

# Teaching Practice of Talent Training in the Context of New Liberal Arts Construction: Based on the Design of Blended Teaching Model

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**Abstract:** How can talent training be implemented and enforced in course teaching, the smallest and most pervasive unit of human education, within the context of the construction of the New Liberal Arts? This paper describes and evaluates a curriculum development program that emphasizes the development of adaptability. In the curriculum creation link, this program seeks to make clear the major nodes of reform backdrop, value orientation, cultivation goals, and teaching design. It is stated that a blended teaching model will be a key tool for facilitating a future-focused, realizable, and effective curriculum development reform that is centered on the development of adaptive competences. The direction of effort for the course teaching for particular courses is toward further enhancing and operationalizing the curriculum construction in conjunction with the nature and characteristics of the course and the implementation focus and implementation strategy of the CoI theoretical framework.

**Keywords:** Talent Training, New Liberal Arts Construction, Blended Learning.

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## 1. Introduction

The main focus of education is the development of talent training. The general secretary of the CPC, Xi Jinping, has made significant comments on the fundamental questions of what to develop, how to cultivate, and for whom to cultivate people ever since the 18th CPC National Congress. He has consistently underlined the value of talent nurturing. Since 2017, Chinese higher education has conducted top-down and government-led changes in all areas, pushing the development of new engineering, new medicine, new agriculture, and new liberal arts in order to promote the innovation of the talent cultivation paradigm.

The New Liberal Arts building is a significant undertaking that carries a lot of weight in the "Four New" construction. China released the Declaration on the New Liberal Arts in November 2020, emphasizing that talent training is the New Liberal Arts' primary goal (Wu Yan, 2021). The New Liberal Arts construction is focused on talent training, in particular, to cultivate a group of new generations who are familiar with, passionate about, and knowledgeable about China. They should also be able to communicate the Chinese story with authority and at a high level (Wu Yan, 2022).

However, talent training reform needs to be put into practice as well as encourage paradigm shift. How can teaching practice in course, which is the smallest and most fundamental unit of human education, be optimized to better serve the goal of talent development? This will be a crucial question in the construction of a New Liberal Arts in China.

## 2. Talent Training Objectives

The fast changing knowledge society has altered the value orientation of talent training objectives. In the past, formal education has emphasized the development of acquired conventional expertise on the traditional premise of "acquisition of knowledge - direct application." Conventional expertise, which is based on the pillars of past experience,

frequently does not adapt to the fast changing future situation. As a result, higher education that is focused on the future increasingly emphasizes the growth of adaptive competence (Wang, 2010), which enables students to apply their knowledge in new application situations.

### 2.1. Developing Adaptive Expertise

Based on a contrast between adaptive competence and conventional expertise, Conventional expertise is a fundamental competency that describes the procedural understanding of "how to do it," the capacity to act swiftly, efficiently, and automatically, and the ability to solve familiar problems efficiently. However, it is challenging to adapt naturally to novel situations. Conversely, adaptive expertise is a capability that develops with time. In addition to enabling understanding and insight into the mechanisms underlying the operation of procedural knowledge, it builds on procedural knowledge to develop conceptual knowledge of "why we do what we do," providing "a comprehensive ability to apply, change, and expand knowledge and skills to respond to new situations" (Wineburg, 1998). In the context of the construction of the New Liberal Arts, the objective of talent training is focused on the growth of adaptive expertise.

### 2.2. Promoting Knowledge Transfer

The encouragement of knowledge transfer is necessary for the growth of adaptive expertise. The phenomenon of knowledge transfer is crucial to the learning process. Knowledge transfer is the ability to apply knowledge learned in one context to another new context (Blandfoister et al., 2012: 51). By enabling the transfer of knowledge from one course to another, from one curriculum problem to another, from theory to practice, and from books to the field, this ability activates knowledge and broadens the learning process from training and accumulation in one context to application and innovation in other contexts.

Knowledge transfer strengthens initial learning. Both direct

and indirect applications of knowledge can result from initial learning. High-quality initial learning may be directly applied to specific application contexts in traditional societies where application contexts change slowly and seldom, reinforcing the conventional belief that the purpose of education is "knowledge acquisition - direct application." However, because application settings shift more frequently and

drastically in a knowledge society, initial learning is impossible to put into practice immediately and must instead be accomplished through knowledge transfer. Initial learning, problem-solving, and contextual application are the three crucial steps in knowledge transfer, which are accomplished by the following two critical steps: knowledge extraction and knowledge development (Figure 1).

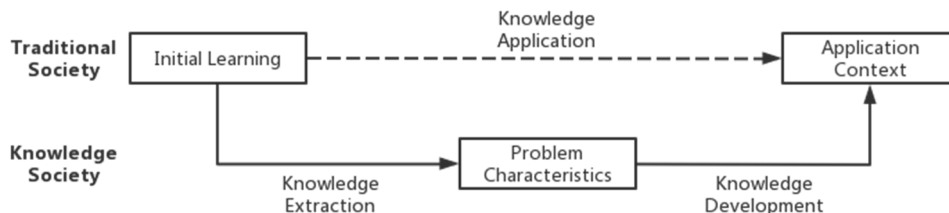


Figure 1. Mechanisms of Knowledge Transfer

### 3. Teaching Practice

Promoting professional optimization, concentrating on improving the quality of the curriculum, and bolstering model innovation are the three key initiatives for talent training in the New Liberal Arts construction (Wu Yan, 2021). Professional optimization is the fundamental component of talent training, teaching method has the central role, and model innovation is the most efficient method. Enhancing curriculum quality is the primary means of achieving talent training at the micro level of classroom training. The pedagogical design of curriculum development should be updated in line with the value orientation of developing adaptive expertise and the teaching aim of knowledge transfer. This essay makes the claim that curriculum development must be integrated into the blended learning paradigm and that instructional design must be revised in accordance with blended learning's theoretical underpinnings.

#### 3.1. Blended Learning

According to blending theory, innovation that blends old and new technology to get the best of both worlds is a continuum of innovation (Horn, Striker, 2015: 69). Blended learning (B-Learning) is an instructional paradigm that combines traditional classroom teaching (C-Learning) and contemporary online teaching, according to hybrid theory (E-Learning). It is described as an instructional strategy that uses the appropriate media technology to apply resources and activities that are suitable for the right learning environment at the right time, enabling the right students to develop the right competencies, and resulting in the best possible teaching

and learning outcomes (Li, Fengqing, 2016). Technology application, technology integration, and "Internet+" (Feng et al., 2018) are the three stages of evolution that this idea has gone through since it was first created in the late 1990s. With the emphasis shifting from highlighting the fundamental transformation and redesign of the teaching and learning model to emphasizing the important role of the technology model in teaching and learning (Yen & Lee, 2011).

#### 3.2. Implementation Strategies for Blended Learning

In order to assist the adoption of blended learning, Garrison developed the Community of Inquiry (CoI) model in 2000. This model offers an organizational framework for blended learning and aids teachers in defining the theoretical framework's implementation focus. The CoI framework offers an organizational framework for blended learning and aids educators in clarifying the theoretical framework's implementation focus, which contends that creating a community of inquiry model as a learning community—the realization of which depends on three essential components: cognitive presence, teaching presence, and social presence—is the key to implementing blended learning. Only when all three are at a high level can blended learning be implemented successfully, assisting in the development of knowledge, thinking, and ability from conventional expertise to adaptive expertise. These three important characteristics overlap with one another. Several stages or styles of implementation can be used to start raising the level of cognitive presence, teaching presence, and social presence. (Figure 2).

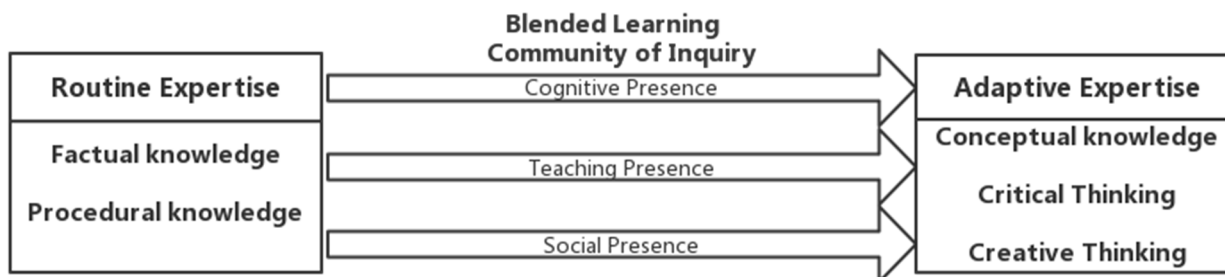


Figure 2. Implementation Strategies for Blended Learning

### 3.2.1. Cognitive Presence

This process is divided into four steps by the CoI framework (Garrison et al., 2001). Triggering Events is the initial step. The role of educators is to openly express learning challenges or tasks, detect problems and confusions in the world of experience, and initiate learning. Explore is the next stage. The student is asked to understand the nature of the problem, to thoroughly investigate the facts, and to respond to the problem's content through brainstorming and information sharing. Integration is step three. As a result, this phase necessitates active instructional presence to identify misconceptions, provide additional information for inquiry-based learning, and provide guidance and commentary in an effort to ensure ongoing cognitive development. The ideas that emerge from the exploration phase hold attributes that construct meaning. Resolution is the fourth stage. Learners complete a round of cognitive iteration and acquire practical knowledge by solving puzzles or issues through direct or indirect action to encourage knowledge application and progress.

### 3.2.2. Teaching Presence

Teaching presence is the method through which instructors help students create learning objectives, define learning directions, apply learning management, and create instructional meaning by arranging learning tasks, setting up teaching scenarios, and organizing teaching activities. Because instructional presence is the factor that teachers can most directly influence (Anderson et al., 2001), it serves as a key component in the implementation of blended teaching approaches (Feng et al., 2018). Three different sorts of activities can be used to provide teaching presence according to the CoI framework (Anderson et al., 2001). Design and organization are the first category of action. Before the session, teachers clearly and openly plan and prepare for the course content, instructional management, and learning expectations. The second category of activity is discourse facilitation. In order to help the student share responsibility for learning and to keep interest, motivation, and engagement in active learning, the educator takes on an active intervention role. Direct instruction makes up the third category of activities. In addition to serving as a facilitator, the teacher also acts as a content provider, carrying out the typical duties of a teacher, such as making presentations, offering feedback, presenting learning materials, and guiding instructional activities to concentrate on the expansion of knowledge.

### 3.2.3. Social Presence

The ability of students to display their socialization and affectivity in the learning community is the classical definition of social presence (Rourke et al., 1999). Three different categories of social presence are identified by the CoI framework. Affective Responses are the first category. Affective reactions are a defining feature of social presence (Rourke et al., 1999) and are pervasive, serving as both a hindrance to blended learning and a spark for the creation of learning communities (Cleveland-Innes & Campbell, 2012). Strategies to encourage emotional responses include: emotional expression, expressive humor, and self-expression. The second category is Interactive Responses. These interactions include intimacy, warmth, belonging, attractiveness, and unrestricted engagement in the learning community (IRs). Strategies to encourage interactive responses include being consistent around a particular topic,

quoting others, referring to others' perspectives, asking each other questions, expressing agreement, appreciation, and praise. These actions will improve participation and understanding in the learning community. Cohesive Responses constitute the third type. Using inclusive pronouns like "we" to refer to the community and boosting communication with greetings and salutations are some tactics that could be used to improve group cohesion in learning communities.

## 4. Curriculum Design

Based on the CoI model of the blended teaching model, online and offline blended teaching makes use of and draws inspiration from the blended teaching process design at home and abroad (Qiliang Zhang and Aichun Wang, 2014; Fengqing Li, 2016) to reshape the teaching design at the level of curriculum development and classroom teaching, respectively.

### 4.1. Curriculum Construction Level

Blended teaching can be broken down into three stages—at the level of curriculum construction: "early", "middle", and "late". The instructional design adopts a targeted and focused strategy, clarifies the task focus of the dynamic process of creating a learning community, and offers teaching scaffolds of various strengths and dynamics for three crucial elements: cognitive presence, teaching presence, and social presence. This is done while taking into account the learning characteristics and teaching needs of various stages (Table 1). The teaching presence has the most unique building requirements, with its building intensity necessary to gradually increase from low to high whereas the cognitive presence scaffold's building intensity is required to gradually diminish from high to low. In terms of building type, the scaffolding of "planning and design" was highlighted in the early stage of the implementation, and the use of "dialogue facilitation" was highlighted in the middle of the implementation to build teaching presence. The requirements for teaching presence were maintained at a high level throughout the implementation of blended learning and reached the highest level in the middle of the implementation. To avoid knowledge instillation, the scaffolding of "planning and design" was emphasized in the early stages of implementation, "facilitated discourse" in the middle stages, and "direct instruction" in the late stages.

**Table 1.** Curriculum Construction

Stage	Cognitive Presence	Teaching Presence	Social Presence
Early	LOW	MIDDLE	HIGH
Middle	MIDDLE	HIGH	LOW
Late	HIGH	MIDDLE	LOW

### 4.2. Course Teaching Level

When used to course of instruction, blended learning can be divided into three categories: "pre-class," "in class," and "post-class," as well as the use of Internet-based synchronous and asynchronous dual-channel learning (Wang Shuaiguo, 2017). Combining the teaching objectives of various classroom sessions of blended teaching with the teaching traits of dual-channel teaching can redefine the implementation design of course of instruction (Figure

3).Among them, the pre-class session is completed asynchronously through the online platform, which is a crucial step in preparing for offline teaching; the in-class session is completed synchronously through the offline teaching, which is a necessary extension of online teaching;

and the post-class session is completed through the dual-channel to assess, give feedback, and summarize the impact of online and offline teaching, in order to identify any gaps and begin a new round of instruction.

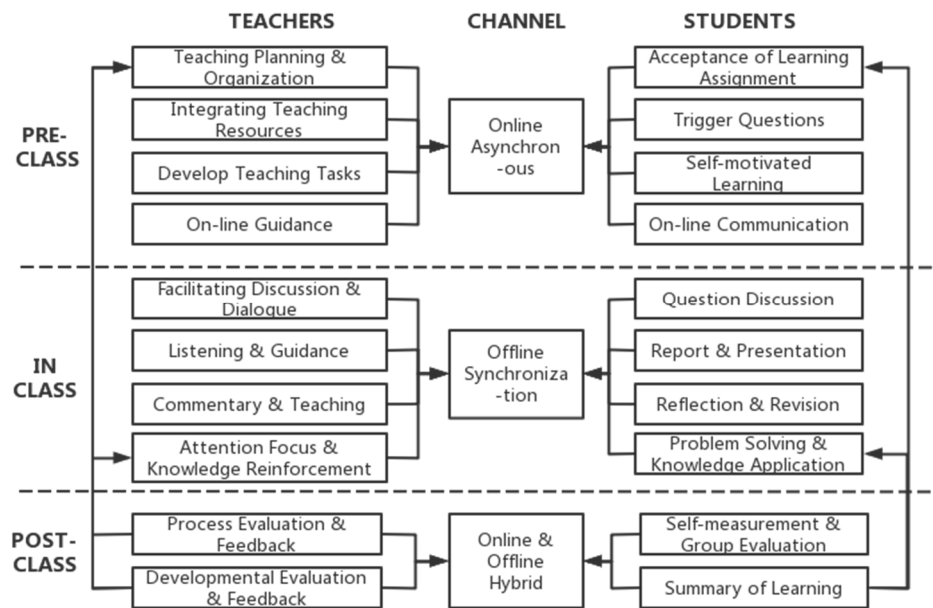


Figure 3. Teaching Practice

The pre-class session's objective is "teacher-led." Teachers assist students in becoming "active knowledge gainers" through careful planning and efficient organization. It is the responsibility of the students to develop effective study habits, actively build a knowledge base, and enhance their learning capacities. The in-class session aims to be "student-centered." Students use the "synchronization" channel to finish the creation of knowledge on important and challenging topics in a safe and encouraging teaching environment through in-depth seminars and other teaching activities. The post-class session's objective is to "concentrate on adaptive skills." In order to evaluate, provide feedback, and summarize the performance of blended teaching, the learning community between teachers and students and between students serves as a gauge of the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the classroom with a focus on student growth.

## 5. Conclusion

This paper offers the value orientation, cultivation goal, and instructional design of curriculum construction focused on cultivating adaptive competence in the context of the New Liberal Arts construction, and systematically addresses the fundamental question of how to cultivate people in curriculum teaching. The paper bases these proposals on the existing theoretical literature and empirical studies. This article promotes changing the talent training value orientation of curriculum development from conventional expertise to the cultivation of adaptive expertise, positioning the curriculum teaching's cultivation goal to transform and enhance students' adaptive abilities, and reshaping teaching design and implementation strategies in accordance with the CoI theoretical framework of blended teaching. In order to promote the adaptation of instructional design and implementation methodologies, adaptable competences should be developed as a focal point of talent training and

teaching practice, according to this study. The blended learning paradigm will be a crucial element in the reform process.

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