

Research on Teaching Reform of "Current Affairs and Policies" Course in Universities under the OBE Perspective

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Abstract: This paper explores the teaching reform of the "Current Affairs and Policies" course in universities from the Outcome-Based Education (OBE) perspective. By systematically reviewing the connotation of OBE and its application in higher education, particularly in the social sciences and the "Current Affairs and Policies" course, the article proposes a path for teaching reform based on OBE. Utilizing literature and content analysis methods, the study examines relevant domestic and international literature, integrating the spirit of the Two Sessions and current social hotspots to explore the specific application and implementation strategies of OBE in the course. The research elaborates on the theoretical background of OBE, analyzes its application status globally and in Chinese universities, and identifies the features and challenges of the "Current Affairs and Policies" course. The article offers a series of OBE-based teaching reform suggestions, including course objectives, content design, teaching methods, and evaluation systems. The conclusion indicates that the comprehensive implementation of OBE can effectively enhance the teaching quality of the "Current Affairs and Policies" course, improve students' understanding of current affairs and social responsibility, and lay a foundation for cultivating well-rounded talents needed in the new era. This study not only provides theoretical support for higher education reform but also offers practical guidance for the specific implementation of the "Current Affairs and Policies" course in universities.

Keywords: OBE; Higher Education; Current Affairs and Policies; Teaching Reform

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Significance

The global wave of educational reform has driven continuous innovation and development of various teaching concepts. Outcome-Based Education (OBE), centered on student learning outcomes, has demonstrated significant effectiveness in enhancing teaching quality and practical abilities. This is particularly crucial for social science courses like "Current Affairs and Policies." Traditional teaching models often focus on knowledge transmission, neglecting the cultivation of critical thinking and practical application skills. Amid the rapidly changing political, economic, and social environment, there is an urgent need for teaching reforms in the "Current Affairs and Policies" course to cultivate social responsibility and comprehensive qualities in students. [1-3]

1.2 Objectives and Methods

This paper aims to systematically explore the teaching reform path of the "Current Affairs and Policies" course in universities from the OBE perspective, striving to enhance the course's teaching effectiveness by clarifying learning outcomes, optimizing course design and teaching methods, and constructing a scientific evaluation system. By employing literature and content analysis methods, the study systematically reviews relevant domestic and international research and integrates current social hotspots and the spirit of the Two Sessions to discuss the specific application of OBE in the course.

1.3 Review of Domestic and International Research

Internationally, countries like the United States, Canada, and Australia have widely adopted OBE in higher education. Scholars like Spady

have demonstrated OBE's effectiveness in improving teaching quality and student capabilities through detailed theoretical and practical exploration. Domestically, OBE research has focused mainly on engineering and medical fields, with less emphasis on social science courses. However, existing studies show that introducing OBE can significantly improve the teaching effectiveness of the "Current Affairs and Policies" course. Scholars like Wang Xuexue, Xie Zhejun, and Zhou Xiance have offered valuable suggestions on course content design, teaching methods, and evaluation system construction through practical teaching experiences. [3-8]

2. Overview of OBE Education Concept

2.1 Core Connotations and Principles of OBE

The core of OBE lies in its clear outcome orientation, ensuring students not only gain knowledge but also develop the ability to apply and solve practical problems by setting specific, measurable learning goals. OBE emphasizes student-centered teaching, utilizing diverse teaching methods, continuous evaluation, and feedback mechanisms to ensure all students achieve the expected learning outcomes. The four main principles of OBE include clear learning outcomes, student-centered teaching, flexible teaching methods, and continuous improvement processes, providing scientific guidance for higher education course design and implementation.

2.2 Application of OBE in Higher Education

OBE's successful application in higher education has strongly supported global educational reform. In Australia's engineering education reform, OBE has made course goals clearer and teaching methods more practical, significantly enhancing students' employability and professional adaptability. Similarly, Canada's medical education reform through OBE has comprehensively improved students' knowledge mastery and clinical skills. These practices indicate that OBE is not only applicable to theoretical teaching but also shows unique advantages in practice-oriented courses.

2.3 Application of OBE in Social Science

Courses

Although OBE has achieved notable success in STEM courses, its application in social science courses is relatively new. With the increasing complexity of global political, economic, and social environments in recent years, OBE has gradually been introduced into the teaching reform of social science courses. Some UK universities, for instance, have applied OBE in political science and international relations courses, which has clarified learning outcomes, enhanced the interaction and diversity of teaching methods, and improved students' understanding of current issues and critical thinking skills. Research and practice in China also show that applying OBE has significantly improved the teaching quality of the "Current Affairs and Policies" course and enhanced students' social responsibility.

3. Analysis of the Current Status of the "Current Affairs and Policies" Course in Universities

3.1 Course Setup and Teaching Objectives

As a crucial ideological and political theory course, "Current Affairs and Policies" aims to cultivate students' correct understanding of domestic and international situations, improve their political consciousness and social responsibility, and enhance their ability to discern right from wrong. However, the traditional course setup often focuses on knowledge transmission, lacking the promotion of practical application and critical thinking. The course content is relatively fixed and not updated timely, failing to meet students' demands for understanding current affairs.

3.2 Teaching Content and Methods

The current "Current Affairs and Policies" course mainly relies on theoretical lectures, with limited discussion of practical issues and case analysis. Teaching methods are mainly lecture-based, with low student participation and insufficient classroom interaction. This approach fails to stimulate students' interest in learning and affects teaching outcomes. Additionally, the course content lacks close ties with social hotspots and real-world issues, making it difficult for students to apply theoretical knowledge in practice.

3.3 Evaluation System and Existing Problems

The traditional evaluation system for the "Current Affairs and Policies" course mainly relies on final exams, with singular evaluation standards that fail to comprehensively reflect students' learning outcomes and abilities. Students' regular performance, class participation, and practical abilities are not adequately considered, resulting in evaluation outcomes that do not accurately reflect students' overall quality. This evaluation system not only affects students' learning enthusiasm but also hinders the improvement of teaching quality.

4. Teaching Reform Path of "Current Affairs and Policies" Course Under OBE Perspective

4.1 Setting Course Objectives

Under the OBE perspective, the teaching objectives of the "Current Affairs and Policies" course should shift to student-centered outcomes, setting specific, measurable learning outcomes. For instance, course objectives can include enhancing students' ability to analyze domestic and international situations, increasing social responsibility, and fostering critical thinking and problem-solving skills. These objectives should be dynamically adjusted and optimized based on students' actual conditions and current social issues.

4.2 Designing Teaching Content

The teaching content should be designed around clear learning outcomes, incorporating current social hotspots and real-world issues to increase practical case analysis and discussions of current affairs. For example, recent changes in international relations, domestic economic policy adjustments, and environmental protection issues can be integrated into the course to enhance its timeliness and practicality. Additionally, focus on the systematic and hierarchical nature of knowledge to enable students to deepen their understanding and analysis of real-world issues based on theoretical learning.

4.3 Selecting Teaching Methods

In terms of teaching methods, it is essential to move away from the single mode of teacher-led lectures and adopt diversified methods to

increase student participation and interaction. Group discussions, case studies, role-playing, and simulation exercises can effectively boost students' interest and initiative in learning. For instance, discussing major domestic and international events through Model United Nations or debates can help students better understand and think critically about issues.

4.4 Constructing Evaluation System

Constructing a scientific and reasonable evaluation system is crucial for effectively implementing OBE. The evaluation methods should be diversified, combining final exams, regular performance, and practical assessments to comprehensively reflect students' learning outcomes. Project-based evaluations can be introduced, where students demonstrate their ability to apply knowledge and solve practical problems through completing projects. Additionally, process evaluations should be emphasized, providing continuous feedback and improvement to help students continuously enhance their abilities.

5. Teaching Reform Strategies Integrating Two Sessions Spirit and Social Hotspots

5.1 Guiding Significance of the Two Sessions Spirit for Teaching Reform

The Two Sessions Spirit provides critical guidance for higher education reform, emphasizing the comprehensive implementation of the Party's education policy, fulfilling the fundamental task of moral education, and cultivating well-rounded socialist builders and successors. Under this guidance, the "Current Affairs and Policies" course should focus on students' ideological and political education, enhancing their political consciousness and social responsibility. By integrating the Two Sessions Spirit, the course content should be dynamically adjusted to enable students to stay updated on the Party's latest policies and national development directions, better preparing them to serve society.

5.2 Integration of Social Hotspots into the Curriculum

Given the rapid changes in global political, economic, and social environments, the teaching content and methods of the "Current Affairs and Policies" course need continuous

updates and adjustments. Hot topics such as globalization, informatization, environmental protection, and social equity are crucial content areas for the course. By introducing OBE concepts, clearly defining learning outcomes, and optimizing teaching methods, students can better understand and address these complex social issues. Incorporating social hotspots through case analyses and current affairs discussions helps students grasp the political, economic, and social factors behind these issues, fostering their comprehensive analysis and problem-solving skills.

5.3 Cultivation of Comprehensive Competence and Social Responsibility

From the OBE perspective, the "Current Affairs and Policies" course should not only impart knowledge but also emphasize cultivating students' comprehensive competence and social responsibility. Diverse teaching methods and evaluation systems can stimulate students' interest and initiative, enhancing their critical thinking and practical application skills. By aligning with the Two Sessions Spirit, the course can guide students to adopt correct values and life perspectives, strengthening their social responsibility and contributing to national and societal development.

6. Conclusion

By systematically reviewing the connotations of OBE and its application in higher education, especially in social sciences and the "Current Affairs and Policies" course, this paper proposes an OBE-based teaching reform path. It clarifies specific strategies for setting course objectives, designing teaching content, selecting teaching methods, and constructing evaluation systems, aiming to enhance the teaching quality and student learning outcomes of the "Current Affairs and Policies" course through scientific and reasonable reform.

Despite the systematic exploration of teaching reform for the "Current Affairs and Policies" course from the OBE perspective, further research is needed to evaluate the actual teaching effects and implement improvement

measures due to the limitations of the research methods. This study primarily employs literature and content analysis methods, lacking empirical research and case studies. Future research can verify and refine the proposed teaching reform strategies through field surveys and experimental studies.

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