

# The Optimization of Curriculum Teaching in Tourism Management Specialty under the Background of New Liberal Arts in the Local Finance and Economics University

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## Abstract

The tourism management major has obvious interdisciplinary and composite characteristics. The traditional theoretical teaching based classroom teaching model is not sensitive to new tourism formats and does not match the talent demand that supports the high-quality development of the tourism industry. Promote the reform of undergraduate courses in tourism management majors and innovate the teaching philosophy of tourism management classrooms in accordance with the new liberal arts concept and requirements is an important path to cultivate high-quality tourism talents. This article explores the requirements for the construction of undergraduate courses in tourism management under the new liberal arts construction, explores the problems and causes of undergraduate course teaching in tourism management, and proposes optimization strategies for the teaching of tourism management courses in local finance and economics universities.

## Keywords

New Liberal Arts; Tourism Management Specialty; Curriculum Reform.

## 1. Introduction

China has become the country with the largest scale of tourism management majors in the world. The tourism industry has been constantly criticized for the mismatch and imbalance in the supply and demand of tourism talents, especially in undergraduate tourism talent training. The fundamental reason for this phenomenon is that the current tourism education, especially the talent cultivation mode of higher education, basically follows the traditional teaching mode and cannot adapt well to the rapid development needs of modern tourism industry. In the new era, high-quality development has become the theme of tourism development. Further improving the quality of tourism education and cultivating industry elites who can adapt to high-quality tourism development are important missions that higher education tourism educators should undertake. The construction of new liberal arts is a new requirement for the development of philosophy and social sciences with Chinese characteristics in the new era, which promotes interdisciplinary and deep integration, and is an important strategic measure to improve the quality of tourism higher education.

The cultivation of tourism management professionals under the construction of new liberal arts emphasizes the consolidation of basic subject education that relies on tourism management, especially emphasizing classroom education on economic management knowledge. In order to adapt to the new situation and requirements of the industrial revolution brought about by the new generation of information technology and the economic and social development changes it has triggered, inspired by the construction of the "New Engineering" in education and guided by the goal of modernizing higher education, Anhui University of Finance and Economics

proposed the implementation of the "New Management" construction project as a development strategy in early 2018, comprehensively implementing comprehensive reforms, focusing on the goal of building a high-level university with local characteristics, and accelerating the realization of connotation development. The curriculum system is a key element that determines the characteristics of the teaching profession and the genes of talent cultivation. Among them, the reform of curriculum teaching mode is the foundation and core of talent cultivation mode reform, a necessary way to achieve new goals in talent cultivation, the first and most important step in building a new management project. On the basis of interpreting the requirements for the construction of undergraduate courses in tourism management majors under the background of new liberal arts, this article explores the problems in the teaching of undergraduate courses in tourism management majors in local finance and economics universities through a questionnaire survey, and proposes optimization strategies for the teaching of tourism management majors, in order to provide a basis for deepening the reform of undergraduate courses in tourism management majors and improving the quality of tourism talent cultivation.

## **2. Requirements for the Construction of Undergraduate Courses in Tourism Management Majors in the New Liberal Arts**

### **2.1. Guided by New Concepts in Curriculum Construction**

The construction of undergraduate courses in tourism management majors under the background of new liberal arts should break through traditional disciplinary thinking and talent cultivation models, adhere to the concept of people-oriented (student-centered), moral education, effectiveness oriented, and continuous improvement, comprehensively promote the "four regressions", vigorously promote the reform and innovation of undergraduate courses in tourism management majors with innovative development thinking, collaborative training mechanism, green education content, open and inclusive pattern, and shared teaching function, transform and improve old courses, develop and construct new courses, continuously optimize the curriculum system, create a batch of tourism "golden courses", and comprehensively improve the ability and quality of tourism talent cultivation.

### **2.2. Guided by New Demands for Curriculum Construction**

In the era of constantly changing and developing new strategies, new economies, new cultures, new infrastructure, new technologies, new media, new formats, and new patterns, traditional tourism education is no longer able to adapt to the new development requirements. Curriculum construction must accurately grasp the characteristics of the new era, guided by national strategies and social and industry needs, combined with the rise of mass (moderately prosperous) tourism, ecological civilization construction, cultural prosperity and development, information technology empowerment, cultural tourism integration, upgrading of comprehensive tourism, optimization of public services, rise of leisure vacation, poverty alleviation and wealth creation through tourism, and high-quality development of tourism industry characteristics and talent needs. It is necessary to construct undergraduate courses in tourism management with new liberal arts characteristics that are conducive to students' learning and development, and to cultivate and provide supportive and leading composite excellent talents for the industry.

### **2.3. Taking New Quality as the Main Line of Curriculum Construction**

The construction of new liberal arts must take high-quality development as the main line, and make efforts to enhance the professional connotation and talent cultivation quality, continuously improving students' ideological depth, cognitive level, and comprehensive ability. We should effectively promote the "quality revolution" of undergraduate courses in tourism

management, create first-class undergraduate courses, establish a high-level talent training system and teaching assessment and evaluation system, and truly achieve the implementation of the "Implementation Opinions on the Construction of First Class Undergraduate Courses" proposed by the Ministry of Education with new training objectives, new course (textbook) content, new teaching methods, new management measures, and new evaluation systems, to make the courses better, teachers stronger, students busier, management stricter, and results more effective.

#### **2.4. Taking New Culture as the Connotation of Curriculum Construction**

The construction of new liberal arts requires highlighting the characteristics of "culture", enriching educational connotations with culture, and promoting changes in educational content. The curriculum reform and construction should break through the limitations of traditional tourism management majors, organically combine tourism science (curriculum) with humanities and social sciences (curriculum), cultural education, and tourism education. While strengthening the subjectivity education of Chinese culture, it should further expand its international perspective, integrate new cultural ideas, content, and methods into the tourism curriculum and talent cultivation system, attach importance to the cultivation of students' cultural confidence, humanistic spirit, patriotism, cultural knowledge, cultural inheritance, and innovation ability, and cultivate new cultural and tourism talents with high cultural literacy and strong professional abilities.

#### **2.5. Using New Integration as a Means of Curriculum Construction**

The construction of new liberal arts has distinct comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and integrated characteristics. We should be based on the development characteristics and inherent needs of tourism science, adhere to the curriculum structure of integrating science and humanities, effectively promote the organic integration of tourism management science (curriculum) with natural and humanities social sciences (curriculum), and the intersection and integration of tourism science with the new round of technological and industrial transformation, to build an inclusive tourism classroom. Fully utilize modern information technology, strengthen tourism informatization and smart tourism curriculum construction, use new technology to promote the upgrading of tourism management majors, and promote the "hardening" of tourism professional technology and the improvement of talent innovation ability.

### **3. Analysis of Problems in Teaching Tourism Management Courses**

Based on relevant documents from the Ministry of Education and existing research literature, this article focuses on the theme of teaching reform and the construction of "first-class courses" for undergraduate courses in tourism management majors. It designs content covering the problems existing in the teaching of undergraduate courses in tourism management majors, the causes of these problems, the optimization of teaching content and curriculum system, and a total of 18 items. And in January 2023, pre research and expert interviews were conducted at universities such as Anhui University of Finance and Economics. Based on the research results, the questionnaire was optimized and designed to form a formal questionnaire.

#### **3.1. Sorting and Analysis of Existing Problems**

Among the 8 items involved in the questionnaire, the average degree of agreement for 4 items is greater than 0, which can be considered as the main problem in the teaching of undergraduate courses in tourism management: (1) The curriculum system is not optimal and detached from the actual industry. (2) There are too many theoretical courses and too few courses for thinking training and practical experience. (3) The course lacks difficulty and weak

ability development. (4) The course content is outdated and some parts are repetitive. And for the other four issues: the teaching staff is not strong enough, and teaching is not attentive enough; Loose teaching organization and lax teaching management; Poor learning experience and poor teaching effectiveness; Insufficient teaching resources, poor teaching conditions, and relatively low recognition.

### **3.2. Sort out and Analyze the Reasons behind the Problem**

A survey on the causes of the problems in the construction of undergraduate courses in tourism management involves 10 items, of which 8 items have a degree of agreement greater than 0, reflecting the problems in the construction of undergraduate courses in tourism management. The main reasons for this are: (1) Insufficient emphasis on undergraduate teaching (emphasis on research over education), and a weakened awareness of the quality of talent cultivation. (2) Employment and majors are not aligned, and curriculum design is detached from social and industry needs. (3) Education reform is merely a formality or deviates from direction, failing to focus on student learning and development. (4) Outdated textbooks, unscientific curriculum design, and lack of practical value. (5) The classroom is dull, the teaching methods are monotonous, and students' participation is insufficient, which cannot stimulate their interest in learning. (6) The teaching supervision management and evaluation system is not perfect, and the teaching incentive mechanism is not sound. (7) Students have weak learning motivation, study too easily, and lack energy investment. (8) Insufficient investment in teaching funds and resources. However, the recognition of the other two items (difficulty in meeting the needs of teaching staff, weak teaching and training, insufficient teacher personality charm and teaching investment; neglect of students' ideological education and moral cultivation) is relatively low.

The results of the full sample analysis indicate that the main reasons for the problems in curriculum teaching are that "employment and majors are not aligned, and curriculum design is detached from social and industry needs" and "education reform is merely a formality or deviates from direction, failing to focus on student learning and development". In the understanding of the causes of problems, there is the greatest disagreement on teacher factors, and the smallest disagreement on the failure of educational reform to focus on students; Students have the greatest cognitive differences regarding their own learning attitude and level of effort, and the smallest cognitive differences regarding ideological education and moral cultivation factors; However, teachers have the greatest cognitive differences regarding the factors of ideological education and moral cultivation, and the smallest cognitive differences regarding the failure of educational reform to focus on students.

## **4. Optimization Path of Tourism Management Course Teaching under the New Humanities**

### **4.1. Revise the Talent Development Plan**

In order to scientifically and reasonably set the training objectives for tourism management professionals, optimize and improve the talent training plan, further improve the quality and level of applied talent training in tourism management, better meet the needs of new liberal arts construction, strengthen resonance and direction with local development, and adapt to the social demand for tourism management talents based on the school's educational positioning and national standards for teaching quality of tourism management majors, the talent training plan will be adjusted regularly. In the 2020-2023 version of the training plan for this major, the goal is to cultivate high-level applied specialized talents with solid foundations, broad knowledge, strong comprehensive abilities, good professional qualities, innovative spirit, entrepreneurial awareness, and adaptability to the needs of economic and social development. Six course modules are set up, including ideological and political theory and practice, general

education, discipline foundation, professional theory and practice, innovation and entrepreneurship and practical training, and classified education. Consolidate the foundation courses of disciplines and core courses of majors; Emphasize interdisciplinary and integrated approaches; Highlight features and offer courses on Python language, big data analysis and applications, and specialized lectures.

#### **4.2. Optimize the Curriculum System around the Needs of New Liberal Arts Disciplines**

Focusing closely on the needs of national economic, social, and tourism development, with the goal of cultivating high-quality tourism talents, in accordance with the requirements of the construction of new liberal arts, we adhere to the fundamental task of cultivating morality and talents with new concepts as the guide and students as the center. Combining the professional advantages and characteristics of tourism management, we optimize and reconstruct the teaching content and curriculum system. One is to optimize the curriculum system guided by cultivating students' comprehensive abilities and advanced thinking (including critical thinking, etc.), reflecting the organic integration of knowledge, abilities, and qualities, effectively integrating cutting-edge, contemporary, and challenging aspects, and effectively integrating theoretical, innovative, and practical aspects. Secondly, the curriculum should have a solid foundation, broad scope, and emphasis on application. It should reasonably arrange modules such as general education courses, basic courses, professional courses, and practical courses, and effectively integrate them into courses on ideological and political education, professional ideological and political education, and moral cultivation. The third is to fully reflect the characteristics of the new liberal arts and industry demands, strengthen the characteristics of tourism management majors, and in accordance with the requirements of the "National Standards for Teaching Quality of Tourism Management", highlight five core courses including "Introduction to Tourism Studies", "Tourism Reception Industry", "Tourism Economics", "Tourism Destination Management", and "Tourism Consumer Behavior", appropriately increase interdisciplinary and humanistic courses, strengthen the configuration of smart tourism courses, use modern information technology to enhance professional technical content, and strengthen the cultivation of students' application abilities. The fourth is to deepen ideological and political education throughout the entire process and curriculum, and promote the integration of ideological and political education into the curriculum. Through the construction of projects such as "Tourism Planning and Development" (a provincial-level blended online and offline course), "Business Etiquette" (a provincial-level MOOC), and "Tourism Economics" (a school level smart classroom pilot course and a provincial-level blended online and offline course), the construction of professional core course groups is driven. The fifth is to moderately compress theoretical courses, strengthen practical courses, while adjusting and optimizing the class hour structure, appropriately reducing teaching hours, and increasing forum, seminar, practical, and learning exchange experience hours. Cognitive internships and experimental teaching are carried out in professional basic courses, and internship and practical training are carried out in professional elective courses, integrating "knowledge understanding", "ability cultivation", and "skill training". Carry out comprehensive assessment reform of the learning process, and evaluate grades through classroom discussions, course papers, and final exams.

#### **4.3. Create First-Class Courses in Tourism Management**

##### **4.3.1. Adhere to the Guidance of First-Class Curriculum Standards**

On the basis of the implementation opinions and relevant regulations on the construction of first-class undergraduate courses issued by the Ministry of Education, we will strengthen the construction of existing provincial quality courses, initiate the preliminary preparation and

application for national and provincial first-class courses, effectively eliminate low-level and outdated "water courses", and improve the quality and efficiency of course construction.

#### **4.3.2. Build a Student-centered Curriculum**

Student centeredness "is the core concept of undergraduate education and an important direction of curriculum reform. The construction of "first-class courses" in tourism management must be centered on promoting students' comprehensive development, always highlighting the students' learning subject status, scientifically setting course objectives, integrating and optimizing course resources, deepening course teaching reform around stimulating students' learning interest and potential, improving the curriculum system and practical activities that support students' learning and development, cultivating and enhancing students' thinking ability, innovative spirit and practical ability, while fully respecting students' individuality and understanding their learning and development needs.

#### **4.3.3. Promote a Revolution in Tourism Classroom Teaching**

Classroom teaching is the main battlefield for talent cultivation and also the breakthrough point for teaching reform. By revolutionizing classroom teaching, we can effectively stimulate students' desire for knowledge, awaken their own potential, inspire and cultivate their imagination and advanced thinking abilities, and improve their self-learning, independent thinking, and learning efficiency. Adhere to the creative oriented curriculum implementation concept, promote high-level interactive, debate based, and small class classroom teaching reforms in undergraduate tourism management majors, encourage the adoption of blended learning, flipped classrooms, and a combination of online and offline teaching models, strengthen learning process management, enrich classroom interaction experiences, and reform and improve course assessment content and methods to continuously improve the quality of classroom teaching.

#### **4.3.4. Create Inclusive Tourism Classrooms**

The inclusive teaching philosophy advocates putting students at the center, respecting and protecting each student's personality, encouraging students to speak freely and express themselves, and providing equal opportunities for every student to participate in learning and achieve success to the maximum extent possible. Cornell University, University of California, Berkeley, University of North Carolina, and other universities in the United States have achieved good results by creating inclusive classrooms and learning environments. Advocate for the creation of inclusive tourism classrooms, and carry out new inclusive classroom construction in teaching concepts, teaching objects, teaching content, teaching methods, teaching processes, and teaching environments, truly creating high-quality courses that are conducive to equal learning and personalized innovative development for every student.

### **4.4. Reform Teaching Methods around Improving Classroom Effectiveness**

#### **4.4.1. Optimize Classroom Teaching Design**

On the basis of reforming textbooks and developing high-quality tourism management textbooks, classroom activities are designed and teaching content is optimized according to the requirements of "high level". Teaching problems are extracted and designed for high-level thinking and critical thinking, so that the teaching content is both knowledgeable and thoughtful, theoretical and practical, broad and deep, reflecting both tradition and cutting-edge, effectively changing the outdated and traditional teaching methods of textbooks and teaching content, increasing students' learning engagement, guiding students to actively engage in deep learning, and enhancing the connotation and value of curriculum teaching.

#### **4.4.2. Reform Classroom Teaching Methods**

Carefully organize teaching forms, reform teaching methods, optimize teaching links and activities, and flexibly adopt teaching, questioning, answering questions, discussing, interning,

visiting and inspecting methods according to different course objectives and teaching content to improve classroom teaching effectiveness. Encourage teachers to actively adopt heuristic teaching, interactive communication, research-based (exploratory) teaching, situational simulation, case analysis, on-site teaching, non-standard answer exams and other methods to carry out teaching, strengthen teacher-student interaction and student student interaction, enable students to successfully learn and actively develop through experience, thinking and creation, and turn knowledge into their own thoughts, knowledge, abilities and output results.

#### **4.4.3. Promote Diverse Classroom Collaboration**

Actively expanding classroom space and extending teaching activities, comprehensively improving classroom teaching effectiveness through the construction of diverse classrooms and the connection of teaching links such as on campus and off campus, offline and online, theory and practice. One is to promote school enterprise cooperation and practice the integration of industry and education. Mount Huangshan Tourism Development Co., Ltd., Huaqiang Fangte Culture and Technology Group Co., Ltd., Shanghai Devil Land Investment Management Co., Ltd. and other well-known enterprises were selected as off campus practice bases to jointly develop talent training programs with enterprises. Schools provide theoretical teaching sites, enterprises provide practical teaching sites and equipment, and schools and enterprises cooperate to cultivate talents. The second is to carry out the reform of the teaching mode of "bringing in and going out". Relying on the "Hui Merchants Lecture Hall", Tao Ping, President of Mount Huangshan Tourism, Ren Guocai, Vice President of Jingyu Donkey Mother Group, and other experts were invited to hold special lectures to let students understand the academic frontier and industry trends. Organize students to conduct mobile classroom teaching in Yangzhou, Zhenjiang, Lianyungang, Zaozhuang and other cities to enhance their ability to analyze and solve practical problems using professional knowledge.

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