

# *Ways of Incorporating Curriculum Ideology and Politics into the Course of Foreign Trade Documents*

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**Keywords:** Curriculum ideology and politics, foreign trade documents, ways of incorporation, classroom teaching.

**Abstract:** Curriculum ideology and politics is to foster students' character and civic virtue. It helps students to form a full-grounded life view, world view and sense of values as learning professional courses. However, incorporating ideological and political elements into professional course study is not an easy thing. "Foreign Trade Documents" is a personalized module course for foreign trade majors. This article aims to explore effective ways of incorporating curriculum ideology and politics into the course of Foreign Trade Documents. Accordingly, some suggestions on incorporating ways are put forward from four perspectives, which are teaching objectives, teaching content, teaching methods and after-class "Ideological and political" reflection, in order to help students to have an ideologically and politically comprehensive understanding of the global economy, the world community and international trade policies and practices.

## **1. Introduction**

In a globally integrated society, international trade has grown significantly as a factor in economic growth and development. For enterprises and governments alike, it can be challenging to navigate the complexities of trade legislation, policies, and practices. Professionals must have a solid grasp of the political and ideological forces that influence trade relationships and transactions if they are to prosper in this dynamic environment. Thus, for international business-related courses and students, like Foreign Trade Documents, curriculum ideology and politics are of great importance in professional study.

The concept of "curriculum ideology and politics" is a new mode of Chinese higher education first proposed at the National Conference on Ideological and Political Work in December, 2016. It aims to foster students' character and civic virtues, and help them to form a full-grounded life view, world view and sense of values. It is hoped to achieve complete and all-around education by incorporating ideological and political education into every link of professional higher education. With the continuous advancement of teaching reform and curriculum ideological and political construction in colleges and universities, curriculum ideology and politics has become an essential factor of higher education to deepen reform and improve teaching quality.

This paper aims to explore the ways of incorporating curriculum ideology and politics into the course of Foreign Trade Documents, hoping of preparing students for the challenges of the global

trade environment and promote the construction and reform of ideological and political incorporation in higher education. With professional knowledge education, the course Foreign Trade Documents could play an influential role in students' ideological and political views cultivation.

## **2. The Necessity of Curriculum Ideology and Politics in the Course Foreign Trade Documents**

### **2.1. Foreign Trade Documents and Curriculum Ideology and Politics**

The course "Foreign Trade Documents" is a personalized module course for students majoring in business English majors, international trade majors and alike. It is a comprehensive and practical course involving foreign trade activities. This course takes documents making ability training and technical skills as the fundamental focuses, and combines the teaching requirements of foreign trade document clerk and documentary clerk [1]. Students are supposed to master the basic knowledge of various international business documents. By learning this course, students will be familiar with international practice, international commercial law, international cargo transportation, international insurance and other related knowledge of documents, and have the working ability to make out standard international business documents. It will lay a solid foundation for students to be engaged in professional positions such as document clerks and customs declarer after graduation.

Curriculum ideology refers to the beliefs, values, and principles that guide the design and delivery of educational programs. It includes the goals, objectives, and standards that shape the content and structure of the curriculum. On the other hand, curriculum politics refers to the influence of political factors on the development and implementation of the curriculum. This includes the role of government policies, societal values, and cultural norms in shaping educational programs.

It seems that Foreign Trade Documents and curriculum ideology and politics have no apparent connection, but the fact is that they are quite closely related. Global trade policies are shaped by complex political and economic factors, and their implications are far-reaching. The following section will present why integration curriculum ideology and politics into Foreign Trade Documents is essential.

### **2.2. The Necessity of Curriculum Ideology and Politics**

From a historical point of view, Political and economic influences, such as colonialism, imperialism, and neoliberalism, have influenced the development of international trade policies. Environmental sustainability, economic growth, and inequality are all impacted by global trade policies [2]. Depending on how they are formulated and applied, trade policies can either help or hinder economic growth. It is necessary to have a comprehensive understanding of the global economy and the role of politics in shaping trade policies. This can be achieved by incorporating not only relevant theories and concepts from fields such as economics, international relations, and political science into the curriculum but also curriculum ideology and politics.

From a political point of view, with the strengthening of the reform of higher education and teaching, the primary objective of nurturing talents with the overall growth of morality, intelligence, beauty, and labor has changed into the primary objective of establishing morals and cultivating people. The ideological and political framework of the curriculum must be fully promoted by incorporating values into knowledge instruction and skill development. The true and core purpose of talent training is to assist students in developing a proper world view, life view, and set of values. Foreign trade workers are a valuable talent resource for our nation, and they are the driving force for our country to participate in international affairs, international exchanges and cooperation, as well as the presentation of our soft and genuine national culture [3]. Their ideological and political status, moral

quality, scientific quality and cultural quality are all directly related to the external image of our nation. It influences the future and destiny of a country.

From a critical thinking point of view, incorporating curriculum ideology and politics can help students develop critical thinking skills, which are essential for engaging with complex trade issues [4]. It enhances their understanding of the social, economic, and political issues that affect global trade. Students can learn to assess and evaluate many perspectives on trade issues and acquire well-informed judgments on complicated subjects by examining the political variables that influence trade policies. By developing critical thinking skills and an awareness of their social and political responsibilities, students can become more effective trade professionals who can navigate complex trade issues with confidence.

From the responsibility point of view, incorporating curriculum ideology and politics can help students become responsible global citizens aware of their social and political responsibilities. By engaging with complex trade issues, students can develop a sense of empathy for people from different cultures and backgrounds, and understand how their actions can have an impact on others. Incorporating curriculum ideology and politics can also benefit students' future careers in global trade by equipping them with a deeper understanding of the political, cultural, and ethical dimensions of trade.

Ideological and political construction and reform will be implemented in the courses of international trade-related majors, help guide students to establish the core values of patriotism, dedication and the rule of law, strengthen their confidence in the path, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and put national interests first. It can play the ideological and political education function of professional courses, go in the same direction with ideological and political courses, form a collaborative education effect, realize the educational goal of moral education, and meet the needs of enterprises and society for the ideological and political level of international trade professionals.

### **3. Ways of Incorporating Curriculum Ideology and Politics into the Course of Foreign Trade Documents**

Professionals must be able to navigate complex political, cultural, and social contexts to succeed in the global trade environment. Incorporating ideology and politics into the curriculum of Foreign Trade Documents is beneficial for students to develop a more nuanced understanding of these contexts, anticipate better in complex foreign trade activities and respond to the challenges in global trade. When engaging in teaching activities, educators should better integrate ideological and political content into the curriculum, continually improve the teaching system, keep the curriculum up-to-date, and adapt their teaching techniques to the needs of their students as well as the growth and changes in their field[5].

There are several methods for incorporating ideology and politics into the course of Foreign Trade Documents, as follows:

#### **3.1. Revise Course Teaching Objectives**

Knowledge objectives: Enable the students to know the basic requirements and processes of foreign trade documents, understand the basic theoretical knowledge of foreign trade documents, Be familiar with the specific requirements of L/C verification, document making, document review, document presentation, filing and other processes in foreign trade documents work. Master terms, vocabulary, sentence patterns and documents-filling methods and skills. Understand international trade processes and business terminology.

Ability objectives: Be able to make out all kinds of import and export documents independently and skillfully, and accurately complete a series of foreign trade documents based on the needs of different procedures in the process of foreign trade contract performance. Be able to analyze, practice and make decisions in foreign trade work. To cultivate problem-solving abilities and deal with problems arising in foreign trade independently. Be able to carry out effective cross-cultural communication. To foster knowledge transfer ability and lifelong learning ability by thinking training.

Moral (with ideological and political) objectives: Help students to understand and practice the core values with love and dedication, honesty and trustworthiness and craftsman spirit. Have the ability to adapt to the working position quickly. Strengthen self-learning ability, information processing ability, problems-solving ability and teamwork spirit. Know how to cope with crisis and accidents in work. Hold a good psychological quality and work efficiently pressure; Have an international horizon, awareness of global market risk prevention, awareness of abiding by international rules and laws, national feelings and social responsibility.

### **3.2. Excavate Ideological and Political Elements in Teaching Content**

Teaching content optimization is a crucial supportive condition in the ideological and political teaching activities for the course "Foreign Trade Documents". Ideological and political elements are everywhere in the teaching content, which needs to be excavated by the teacher according to the teaching material. Ideological and political elements should be set with professional knowledge of each chapter. In accordance with the core values, we should be "patriotic, dedicated, honest and friendly", which is the basic moral code of Chinese citizens, and also the code of conduct that foreign trade workers and people from all walks of life in the whole society should abide by [6].

Patriotism always comes first for foreign trade workers. Foreign trade is about the transaction among different countries. As the sentence goes, "family is the smallest country, and the country is composed of tens of thousands of families." With a strong country, there has a happy home. Today, China's economy has soared, developed and grown, and its status in the international community has been increasing. Under the massive impact of the corona-virus pandemic, China's economy could still maintain a steady situation, and people's steady daily life was guaranteed, which shows its great power and policy superiority. As a foreign trade worker, paying attention to the international forefront industry trends and foreign trade hot news at any time, feeling the economic development and growth of our country are pretty essential to cultivate students' "economic confidence".

Dedication is the essential quality required in foreign trade work. Foreign trade workers have clients from all over the world and sometimes need to travel abroad on a business trip. Sometimes there is a need to work overtime to follow up with clients because of the time difference. Sometimes there is no response to follow up, which requires patience and perseverance in the process of finding customers, establishing business relations, negotiating prices, payment, shipping, packing, insurance, etc. Therefore, it is very vital for foreign trade workers to develop a sense of responsibility and professionalism with a spirit of love and dedication, working hard with proper working methods. In addition to getting high-quality products or services and favourable prices, customers also hope to be sincerely and friendly treated. Foreign trade workers should have a sincere and friendly working attitude in the process of communicating with customers, respect customer needs, and actively seek solutions when foreign trade disputes occur.

Honesty and friendliness are conducive to business success. Cultural differences between countries can also impact the drafting and interpretation of trade documents. Students can explore how cultural differences affect, how trade agreements structured, how rules perceived and enforced. Foreign trade enterprises should obey the laws and regulations of relevant countries in their business activities and operate in conformity with international trade procedures and practices. Only when foreign trade

workers are law-abiding and fully engaging in foreign trade activities can their rights and interests be protected. Culture is the soul of a country and a nation, and national culture is a unique symbol that distinguishes a nation from other nations.

In foreign trade, the cultural collision between countries and nations is inevitable. On the one hand, foreign trade workers need to be thoroughly familiar with and understand the values and behavioral preferences of foreign countries. Their words and behaviors in foreign trade activities should conform to international conventions. On the other hand, foreign trade workers should actively become communicators of Chinese culture in their exchanges with foreign countries. Only by understanding the glorious history and culture of the Chinese nation, having firm self-confidence and strong pride in the national cultures, can we achieve honesty, modesty and friendliness in foreign trade.

### 3.3. Adopt Multi-Teaching Methods

In the teaching process of Foreign Trade Documents, the appropriate introduction of ideological and political education content has become the essential requirement of teaching reform in the new era. While the teaching content changes, teaching methods are also required to change synchronously. However, in the actual teaching practice, some teachers are still based on the indoctrination teaching mode, that is, the traditional teaching mode of teachers' explanation and students' passive acceptance, which is difficult to stimulate students' interest in learning. Although some schools have adopted new models such as flipped classes and project-based teaching, due to improper organization, students' participation enthusiasm is insufficient, and the teaching effect is not ideal. Therefore, a variety of teaching methods could be considered comprehensively, such as case-based teaching, task-driven teaching, group discussion method and Simulation-based learning. It is hoped to help students understand relevant theoretical, ideological and political factors by using multi-teaching methods, avoiding the single teaching method or the rigid combination of ideological and political elements.

Case-based teaching: while teaching professional knowledge, students are interested in real cases of enterprises, current affairs cases, excellent foreign trade entrepreneur stories and so on. In this method, the instructor would present case studies demonstrating the importance of politics and ideology of foreign trade documents. Some cases in foreign trade are negotiated under difficult political circumstances. Teachers could present a case study of a company that faced challenges or opportunities due to cultural differences. For example, when filling out letters of credit, certificates of origin, etc., we should consciously introduce the current global trade situation in our country, the cultures of different countries, business etiquette and business ethics, which can broaden students' horizons, stimulate students' national feelings and enhance students' cultural confidence.

Task-driven teaching: Speech, project and presentation. Students would be given fixed title projects to research and analyze the political and ideological factors that impact foreign trade documents, and students work together in groups of 3-5 to complete the task, make PPT, and give speeches and show results in class. For example, they could be asked to research a specific trade agreement and analyze the political factors that led to its negotiation. Alternatively, they could be asked to explore the cultural differences between the two countries and how these differences impact the types of documents that are used in foreign trade.

Besides the in-class activities, an after-class course paper is also needed. Students are supposed to write ideological and political course papers, and teachers guide them in topic selection, structure, arguments, etc.

Group discussion: discussion and debate. Teachers assign subjects before class, and let students collect and sort out information. Students could be arranged to discuss a specific material or multimedia video directly in class. Teachers could organize the students to carry out the topic debate

by dividing them into two groups, pro side and con side, free debate. Group discussions and group representatives' opinions are stated, and teachers make comments.

Simulation-based learning: To create an "online + offline + training" hybrid class model, with the help of modern educational technology and means, break the limitation of teaching time and space, use online teaching platforms such as learning link and all kinds of online teaching resources, select the current popular and students-related teaching material, and present easy to understand and exciting teaching content to improve students' interest in learning and enhance the teaching results.

Through the application of these methods, students can not only master professional knowledge, but also acquire critical thinking ability, teamwork ability and knowledge transfer ability. In order to obtain ideological and political teaching, it is necessary to deepen the understanding of ideological and political contents while mastering relevant professional knowledge and skills. Overall, the key is to choose proper and effective teaching methods that allow students to engage with political and ideological factors.

### **3.4. After-Class "Ideological and Political" Reflection**

Reflection is an integral part of the teaching process [7]. Teachers should take many factors into consideration, such as, reviewing the teaching plan, evaluating student learning results, considering students' feedback, reflecting on teaching strategies and effectiveness of teaching material, identifying areas for improvement and planning for the classes. Some schools are affected by the lack of theoretical research on curriculum ideological and political construction and the single traditional evaluation method, which makes it hard to reflect the result of ideological and political education in the evaluation system.

Students' online learning, in-class discussion and participation, homework, daily testing and practical training are incorporated into the evaluation process. The formative assessment should be adopted throughout the overall process of teaching activities, so that students can more clearly understand their own learning situation, and teachers can more directly understand the difficulties students face in the learning process, to timely optimize the consistency of teaching content and teaching objectives, adjusting teaching methods to meet requirements of students' comprehensive quality training.

It is suggested to improve the curriculum evaluation method to reflect the "ideological and political" elements. In the course evaluation, in addition to reflecting on the students' mastery of the key points of the documents making, it is necessary to reflect the students' ideological and moral levels and values. In the formative assessment, students' classroom participation in the ideological and political content, the performance of the group discussion, the completion of group assignments, and the completion of course papers should be assessed. In the summative assessment, that is, the final examination paper, a certain subjective questions about "ideological and political" aspects could be set up to investigate the ideological and political level of students.

## **4. Conclusion**

Incorporating curriculum ideology and politics into the course of Foreign Trade Documents can provide students with a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of global trade issues. By including relevant theories and concepts from different disciplines, students can develop critical thinking skills and prepare for the challenges of the global economy. In this paper, it is suggested that curriculum ideology and politics could be incorporated into the course of Foreign Trade Documents from four perspectives, which are revising course teaching objectives, excavating ideological and political elements in teaching content, adopting multi-teaching methods and after-class "Ideological and political" reflection. It is hoped that these suggestions could be of guidance for advancement of

teaching reform and curriculum ideological and political construction in colleges and universities. Further research is also needed to assess the long-term impact of such integration on students' learning outcomes.

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