

# Research on The Improvement Path of College Counselors' Core Literacy in The New Era

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**Abstract:** The core literacy of counselors is to do a good job with students, and it is a necessary character and key ability to promote the career development of counselors. Improving the core literacy of counselors is of great significance. It is the fundamental requirement for foster character and civic virtue, and it is also the need to promote the professional development of counselors. It is also an important measure to strengthen and improve the ideological and political work of college students. To improve the core literacy of college counselors, we should start from improving the counselors' awareness of self-development, building a three-dimensional training system, optimizing the assessment and evaluation mechanism for counselors, and improving the incentive mechanism for counselors, so as to better implement the fundamental task of foster character and civic virtue.

**Keywords:** College Counselors, Ideological and Political Education, Core Literacy.

## 1. Introduction

The cultivation of core literacy has become the focus of educational theory and educational practice. Improving core literacy is an important measure to strengthen the construction of counselors, and it is an important guarantee for colleges and universities to improve the quality of education, the level and effectiveness of education. In today's society, with the development of economic globalization, social informatization, and cultural diversification, it has had a huge impact on the study and lifestyle of college students. Their value orientation and way of thinking have shown significant changes, bringing new problems and challenges to students' work. In order to adapt to the development of the situation, counselors must continuously improve their quality and ability, keep up with the pace of the times, implement the party's educational policy, better implement the fundamental task of foster character and civic virtue, and promote the healthy growth of students.

## 2. The Connotation of the Core Literacy of College Counselors in The New Era

Core literacy is an imported product. It is a new educational concept initiated by the World Economic Cooperation Organization to help young people adapt to future development. People's understanding of core literacy has gone through a gradual process from vagueness to clarity.

### 2.1. Concepts related to core literacy

Core literacy, also known as literacy in the 21st century, has become a hot research topic in the current education field since it was proposed by the WECO in 1997. Core literacy aims to explore the promotion of long-term sustainable development of individuals, occupations and society, and help people effectively cope with the challenges brought about by future economic and social development. In 2005, the WECO defined core literacy as "the ability to meet complex needs by

utilizing and mobilizing psychosocial resources (including skills and attitudes) in specific contexts". [1] UNESCO considers core literacy as "the literacy required for an individual to live the life he wants and for a good functioning society". [2] In China, based on China's national conditions and educational reality, Professor Lin Chongde of Beijing Normal University put forward that core literacy is "a necessary character and key ability that students should possess and can adapt to the needs of lifelong development and social development". [3] Core literacy is the "key" and "must-have" literacy, which plays a key role in the performance of the counselor's duties. The definition of core literacy is historical and regional, and the content and requirements of core literacy in different countries are different. Many countries have formulated a core literacy framework that suits their national conditions based on the actual situation of their own education. For example, the United States formulated and implemented the "21st Century Skills Framework" in 2002, which mainly includes three major areas: learning ability, critical thinking and problem-solving ability; France passed legislation in 2006 to clearly integrate core literacy into curriculum objectives; Canada proposed The core literacy covers four aspects: cognition, communication, personal and social, and method. In China, the 2016 "Core Competence for Chinese Students' Development" was released, which attracted widespread attention from all walks of life. It was proposed that the core competencies of students include three aspects and 18 basic points, including cultural foundation, independent development and social participation.

### 2.2. The connotation of the core literacy of counselors

The full name of the counselor is "political counselor", which is the main force in carrying out ideological and political work, and a professional who can carry out the work responsibilities of students. The work of counselors is special, political and epochal, and it is necessary to fully consider the development requirements of the times, the characteristics of

positions, and the laws that conform to the growth and development of contemporary college students. Ma Linhai (2016) pointed out that "the core literacy of a counselor is a necessary character and key ability that he should possess in the process of performing his job responsibilities and promote personal career development and students' all-round development". [4] Core literacy is a comprehensive literacy, it is a necessary condition and the most basic requirement for doing a good job of students, and it is a key factor for counselors to perform their duties and personal development. Core literacy are comprehensive, covering aspects such as knowledge, abilities and values. Due to the special status and work of counselors, the core qualities of counselors are also different.

**Political literacy.** The famous German philosopher Marx believed that political literacy is "a special quality that people carry out various spiritual and practical activities to achieve the fundamental interests of their class". [5] Politics is the most essential feature of ideological and political work, and counselors possessing a high degree of understanding of party spirit is a concentrated expression of doing well in ideological and political work. In different historical periods, although the work attributes and content of counselors are different, the political attributes that counselors must possess has never changed, just as Chinese President Xi Jinping's request for ideological and political teachers in the new era is to be "strong in politics", which is first manifested in firm belief. As the main backbone of ideological and political education for college students, counselors must strengthen their ideals and beliefs, and implement the educational policies and policies of the party and the country. Counselors should not only be a teacher, but also have a big mind and a big pattern. Counselors must stand firm in their political stance, firmly establish the lofty ideal of communism, always stay with the party and the people, guide students to learn and master Marxist theory, enhance students' political responsibility and political awareness, and help students establish correct values. To be strong in politics, it also requires strong political skills. Counselors should enhance their political awareness, improve their political standing, and develop strong political skills. In the political direction, they should hold high the banner of socialism with Chinese characteristics, support the leadership of the Communist Party of China, identify with a socialist country, use the political theory system recognized by the Communist Party of China to carry out ideological and political education for college students, help college students grow up healthily, and be a guide for students' ideas.

**Professional ethics.** Professional ethics is a necessary character for counselors, and it is a general term for the stable values, behavioral norms and moral qualities formed by counselors in the work of education management, it reflects the moral requirements of the society for the work of counselors, and regulates the relationship between teachers and between teachers and the collective. The professional ethics of counselors include several aspects, one is love and dedication, counselors must establish lofty professional ideals and be full of enthusiasm for education, love the work of counselors, be conscientious and dedicated in their work, and enhance their sense of mission and responsibility for educating people. Always take the training of talents for national rejuvenation as the original intention and mission of the work, devote myself to the work of students, and organically integrate the implementation of the task of foster character and civic virtue into daily education and services.

The second is the spirit of benevolence. Chinese President Xi Jinping (2014) pointed out in a conversation with representatives of teachers and students of Beijing Normal University, "Education is a career of 'benevolence and love for others', love is the soul of education, and there is no education without love. A good teacher should be a benevolent teacher, a person without love cannot be a good teacher." [6] The counselor should have a deep feeling and sincere love for the work of the students, and be kind and treat the students equally. Respect students' individuality, understand and tolerate students' shortcomings and deficiencies in the process of growth, regard students as their close friends, conduct sincere exchange of ideas with students, understand students' ideological dynamics, give students care in a timely manner, and actively help students solve practical problems and stimulate students' interest in learning. The third is to be a role model of teachers. Doing a good job in ideological and political work depends not only on the power of truth, but also on the charm of personality. Counselors must establish a noble moral sentiment and be a model for others. A qualified teacher is first of all a person who is qualified in terms of moral character, that is, "personality must be upright". A counselor should become a model and role model for students in dealing with others. They should not only teach well in the classroom, but also set an example in their daily life and work, and strive to become a guide for students to temper their character.

**Professional competence.** The work of a counselor is a specialized and professional job, which requires counselors to have high professional competence. One is to have strong educational and guiding ability. Counselors are not only ideological and political leaders, but also guides for students' professional learning, which requires counselors to have strong educational and guiding abilities. This will help the work of counselors, promote communication with students, grasp students' ideological dynamics in a timely manner, and provide timely help to students in difficulty; use theme class meetings, heart-to-heart conversations and other methods to carry out a variety of ideological education activities, guide students to establish a correct world outlook, outlook on life and values. The second is organizational management ability. Ideological and political work is an overall and systematic education project, which needs to gather the strength of the whole school to form a joint force of education. The counselor is the organizer and manager of the ideological and political work. According to the job responsibilities of the counselor, the counselor should lead class construction, select the best team leader, so as to unite guide the majority of students to actively participate in class affairs. In the management of daily affairs, the counselors organize the entrance education of freshmen and the employment guidance and service of graduates, and organize and carry out rich theme class meetings, theme speeches, theme education and other activities in conjunction with major festivals. To manage and serve students' academic and career planning well, and to respond to and resolve emergencies and various hidden risks in a timely manner, counselors are required to have strong organizational and management skills. The third is language ability. Education is an art, and excellent language expression ability helps the educational concept to penetrate into the minds of students and enlighten students' minds. Counselors work with college students, they must adhere to the student-centered approach in their work, be good at grasping students' psychological characteristics and ideological dynamics, and

be proficient in the art of language for education guidance, solving students' worries and problems, and make ideological and political education work on the hearts of students.

### **3. The Value of the Times for Enhance the Core Literacy of Counselors**

Improving the core literacy of counselors is an important way for the high-quality development of ideological and political education in colleges and universities, and it is also the key for colleges and universities to implement the fundamental task of foster character and civic virtue and to promote the professional development of counselors.

#### **3.1. Implement the fundamental requirements of foster character and civic virtue**

Chinese President Xi Jinping (2016) pointed out that "the ideological and political work of colleges and universities is related to the fundamental issue of what kind of people are cultivated in colleges and universities, how to cultivate them, and for whom to cultivate them. It is necessary to adhere to the central link of foster character and civic virtue." [7] To foster character and civic virtue is a concentrated expression of implementing the party's educational policy, and it is also the fundamental task of running a school and educating people in colleges and universities, that is, cultivating students to become talents with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physique, beauty and labor. This is the main point of student work. It is also an important assessment standard for evaluating the effectiveness of the counselor's work. In the implementation of the task of foster character and civic virtue, counselors play many roles and assume a variety of job responsibilities. They are not only organizers and implementers of ideological and political work, but also educators and guides for students' daily work. Vice Minister of Education of China Du Yubo (2016) proposed that "a group of good teachers can make a good school, and a good counselor can make a group of good students". [8] The quality and ability of counselors have a profound impact on the growth of college students. Political work helps students establish a correct world outlook, outlook on life and values; helps college students establish lofty career ideals and make career plans for college students; provides psychological counseling for college students, timely resolves obstacles encountered by college students on the way to growth, and helps college students grow into talents. Counselors should closely follow the fundamental tasks and job responsibilities of foster character and civic virtue, undertake the mission of teaching and educating people, continuously improve the awareness and level of foster character and civic virtue, and better serve students.

#### **3.2. The need for professional development**

Counselor work is a specialized profession that requires professional qualities and abilities. China has always attached great importance to the professional construction of counselors. The "Regulations on the Construction of Counselors in Ordinary Colleges and Universities" proposes to "effectively strengthen the professional construction of counselors in colleges and universities", and further clarifies the identity of counselors; "The Standards for Professional Competence of Counselors in Colleges and Universities" pointed out that "counselors should master systematic professional knowledge and professional skills", and clarified

the requirements for the professional construction of counselors. Under the background of the new era, all walks of life have put forward new requirements for the quality and ability of counselors. And facing new challenges and opportunities, counselors must continuously improve their core literacy in order to be competent for their duties. The professional growth of counselors needs to go through a process from immaturity to experts. A professional counselor team can effectively solve the problems such as unclear job responsibilities, low quality, low ability, unstable team, etc., as well as the counselor's rise from "externalized" knowledge to "internalized" self-improvement. Improving the core literacy of counselors is the direction of professional development of counselors, and it is also the only way to realize the transformation of counselors from experience-based to expert-based, and to promote the sustainable development of counselors. The professional construction of counselors includes the specialization of educational concepts, the specialization of knowledge systems, and the scientific organization and management. It requires high ideological quality, strong professional ability, and excellent moral quality. These aspects are the embodiment of core literacy.

#### **3.3. Important measures to strengthen and improve ideological and political work**

Doing a good job in ideological and political work is an extremely important task. The party and the state have always attached great importance to ideological and political work, and placed it in an important position related to the development of the party and the country. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council issued the document "Opinions on Strengthening and Improving Ideological and Political Work in the New Era", proposing that "strengthening and improving ideological and political work is related to the future and destiny of the party, the long-term stability of the country, and the cohesion and centripetal force of the nation." [9] Ideological and political work is a regular and basic work, and it is the ideological guarantee for the smooth progress and implementation of various work in colleges and universities. Under the new situation, the international and domestic environment is evolving at an accelerated pace, and profound changes have taken place. From the perspective of the international environment, foreign hostile forces are constantly infiltrating university campuses by using cultural trends and universal values to snatch and occupy the ideas of the younger generation. The struggle in the ideological field of colleges and universities has become increasingly complex and severe. Some decadent lifestyles and values have a huge impact on the ideals and beliefs of college students, and some students have the tendency to shake political ideals, distort value orientation, and have a weak sense of responsibility. From the perspective of the domestic situation, with the continuous deepening and development of China's reform and opening up, the production and lifestyle of society are more diversified. The expansion and merger of colleges and universities have brought new changes and challenges to student management. The students' self-awareness and self-reliance, and the expectation of becoming a talent are also getting stronger and stronger. The development and changes of the situation have had a profound impact on the ideological and political education in colleges and universities, and have put forward higher requirements for the quality of counselors. Improving the core quality of counselors has become an urgent and

important task to strengthen and improve ideological and political education.

#### **4. Paths to Improve the Core Literacy of Counselors**

Improving the core literacy of counselors is a systematic, long-term and gradual process. It is not only necessary to enhance counselors' awareness of self-development, but also to establish and improve corresponding systems and mechanisms to jointly promote the sustainable development of college counselors.

##### **4.1. Enhance counselor's awareness of self-development**

To improve the core quality of counselors, the key is to improve the counselors' awareness of foster character and civic virtue, and strengthen the main responsibility of educating people. The first is to raise awareness and responsibility for educating people. Counselors should keep in mind the historical mission of cultivating the soul of college students, closely follow the proposition of "what kind of people to cultivate and how to cultivate them", strengthen the professional ideals, enhance the sense of professional identity, and fully understand and familiarize themselves with the responsibilities of counselors and work requirements, strengthen problem awareness, goal awareness and service awareness, clarify work ideas, make work plans and implement them in place. The second is to establish the concept of lifelong learning. With the development and progress of the times, the background of the times faced by students' work is also evolving, and the work objects, work environment, goals and tasks and work requirements have undergone significant changes. The methods of ideological and political work must also keep pace with the times. In the face of new problems and new situations, counselors should establish the concept of lifelong learning, and through continuous learning and practice, timely update and develop their own knowledge structure and work ability to meet the new requirements of the society for counselors.

##### **4.2. Build a three-dimensional training system**

As an ideological and political educator, a counselor must first understand the truth before he can believe and preach. Improving the core literacy of counselors is a gradual process that requires continuous training and reinforcement. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the core literacy training of counselors, it is necessary to build a hierarchical and diverse training system that adapts to the high-quality development of colleges and the law of counselor growth. First of all, in terms of training form and level, the training plan should be incorporated into the national, provincial, university and other training plans. Diversified training institutions can be used, and according to the focus of work tasks at different development stages, pre-employment, induction and on-the-job training can be carried out at different levels, and attention should be paid to the connection and supplementation between different levels. In terms of training content, it is necessary to closely follow the requirements of foster character and civic virtue, the work responsibilities and work standards of counselors, focus on the new situation, new problems, hot spots, difficulties, etc. faced by students' work, and set up scientific and reasonable training content, covering ideological and political quality, knowledge ability quality,

psychological quality and so on. In terms of training methods, a variety of training methods are adopted, focusing on the combination of theory and practice, adopting teaching methods such as heuristics, situational simulation, and practical teaching, and through expert lectures, academic exchanges, visits and other activities to enhance the interesting of training, analyze and practice the practical problems encountered in the work to improve the attractiveness and effect of training. Establish vocational training files for counselors, so that colleges and universities can carry out more valuable training for counselors at different levels and stages.

##### **4.3. Improve the core quality-oriented evaluation system of counselors**

Evaluation has a guiding role. The evaluation of counselors is related to the development of students' work and is an important part of strengthening the construction of the counselor team. It plays a "baton" role in the improvement of the quality of counselors, include setting evaluation method, evaluation object and other aspects. Establishing a scientific and reasonable evaluation system can guide, supervise and motivate the team of counselors. First of all, we must formulate reasonable evaluation indicators. The assessment indicators are mainly set based on the responsibilities and tasks of the counselors, covering all aspects of the counselors' work, including morality, ability, diligence, performance, integrity, etc. The morality is placed first in the assessment and evaluation indicators. Secondly, it is necessary to establish an evaluation method to improve the core literacy orientation of counselors. Evaluation methods should take into account the principles of fairness and impartiality. On the subject of evaluation, self-evaluation and organizational evaluation should be combined, including counselor self-evaluation, student evaluation, leader evaluation, and colleague evaluation, to evaluate the work of counselors from different perspectives and groups. At the evaluation level, three different levels of assessment standards, primary, intermediate and advanced, should be established based on the "Professional Competence Standards for Counselors in Colleges and Universities". The third is using a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, through interviews, questionnaires and other methods to understand and evaluate the effectiveness of the counselor's work. The fourth is to rationally use the evaluation results. Rational use of evaluation results is an important measure for the evaluation system to be scientific and fair. Timely feedback of evaluation results to counselors so that they can discover deficiencies in their work in time, encourage them to self-reflect and summarize, and improve their work in a timely manner. At the school level, assessment is an important part of counselors' awards and promotions. Those who have made outstanding achievements in their work should be recognized and rewarded. Those who are not serious and responsible for their work should be criticized and educated in a timely manner, which will help Promote the quality of counselors.

##### **4.4. Improve the incentive mechanism for counselors**

Incentive has the function of spur, encouragement and guidance, and scientific and reasonable incentive means can mobilize people's enthusiasm and initiative. First of all, the incentive for college counselors should be a combination of

material incentives and spiritual incentives, with emphasis on spiritual incentives. According to the Expectation Motivation Theory, people expect to receive material or spiritual rewards after achieving work performance. Material rewards are also called external incentives, including returns in terms of salary, promotion, status, etc., and external incentives can satisfy people's material pursuits; while spiritual incentives are internal incentives, including a sense of achievement, self-realization, etc., and internal incentives can satisfy spiritual needs. Colleges and universities should establish and improve the incentive mechanism for counselors, establish scientific and reasonable incentive standards and means, create a positive and healthy competitive atmosphere, and continuously promote the healthy development of the counselor team. The second is a combination of rewards and punishments, with rewards as the mainstay. Rewards and punishments are evaluation methods that strengthen stimulation, and can play a role in spurring and guiding the evaluator. Among them, the reward is called positive reinforcement. In the evaluation process, if the person being evaluated has made the behavior or performance expected by the organization and society, it should be praised, strengthened and promoted; on the contrary, if the person being evaluated has made an organization acts prohibited by organization and society should be punished and corrected. Colleges and universities should establish assessment management methods corresponding to the powers and responsibilities of counselors, and give affirmations and rewards to counselors who are conscientious and responsible in their work and have achieved outstanding results; Severe criticism and punishment should be given to counselors who are irresponsible in their work and thus have adverse effects, and are required to make corrections in a timely manner. Counselors who have serious consequences due to work mistakes should be disqualified as counselors.

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