

Research on the Current Situation and Countermeasures of General Education in Agricultural Colleges and Universities

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Abstract

General education is an effective way to improve the comprehensive quality and ability of contemporary college students. At present, there are many obstacles and problems in the implementation of general education in agricultural colleges and universities. This paper analyzes the current situation of general education in agricultural colleges and universities and explores the Countermeasures of general education reform from the three levels namely education competent departments, schools, and teachers, and it provides reasonable suggestions for the effective implementation of general education in agricultural colleges and universities.

Keywords: Agriculture, General Education, Reform

1. INTRODUCTION

Universities not only need to disseminate professional knowledge to students, but also need to enhance students' sense of social responsibility, innovation, and practical ability, and cultivate students into a "complete person" with comprehensive development of moral, intellectual, physical, and aesthetic. Liberal studies education has been practiced in western developed countries for more than 100 years, and it has received wide attention as an effective way to improve students' comprehensive quality. Although most colleges and universities in Southeast Asian countries have opened general education courses and initially established a general education curriculum system, there are still many difficulties and problems in the actual operation. Agricultural colleges and universities, as a category of colleges and universities with strong attributes of professional disciplines, have encountered more

resistance in the process of implementing general education, and the general education in many colleges and universities has become virtual. How to promote general education in agricultural colleges and universities, cultivate agricultural elites with comprehensive quality, heart for society and life, and better serve agricultural development is the historical mission given to agricultural colleges and universities in the new era.

2. Current situation and problems of general education in agricultural colleges and universities

The resistance encountered in the process of promoting general education in agricultural colleges and universities is certainly due to the high cost of reforming general education. This is due to the narrow professional structure, but the lack of cognitive awareness, insufficient attention to the important role of general education, and the outdated teaching contents and methods are also important factors that make it difficult to deepen general education.

2.1. Lack of attention in ideological cognition

To complete a job well, it is important to attach importance to it ideologically, and education is no exception. If schools, teachers, or students are resistant to general education in their minds, it is impossible to promote general education effectively.

(1) Schools emphasize teaching over education. Subject to the mindset of professional education for many years, schools are not yet in a position to change their roles, their target orientation is still limited to teaching professional knowledge and skills to college students, and their awareness of improving comprehensive literacy is not enough. They have not yet formed enough attention to liberal education at the functional level. Although the main departments of education have formulated the relevant requirements of general education, the assessment system for schools has not been established, and schools have not been allowed to form an emphasis at the institutional level. Many schools only transform the original public elective courses into general education courses to cope with the education authorities, and the function of general education is virtually invalid.

(2) Students emphasize employment over development. Students in the process of education are too employment-oriented, always think that professional knowledge is the most useful, did not consider the importance of personal comprehensive quality in employment, career development planning, they are often reduced to professional tools. The selection of general studies courses is also based on the criteria of good to pass and fun, without considering from the personal ability to match the complementary. Not realizing that a modern agricultural practitioner should master a variety of skills, which include not only professional skills, but also communication, management, psychological, humanistic feelings, etc. so that they can continue to

develop and innovate in their future careers.

2.2. High cost of general education reform

Breaking the original professional education and teaching mode and realizing the innovation of general education not only need courage and wisdom, but also need sufficient policy and financial guarantee, and the high cost of reform is also an important factor that hinders the development of general education in agricultural colleges and universities.

(1) The structure of majors is narrow. The professional structure of agricultural colleges and universities is usually narrow, often concentrating on a few professional fields that are partial to agriculture, such as agricultural science, plant, and zoology, environmental ecology, biology, biochemistry, etc. Although the professional subdivision is high, the professional breadth is not enough, even though some agricultural colleges and universities have been built into comprehensive universities; the construction of general education majors in humanities, social sciences, and arts are also weak. Moreover, the investment in the construction of general education majors is high and the effect is slow, which is a decision that needs strategic vision and sustainable development consciousness, and under the current slightly impetuous and utilitarian environment, the resistance can be imagined.

(2) The curriculum structure is not very balanced. Given the limitation of professional structure, the structure of general education courses in many agricultural colleges and universities is not balanced with more applied courses such as foreign languages and computers and fewer humanities and arts courses. In addition, some schools can only use professional basic courses to offset the general education courses, which makes general education, lose its proper role and become an accessory of professional education. If schools want to offer excellent general education courses, it is essential to invest in teaching teams, creative research sites, teaching materials, and other teaching software and hardware.

(3) The ratio of faculty structure is out of proportion. Most of the senior teachers in agricultural colleges and universities are teachers of agricultural majors, and they are well versed in teaching agricultural courses, but not many are good at teaching general education. Many schools let new teachers take general education courses, and although the new teachers are young and energetic and have some knowledge of general education, they lack teaching experience and are weak in integrating teaching content. To improve the structure of general education teachers, schools need to introduce a large number of teachers, among which some high-level general education teachers are also needed, all of which also increase the cost of general education reform in schools.

2.3. Outdated teaching contents and methods

General education focuses on personality development and quality improvement, which requires scientific and innovative teaching contents and methods. However, most general education courses have single teaching content and old teaching methods, which are difficult to attract students' interest.

(1) Overview has more than enough deep research. At present, many general education courses do not have fixed teaching materials, and the teaching contents are mainly generalizations, which can only let students understand some superficial knowledge and lack in-depth study of the knowledge learned. Whether it is humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, or arts, just mastering the skin is not enough, only more and deeper reading can master its essence, and then improve their quality and cultivation.

(2) Memory is not enough for thinking. At present, the teaching process of general education is still very heavy with test-based education. Students mainly memorize classroom knowledge and lack thinking about the basic laws and general theories of the subject. Classroom teaching is also mainly imparted, with little interaction and little opportunity for students to think. Only when students learn to think and apply their knowledge and spiritual connotation to related disciplines and daily study and work can liberal education play its proper role.

(3) Theory is not enough for practice. In the current general education teaching, classroom theory teaching is still the focus, and there is a lack of corresponding practical practice. As the old saying goes, "You will feel shallow when you learn from books, but you have to do it by yourself. To master the essence of general education theory, not only do we need to study and think deeply but also need to understand in practice. Practice is a melting pot, which can integrate the theoretical knowledge learned from different disciplines into comprehensive ability and develop good personality and quality.

3. Countermeasures and suggestions for the effective implementation of general education in agricultural colleges and universities

Given the above difficulties and problems in the implementation of general education in agricultural colleges and universities, it is necessary for education authorities, schools, and teachers to work together and collaborate to educate and guide college students to develop good study habits, master scientific study methods. In the same vein, it will help the students to understand the essence of excellent general culture, and uphold the spirit of diligent study, moral cultivation, discernment, and practicality, to let general education take root, form a benign atmosphere of general education, and improve the comprehensive quality of agricultural students.

3.1. Educational authorities strengthen supervision and guidance

Education authorities are the makers of liberal education policies and have the most comprehensive grasp of the policy spirit. Only when education authorities pay attention to liberal education can they guide schools, teachers, students, and society to pay attention to liberal education.

(1) Develop a scientific and standardized general education system. The education authorities can study the countries and colleges with more mature development of general education, formulate a scientific and standardized general education system for colleges and universities to choose for reference, and give guidance to the schools to open general education courses.

(2) Incorporate the standardization of general education into teaching evaluation. The teaching evaluation index is a baton for universities' education and teaching work. Incorporating the standardization of general education construction into the teaching evaluation index can enhance universities' attention to general education, help universities increase their investment in general education, and standardize the construction of the general education system of our university.

(3) Guiding social cognition through policies. The education authorities can also guide the social cognition of general education by introducing corresponding incentive measures for further education and employment, so that the public, enterprises, and institutions can pay attention to colleges and universities with remarkable achievements in general education and graduates with general education quality.

3.2. Schools optimize the top-level design of general education

Schools are an important part of the implementation of liberal studies education and play an important role in carrying on the top and starting the bottom. Only by optimizing the top-level design of liberal education that teachers and students can have their targets.

(1) Forming an independent authority to formulate programs. The realization of general education requires the cooperation of many departments and secondary colleges, which requires an authoritative management institution for general education, but at present, most colleges and universities attach general education to the Academic Affairs Office or the Academic Affairs Office, which is difficult to achieve this. The university should set up an independent management institution for general education, with the main leader of the university as the head of the institution, so that teachers and students feel that the university attaches importance to general education. The institution should also be equipped with special researchers for general education, who are responsible for studying the general education system formulated by the

educational authorities and formulating the implementation plan of general education in our university. Let teachers and students have clear goals and work together up and down to carry out good general education.

(2) Optimize the general education curriculum system. Combining with the narrow structure of majors in agricultural colleges and universities, schools can optimize the general education curriculum system by concentrating their strengths to offer fewer and more precise high-quality general education courses, integrating humanities subjects into professional courses, and forming joint professional courses. Given the uneven distribution of majors in agricultural colleges and universities, it is unrealistic to offer a large number of high-quality general education courses in a short period. Therefore, we can concentrate our strengths to offer a few high-quality general education courses first so that students can feel the charm and effects of general education and enhance their recognition of general education to form a virtuous cycle effect. It is also possible to integrate some humanities subjects into professional courses and organize joint lesson preparation between general studies teachers and professional teachers, focusing on using general studies concepts to broaden the students' thinking and learning methods. In addition, joint specialized courses in agriculture can be formed to enable students to integrate a variety of agriculture-related knowledge and skills and to master the basic core principles of agriculture coherently.

(3) Strengthen the faculty of general education. Introduce a high-level general education faculty, and set up a general education teaching team led by experts and professors, combining the old and the new to create a talent echelon. Improve the education and teaching ability of general education teachers through exchanges, seminars, and training. Improve the evaluation system of general education courses, so that the educated can play a greater voice, so that general education teachers can adjust the content and methods of teaching in time. Give general education teachers a complete development platform in terms of job promotion and title evaluation to motivate them to better carry out general education teaching and research.

3.3. Teachers improve the teaching skills of general education

Teachers are the actual implementers of liberal arts education, and their personal quality and teaching level directly determine the effect of liberal arts education implementation. Teachers with excellent personal charisma can attract students to the classroom, and teachers with excellent teaching skills can make students transform the knowledge of general culture into their eyes, brains, and hearts, and their cultivation and ability.

(1) Enhance their awareness and skills of general education. The teacher is the one who teaches and solves problems, which is also the requirement for the general

education teachers. Liberal studies teachers should not only grant students knowledge, but also positive values, scientific learning methods, and three-dimensional ways of thinking. All these require general education teachers to enhance their awareness of general education, and only when teachers themselves pay attention to it they can make students pay attention to it through practical actions. Liberal studies teachers also need to improve their general education skills and keep exploring and improving their values, learning methods, and ways of thinking to better teach them to their students.

(2) Guide students to explore the deeper connotations behind their knowledge. In the teaching process, general studies teachers should make an in-depth analysis of the general studies curriculum, explain the core contents in detail, guide students to read extensively about related knowledge, and think actively. They have also to explore the deep connotation behind the knowledge, understand the humanistic spirit, value standards, and scientific consciousness in it, internalize these deep connotations and transform them into their comprehensive quality.

(3) Enhance students' ability to use multidisciplinary knowledge comprehensively through practice. In the teaching process, general education teachers should also create more practice opportunities, so that students can externalize the general education theoretical knowledge they have learned and deepen their mastery of relevant knowledge through practical application. The students can go into the field and society to apply their general and professional pieces of knowledge to solve some practical problems. They can also conduct some scientific research and participate in some comprehensive competitions, which require students to use multidisciplinary knowledge and master various skills such as planning, management, and operation, which are conducive to the enhancement of students' comprehensive ability.

The reform of general education in agricultural colleges and universities needs to go a long way, and there are still many difficulties to be overcome on the way. Only when schools are committed, teachers and students would be attentive, and then we can cultivate high-quality agricultural talents and help agriculture to flourish.

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