific research ability and levels.

Table 1: Grass-roots teaching organization structure of University-School-Department-Institute

Department	Institute
Department of computer science and technology	Institute of computer intelligent systems
Department of software engineering	Institute of computer vision
Department of automation	Institute of computer software research
Department of digital media technology	Institute of IOT Research
Department of IOT Engineering	Institute of spatial information computing
	Institute of digital media technology
	Institute of graphics and image
	Institute of computer Network Research
Department of network engineering	Software Technology Engineering Center
	Smart City Engineering Center
	Big data research center

### 3.2. University-School-Department-Teaching and Research Office

Teaching and research universities or teaching universities pay attention to the balance between teaching and research. Teachers' teams gather with similar professional backgrounds. Usually, basic teaching organizations are built in the form of teaching and research offices under the management of departments. Table 2 shows the basic teaching organization structure of a teaching and research school.

Table 2: Grass-roots teaching organization structure of University-school-department teaching & Research Office

Department	Teaching&Research Office
Department of computer science and technology	Computer application technology Network engineering Virtual reality
Department of Mechanical Engineering	Machine design Mechanical manufacturing Material processing
Department of Electronic and electrical	Information Engineering Electrical engineering
Department of Civil Engineering	structural engineering Construction and project management
Department of Optics and electrical engineering	Light source and illumination Photoelectric materials
Department of Mathematics	Algebra and geometry mathematical analysis Applied and Computational Mathematics

The teaching and research offices in the grass-roots teaching organization are subordinate to the management of professional departments. According to the needs of professional talent training, the Department classifies the teachers of the Department into different teaching and research offices through a certain classification method. Each teaching and Research Office provides curriculum teaching for the corresponding majors of the Department. In addition to undertaking the tasks of curriculum teaching, teaching, research, and reform, the teaching and Research Office also has a

certain administrative function to undertake the tasks uploaded and assigned. The disadvantage is that the teaching and research office is under closed management within the Department and lacks communication between the departments. When it is necessary to provide teaching tasks for other departments, teachers with relatively weak teaching ability may be sent instead of being arranged according to the requirements of the course content and the characteristics of the teacher's profession, resulting in the decline of the course teaching quality.

### 3.3. University-School-Department-Course Section

Teaching universities focus on professional construction, course teaching, teaching, research, and teaching reform. Teachers' teams gather in professional departments with similar professional backgrounds. Schools dynamically integrate similar courses or similar courses into a course team according to the courses offered each semester. Generally, grass-roots teaching organizations are constructed in the form of a course teams. Table 3 shows the basic teaching organization structure of School of Information Engineering of a teaching university in China.

Table 3: Grass-roots teaching organization structure of university-school-department-course section

Department	Course Team
Department of computer science and technology	Mobile software development
Department of software engineering	Embedded design class
Department of network engineering	Database system class
Department of information Systems and Information managem	Network programming class
	Enterprise information management
	Management and economy
	Operations research and statistics
	Computer Mathematics

The course section in the grass-roots teaching organization does not belong to a professional department. The course section is composed of teachers who undertake the courses. Teachers may come from different professional departments. The course section is set dynamically according to the different courses offered each semester. Its advantage is that the course section is a simple teaching organization with no administrative function. It focuses on the reform of teaching content, teaching methods, teaching means, and so on. It can provide consistent course teaching for the same courses of different majors. At the same time, it is easy to carry out large-scale teaching reform and improve the quality of course teaching.

## 4. The Practice of Building Grass-Roots Teaching Organizations in Ningbo University of Finance & Economics

Ningbo University of Finance & Economics guarantees the cultivation quality of high-quality applied talents with the requirements of first-class undergraduate construction. In the process of implementation, Ningbo University of Finance and Economics attaches great importance to the construction of grass-roots teaching organizations. According to the positioning of the University, Ningbo, University of Finance and economics has determined the grass-roots Teaching organization form based on "University-School-Department-Teaching and Research Office". It has carried out beneficial practices in the determination of the functions of grass-roots teaching organizations, the selection of responsible persons, and the assessment and evaluation mechanism. Through closed-loop management, the role of grass-roots teaching organizations can be brought into full play.

## **4.1. Determine the Functions of Grass-Roots Teaching Organizations**

The function of grass-roots teaching organizations is to consolidate the connotation construction of grass-roots teaching organizations with teaching quality as the core, taking, the construction of teachers' morality and style, the improvement of teachers' teaching ability, the effectiveness of teaching reform, the results of curriculum construction and classroom teaching effects as the starting point.

### **4.1.1. Strengthen the Construction of Teachers' Morality and Style, and Promote Teachers' Teaching Development**

Regularly organize teachers to learn the basic principles and policies of national education, promote teachers to strictly abide by teaching disciplines and norms, establish a good teaching style, and enhance teachers' sense of responsibility and mission in teaching and educating people. We will strengthen the construction of teaching echelons, formulate teacher training plans, and implement the training system for young teachers' teaching assistance. Teachers shall be organized to apply for advanced studies in colleges and universities at home and abroad in a planned way.

### **4.1.2. Organize Teaching Activities and Implement Teaching Tasks**

Organize and implement the teaching tasks according to the talent training plan and the talent training objectives of the university; strengthen the guidance, inspection, and supervision of various teaching links (such as lesson preparation, teaching, experimental practice, course design, examination, graduation design or thesis); develop and implement the system of young teachers' tutors; assist in professional related quality assessment.

### **4.1.3. Serving Specialty Development and Deepening Teaching Reform**

Encourage and guide teachers to participate in teaching reform through thematic teaching and research activities according to the specialty construction plan and requirements; strengthen the research on the development trend and talent demand of relevant disciplines, industries and fields, formulate and revise professional talent training programs, and play an important role in professional evaluation, professional certification, professional construction and reform; carry out the construction of teaching resources in various forms, such as teaching materials, teaching aids, courseware, short video library, exercise library, test paper library, online open courses, etc.

### **4.1.4. Carry out Teaching Reflection and Perfecting Teaching Evaluation**

Organize teachers to reacquaint and rethink about education and teaching practice, deeply reflect and analyze the course assessment methods, examination results, teaching effects, etc., summarize experiences and lessons, and promote the improvement of teaching quality. Effectively carry out various forms of teaching evaluation, and implement one-vote veto in teaching performance assessment, post-employment, professional title evaluation, and various excellent awards for those who are identified as unqualified in teaching by grass-roots teaching organizations.

## **4.2 Select Principals of Grass-Roots Teaching Organizations**

The selection of the head of the grass-roots teaching organization is the key link for the subsequent good operation of the grass-roots teaching organization. In practice, the responsible person is investigated and selected mainly through four aspects: teaching ability, academic level, teachers' ethics and style, and organizational management ability:

#### **4.2.1. Strong Teaching Ability**

The grass-roots teaching organization is a teaching-centered team of teachers. The person in charge should lead the team members to undertake routine tasks such as curriculum teaching, carry out developmental tasks such as teaching reform and research, and cultivate young teachers. Therefore, the person in charge needs to have strong teaching ability and establish prestige [6]. For example, he / she has a stable and excellent ranking of learning evaluation and teaching, can smoothly teach more than two main courses, has ideas for teaching reform and research, and has a symbolic teaching brand, teaching papers and teaching achievements, etc.

#### **4.2.2. Effective Scientific Research**

University teachers not only need to impart knowledge, but also need to innovate knowledge. The quality of university teaching is closely related to the level of scientific research. Only by enriching the teaching content with scientific research content can the teaching be research-oriented and cutting-edge, and the exploratory activities be truly carried out. In addition to theoretical research, it can also carry out applied research, go deep into enterprises, provide technical services for enterprises, accumulate engineering experience, and transform it into engineering cases in teaching. Teaching research is also a kind of scientific research. Through teaching reform and research, teaching achievements are formed in teaching content, teaching methods, teaching means, or examination evaluation.

#### **4.2.3. Be Noble in Character**

Moral character is the permanent source of the prestige of the head of the grass-roots teaching organization. Not only do the individuals require strong teaching ability and accumulated scientific research, but they only consider their own interests, which will soon lose their prestige, and the team will be loose and have no combat effectiveness. The person in charge should help teachers in all aspects and take teacher development as the goal; take full care of teachers and cultivate students as one's responsibility. Dedicate to help others cooperate in unity, be fair and just, and be upright.

#### **4.2.4. Understand organization management**

The grass-roots teaching organization may be a team of teachers with dozens of people. The person in charge needs to have a strong organization and coordination ability to unite teachers with different characteristics; have a deep understanding of each member, put them in the most appropriate positions, give full play to everyone's strengths, and especially help young teachers grow rapidly. The experience of grass-roots teaching organization management ability is an important platform for growing into university teaching management cadres in the future.

### **4.3 Formulate the Assessment and Evaluation Mechanism for Grass-Roots Teaching Organizations**

The assessment and evaluation of grass-roots teaching organizations is a feedback link in the closed-loop management of the construction of grass-roots teaching organizations. The school timely adjusts the construction tasks of the next cycle according to the assessment feedback results, and incorporates them into the assessment and evaluation indicators, to continuously improve the construction level of grass-roots teaching organizations in the cycle. Assessment and evaluation not only transmit pressure, but also transmit power, forming a culture of catching up with each other and striving for the top.



### 4.3.1. Assessment Purpose

First, improve the organizational role of grass-roots teaching organizations in teaching activities, and further improve the standardization of grass-roots teaching organization activities; second, give full play to the role of the person in charge in ensuring the teaching quality, stimulate the group wisdom of the team members, and highlight the role of the teaching team; Third, promote the initiative of team members to participate in teaching and research activities, build grass-roots organizations with vitality and creativity, and strengthen the collective sense of honor; Fourth, set up advanced models, cultivate teaching achievements, and lay the foundation for building a university level, provincial level and national level teaching team.

### 4.3.2. Assessment and Evaluation Contents

Grass-roots teaching organizations mainly conduct assessment and evaluation from the following five aspects, respectively: system construction and activities, curriculum construction, daily teaching, management, teaching effect, and team construction. See Table 4 for details.

Table 4: Assessment indicators of grass-roots teaching organizations

Assessment content	Assessment observation point
System construction and activities	Annual work plan and annual work summary; Records of teaching activities; Publicity and report of teaching activities
Curriculum construction	Three level curriculum construction (standard courses, high-quality courses and online excellent courses); Textbook publishing; obtained teaching reform or curriculum reform projects at all levels
Daily teaching management	Teaching order; The standardization of various teaching materials; Collective lesson preparation; Teaching accidents
teaching effectiveness	Ranking of team learning and teaching evaluation; The results of teaching research reform; Guide students to win prizes in discipline competitions
Team building	The members of the teaching and research section support each other in their work, actively undertake tasks, and unite and help each other; Teachers win prizes in teaching competitions; The proportion of double qualified teachers; Famous teachers at all levels

### 4.3.3. Assessment and Evaluation

The school set up an assessment team for the work of grass-roots teaching organizations. Each grass-roots teaching organization carries out self-assessment according to the assessment index system. The assessment team verifies and jointly evaluates the submitted self-assessment form. The assessment grades are divided into excellent, qualified, and unqualified. The assessment results are reported to the party-government meeting of the school for approval. The school organizes experience, exchange, and commendation meetings.

## 5. Conclusions

To sum up, under the background of promoting the construction of "double first-class" colleges and universities, the Ministry of Education has successively launched the "double ten thousand plan" and the construction objectives of "first-class undergraduate program", and proposed that grass-roots teaching organizations are the main means for the construction of first-class undergraduate programs and the main way to improve teachers' teaching ability. The grass-roots

teaching organizations in colleges and universities have once again faced a major opportunity for development. On the basis of comprehensively implementing the requirements of "taking undergraduate education as the foundation and four regressions", strengthen the organizational functions, innovate organizational forms, improve the operating mechanism, stimulate organizational vitality, fully mobilize teachers' enthusiasm for education and teaching, form a grass-roots teaching organization with reasonable structure, sound functions and effective operation, give full play to the advantages of grass-roots teaching organizations, and promote the connotative development of undergraduate education and the high-quality improvement of talent training.

## References

- [1] Yi Mingdong. *Thoughts on the Construction of Grass-roots Teaching Organizations in Local Undergraduate Colleges and Universities Against the Background of First Class Undergraduate Course*[J], *Science & Technology Vision*,2019(12):194-195.
- [2] Lu Guodong, Sun Jian,Meng Chen,Wu Hua.*Fundamental Teaching Community in Colleges and Universities: Basic Teaching Organizations*[J].*Research in Higher Education of Engineering*, 2014(1):59-65.
- [3] Liu Baocun. *Building a high-level teaching team to improve the quality of Undergraduate Teaching*[J],*China Higher Education*,2007(3):29-31.
- [4] Ma Tingqi. *On the target orientation and strategy of teaching team construction in Colleges and Universities*[J]. *China Higher Education*, 2007(6):40-42.
- [5] Sun Lina,He Lijun. *Study of the College Instruction Team Construction Based on Team Theory*[J].*Hebei Academic Journal*, 2007(9):163-165.
- [6] Chen Qingzhang. *Frequently-Asked Questions about University Teaching 600*[M].Beijing Capital Normal University Press, 2020:459.