

# Research on the Dilemmas and Coping Strategies of Newly-Employed Counselors in Class Management from Junior College to Undergraduate Level

Xiao Liu<sup>1, \*</sup>, Xiaoju Wu<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> College of Geosciences, Southwest Petroleum University, Chengdu, China

<sup>2</sup> College of Geosciences, Southwest Petroleum University, Chengdu, China

\*Corresponding Author: Xiao Liu

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**Abstract:** Counselors, as an important force in college students' ideological and political education and daily management, play a crucial role in colleges and universities at different levels. This paper aims to explore the dilemmas faced by newly-employed counselors who transfer from junior colleges to undergraduate institutions during the process of class management and propose corresponding coping strategies. Through interviews and observations of newly-employed counselors, problems in aspects such as role transformation, student's characteristics, and work pressure were analyzed. Combined with the actual situation, coping measures such as strengthening learning and training, adjusting work methods, and enhancing personal qualities were put forward to improve the work ability and class management effectiveness of newly-employed counselors.

**Keywords:** Newly-employed Counselors; Dilemmas in Class Management; Coping Strategies; Capacity to Work.

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## 1. Introduction

With the continuous development of higher education, counselors are playing an increasingly important role in college students' ideological and political education and daily management<sup>[1]</sup>. Considering various factors such as personal career development planning, the stability of the establishment of public institutions, and the comprehensive quality of students, more and more counselors are switching from junior colleges or private institutions to public undergraduate universities. For newly-employed counselors who transfer from junior colleges to undergraduate institutions, they face with different working environments and student groups, and may encounter some difficulties during the process of class management. Therefore, it is of great practical significance to study the dilemmas of newly-employed counselors in class management and propose coping strategies.

## 2. Dilemmas of Newly-employed Counselors in Class Management

### 2.1. Difficulty in Role Transformation

From junior colleges to "Double First-Class", "211", or "985" undergraduate universities, the working environment and requirements have changed significantly. Newly-employed counselors need to transform from being counselors for junior college students to counselors for undergraduate students in undergraduate institutions, and both their role positioning and work focus need to be adjusted. Junior college counselors are required to possess solid theoretical knowledge of ideological and political education, as well as strong organizational management and communication coordination abilities. They should be able to effectively manage classes, organize activities, and coordinate the relationships among various departments in the school. Since junior college education emphasizes practical teaching, counselors also need to understand the vocational

skill requirements of relevant majors to better guide students' internship training and employment work. On the other hand, undergraduate counselors are required to possess high ideological and political qualities and academic levels. Counselors should not only master solid theoretical knowledge of ideological and political education but also understand the forefront trends of domestic and international academics, be able to provide academic guidance and research support to students. At the same time, they need to possess strong innovation and research abilities, be able to carry out innovative research on ideological and political education in combination with the actual situation of the school<sup>[2]</sup>, and provide theoretical support and practical experience for the school's ideological and political education work.

During this process, difficulties in role transformation may occur, making it hard to adapt to the new work requirements.

### 2.2. Different Student Characteristics

There are differences between undergraduate students and junior college students in terms of learning and self-management abilities, psychological states and self-awareness abilities, and practical and career planning abilities. Newly-employed counselors need to promptly compare and master the characteristics of students from both junior colleges and undergraduate institutions to better carry out ideological and political education and daily management work.

#### 2.2.1. Learning and Self-Management Abilities

The learning foundation of junior college students is relatively weak, which may lead to certain deficiencies in their knowledge reserves, learning methods, and disciplinary foundations. Overall, their abilities in autonomous learning, summarizing and conclusion, logical thinking, and self-management are relatively lacking, although individual differences are obvious. Some junior college students show relatively strong abilities in practical operation-related learning, such as being able to quickly master practical skills

in vocational skill training, internship practice, and other links. In contrast, undergraduate students have accumulated rich knowledge almost in the middle school stage, possess good learning habits and solid disciplinary foundations. They have a relatively in-depth understanding of the knowledge system of basic disciplines, can quickly master new knowledge, and lay a solid foundation for in-depth learning of professional courses. They possess strong autonomous learning, independent thinking, and innovation abilities. They can actively explore the forefront knowledge of disciplines, have in-depth analysis and understanding of problems, and are good at using various learning methods to improve learning efficiency.

### **2.2.2. Psychological States and Self-Awareness Abilities**

Junior college students are easily influenced by external evaluations. Due to the relatively low social recognition of junior college education, junior college students may be subject to some external prejudices and doubts, which may easily have an impact on their psychology, leading to some students having inferiority complexes. In terms of self-awareness, they may doubt their own abilities and values. Despite facing some challenges, many junior college students have a strong sense of self-improvement, hoping to improve their comprehensive quality and competitiveness through hard work and practice, and change the external views on them. On the other hand, the competition among undergraduate students is relatively fierce, with high competitive pressures existing in learning, scientific research, and social activities. This competitive environment may lead to some students having emotions such as anxiety and tension, but it also prompts them to continuously strive to improve themselves. In an excellent learning environment and academic atmosphere, undergraduate students can better recognize their own advantages and disadvantages, have a relatively accurate assessment of their own abilities and values, are full of confidence in their future development, and can also maintain a humble attitude, continuously learning and progressing.

### **2.2.3. Practical and Career Planning Abilities**

Junior college students have relatively strong practical abilities and clear career orientations. The learning motivation of many junior college students is mainly to acquire a particular skill so that they can successfully enter the workplace after graduation. Since junior college education focuses on cultivating students' practical skills, junior college students have certain advantages in practical ability, being able to quickly adapt to the requirements of work positions. Junior college students are usually more active, enthusiastic about participating in various club activities, social practices, and part-time jobs, hoping to exercise their social abilities and comprehensive qualities through these activities. In terms of social interaction, they pay more attention to the establishment and maintenance of interpersonal relationships, possess strong communication abilities and team cooperation spirits. However, some junior college students do not have a clear enough plan for the future, lacking long-term learning goals and career development plans. In contrast, undergraduate students have outstanding research and practical abilities. Undergraduate institutions place emphasis on scientific research training and innovation ability cultivation, and students have more opportunities to participate in scientific research projects, academic competitions, and other activities. Therefore, they have relatively high abilities in experimental operation, data

analysis, and writing of scientific research papers, being able to combine theoretical knowledge with practice and carry out in-depth research work. By participating in some high-level academic and professional activities, students can meet more excellent classmates and teachers, expand their social circles, which is of great help to their personal academic development and career planning. Their career goals are clear and long-term, whether they choose to pursue further studies, engage in scientific research work, or enter enterprises, etc., they can make preparations in advance and strive for them.

## **2.3. High Work Pressure**

Counselor work involves nine aspects such as students' ideological and political education and value guidance, Party, league and class construction, learning atmosphere construction, daily affairs management of students, mental health and counseling, network ideological and political education, campus crisis event response, career planning and employment and entrepreneurship guidance, and theoretical and practical research<sup>[3]</sup>. The work tasks are heavy. For newly-employed counselors in undergraduate universities, compared with junior colleges, they may manage a larger number of students, cover a wider range of majors, and conduct deeper academic research. Thus, the complexity and workload of handling various student problems have significantly increased. At the same time, the requirements for counselors' professional qualities have been greatly increased. The overall academic atmosphere in undergraduate universities is strong. Compared with other professional teachers, counselors may be relatively weak in academics. However, in such an environment, in order to better communicate and interact with students, provide academic guidance, and obtain opportunities for their own career development, counselors also need to continuously improve their academic levels, such as carrying out relevant topic research, publishing academic papers, etc. This is a considerable pressure for counselors who may have insufficient academic accumulation transferred from junior colleges. The campus life rhythm in undergraduate universities may be faster, with various academic lectures, competitions, and club activities arranged very compactly. For counselors who have just transferred from junior colleges, they may not be able to keep up with the rhythm for a while. Therefore, adapting to such a fast campus life rhythm is also a challenge. With the improvement of the overall work requirements, newly-employed counselors need to continuously improve their work abilities and work levels, which also invisibly increases their work pressure.

## **3. Coping Strategies**

### **3.1. Strengthening Learning and Training**

#### **3.1.1. Clarifying Job Responsibilities and Positioning**

On the one hand, newly-employed counselors should actively participate in the new counselor induction training organized by the school, and seriously study the courses specifically targeting job role positioning through case analysis, simulation exercises, etc., to deepen the understanding of job responsibilities and clarify the specific tasks in aspects such as students' ideological guidance, academic guidance, and life care. On the other hand, newly-employed counselors should thoroughly study the job description of counselors in undergraduate institutions to clearly understand the various work responsibilities,

requirements, and role positioning in the student cultivation system. They need to have sufficient communication and exchange with colleagues and superior leaders, consult about the grasp of key job responsibilities and critical tasks, and ensure an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the role of counselors from the perspective of great ideology and politics<sup>[4]</sup>.

### **3.1.2. Establishing a Plan for Career Development**

According to the characteristics of the current unit (undergraduate institution) and one's own advantages, newly-employed counselors should formulate short-term and long-term career development plans. The short-term plan can focus on familiarizing with the work process, mastering student situations, and establishing good cooperative relationships with colleagues; the long-term plan can revolve around enhancing professional qualities, expanding career promotion channels, and carrying out characteristic student work projects. At the same time, newly-employed counselors should regularly evaluate and adjust the career development plan, combine the actual work situation and the development needs of the school, and timely correct the content of the plan to ensure its operability and foresight, thereby promoting the smooth completion of the role transformation from junior college to undergraduate counselor.

## **3.2. Adjusting Work Methods**

### **3.2.1. Deeply Understanding the Student Group**

On the one hand, newly-employed counselors should carefully analyze the relevant materials of the newly taken-over students to initially master the students' entrance foundation, distribution of places of origin, "difficult" students, etc. In the shortest time, newly-employed counselors should have heart-to-heart talks with students one by one to understand their hobbies, learning goals, family backgrounds, and other personalized information, and establish detailed student information files so that targeted work can be accurately carried out in subsequent work. On the other hand, newly-employed counselors should actively participate in various activities of students, such as theme class meetings, club activities, academic lectures, etc. They should observe the performance of students on the spot, understand their behavior patterns, thinking characteristics, and team cooperation abilities, and deeply recognize the differences between undergraduate students and junior college students from multiple aspects to lay the foundation for better adapting to student characteristics.

### **3.2.2. Adjusting Work Methods and Approaches**

Given the relatively strong autonomous learning and independent thinking abilities of undergraduate students, in academic guidance, it is necessary to change from the more supervisory guidance in junior college to inspiring guidance. For example, newly-employed counselors can provide more learning resource recommendations, guide students to independently explore professional knowledge, and stimulate students' learning interest and innovation thinking by organizing study groups and conducting academic discussions. Especially in ideological and political education, in view of the characteristics of undergraduate students who have higher requirements for information acquisition and more active thinking, adopt diversified and innovative educational methods. For example, combine current hot social issues and academic forefront trends to carry out theme class meetings, use new media platforms to push in-depth

ideological and political content, and organize students to have online and offline ideological and political discussions to meet the higher requirements of undergraduate students for ideological and political education.

## **3.3. Enhancing Personal Qualities**

### **3.3.1. Improving Professional Qualities**

Newly-employed counselors should utilize the rich academic resources of undergraduate institutions, multi-level, multi-form, and pragmatic focus on the main responsibility of counselors<sup>[5]</sup>, and actively participate in various academic lectures and training courses related to counselor work, such as student mental health education, career planning guidance for college students, and labor education, to continuously enrich their own professional knowledge system and fundamentally relieve the work pressure caused by insufficient professional qualities.

### **3.3.2. Optimizing Work Process and Time Management**

Newly-employed counselors should sort out daily work, formulate a detailed work flow chart, clearly define the sequence, time nodes, and responsible persons of each work to avoid chaos and repetitive work in work. They should learn and apply time management techniques, such as the Pomodoro Technique and the Four Quadrants Rule, to reasonably allocate work time, and ensure that important and urgent work is processed first. At the same time, it can be able to take into account the development of other work, improve work efficiency, and reduce the overall work pressure.

### **3.3.3. Establishing Supporting and Cooperating Relations**

On the one hand, establish good cooperative relationships with colleagues. When encountering difficulties, newly-employed counselors should actively ask experienced colleagues for advice, share work experiences and techniques, and jointly solve the difficult problems in student management work. For example, when dealing with student psychological problems, newly-employed counselors should ask the teachers in the school mental health center for professional opinions, or discuss coping strategies with other counselors. At the same time, newly-employed counselors should pay attention to their own mental health, maintaining a positive and optimistic attitude to better cope with work pressure. On the other hand, they need to actively participate in the activities of the counselor team in the school, integrate into the team atmosphere, and obtain emotional support and career development suggestions in the team. At the same time, they can establish close connections with student cadres, give full play to the assisting role of student cadres, and jointly do a good job in student management work to reduce their own work pressure.

## **4. Summary**

In summary, there are significant differences between junior colleges and undergraduate institutions in terms of school-running positioning, student characteristics, and educational resources, which also make junior college counselors face many differences in work content, work requirements, and career development after entering undergraduate institutions. Junior college counselors need to pay more attention to the cultivation of students' vocational skills and employment guidance, and possess strong organizational management and communication coordination abilities; undergraduate counselors need to pay more attention

to students' academic research and career development, and possess high ideological and political qualities and academic levels. Then, newly-employed counselors who transfer from junior colleges to undergraduate institutions face some difficulties during the process of class management, such as difficulty in role transformation, different student characteristics, and high work pressure. In order to improve the work ability and class management effectiveness of newly-employed counselors, coping measures such as strengthening learning and training, adjusting work methods, and enhancing personal qualities are proposed. Newly-employed counselors can make greater contributions to the growth and development of students and themselves by implementing these coping measures and actively adapting to the new working environment and requirements.

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