

## Reform of the “Wine Culture and Tasting” Course Based on the Professional Skill Level Certificate Exploration

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**Abstract:** According to the hotel industry research, this article analyzes the new requirements for the ability structure of compound talents under the background of industry upgrading. Combining with the international professional qualification certification, this article put forward suggestions on the development of “wine culture and tasting” professional qualified technician certificate. Besides providing cases for the construction of sommelier certificate, this article integrates the certificate research and the course construction and reform the course.

### 1. Introduction

On January 24, 2019, the State Council issued the ‘Implementation Plan for National Vocational Education Reform’, the plan mentioned deepening the reform of the training model of compound technical talents, drawing on the common practices of international vocational education and training and launching the pilot work of the ‘1+X’ certificate system [1]. Through the implementation of ‘1+X’, a professional qualified technician certificate system is established, and students in vocational colleges are encouraged to actively obtain professional skill level certificates and expand their skills in employment and entrepreneurship [2]. Adapting to the needs of job position and career development, it is very important to develop professional skills level certificates according to the professional reform plan, and carry out corresponding curriculum teaching reforms [3].

### 2. The Demand for Wine Sommeliers in the Hotel Industry

#### 2.1 The Upgrading of the Industry Puts Forward New Demands

The “Thirteenth Five-Year” Tourism Development Plan issued by the State Council mentioned the construction of new types of accommodation and the improvement of the development quality of the catering industry. Since the 13th Five-Year Plan, China’s five-star hotels have continued to grow. The huge job demand market also places higher demands on hotel management professionals.

In view of the current situation of talent demand in the hotel industry, the course teacher group visited a number of high-star hotels in Chengdu and graduates to further understand the distribution of the hotel industry and talent demand. Through investigation and research, the course teacher group found that the upgrading and development of the industry puts forward new requirements for the adjustment of hotel talent capacity structure. The demand for professional talents in the hotel industry is not only a large number of skilled frontline service staff, but also a good professional quality and professional background, compound technical skills talents with innovative thinking. Sommelier is a profession that is constantly developing and updating in such an industry background.

#### 2.2 Current Situation of the Supply of Sommelier Talents

With the improvement of people’s living standards and the pursuit of a better life, domestic consumers increasingly prefer wine. By 2021, China will become the world’s second largest wine consumption market after the United States. Consumers are more interested in wine culture, so the industry's demand for sommeliers is increasing. As the main wine consumption places, there are not

many hotels equipped with professional sommeliers. Five-star hotels, western restaurants, wine sales companies, wine cellars and wine sales companies have a shortage of tens of thousands of sommeliers [4].

At present, wine majors are mainly agricultural colleges and universities. In the cultivation of wine talents, they focus on the cultivation of grapes, winemaking and wine scientific research. Graduates mainly focus on the upstream of the wine industry, very few people entered the hotel and catering for wine services. Another type of wine course is set up by the hotel management college, which focuses on the cultivation of basic wine theory and cultural knowledge, wine service, recommendation of food and wine. In order to adapting to the needs of the industry, it is a top priority to cultivate compound talents who know not only grape planting and wine making technology, but also wine service skills.

### 3. Development Path and Plan of Hotel Management Sommelier Certificate

#### 3.1 Introduction to Wine-Related Professional Skill Level Certificate

The most popular wine professional qualification certifications are the British Wine & Spirit Education Trust (WSET), the American International Sommelier Guild, the French CAFA and various wine-producing area certifications. There are sommelier certification issued by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and Yixiang ESW certification in China[5]. The domestic wine professional qualification certification is mainly for the wine sales, wine hobbyists, and college teachers. The latter two basically do not work in related industries, only focus on the study of wine theory and knowledge. Few hotel practitioners are certified as sommelier. Since employment does not require certification, students pay less attention to wine certification during school.

Facing the industry needs of major wine consumption channels such as hotels and restaurants, the hotel management major should reasonably develop the professional skill level certificate that matches the sommelier, and carry out the construction and reform of the course certificate integration.

#### 3.2 Proposals for the Development of Professional Skill Level Certificate for Hotel Management Sommeliers.

##### 3.2.1 Professional Positions (Groups) for Sommeliers

Sommelier is responsible for wine service, wine tasting and wine management in high-star hotels, catering companies, and wine-related industries. They have professional wine knowledge, understand the structure of dishes and wine, and are familiar with various types of wine service standards. They can design wine list, mast the procurement and storage management of wines, provide relevant wine knowledge and operation training for employees, and have good language sales and communication skills.

Table 1 the Corresponding Positions and Professional Abilities of Sommeliers

Job position	Professional ability
Wine service	Sales ability
	Service ability
	Tasting skills
	Food and Wine pairing ability
Wine sales	Understanding the wine market industry
	Knowledge of wine storage and management
	Famous village identification
	Wine quality judgment
Wine culture promotion	Carry out theme activities such as wine exhibitions, tasting meetings, promotion meetings, etc.
	Carry out wine training and education

### 3.2.2 Classification of Professional Skills of Sommeliers

The professional qualified technician certificates of sommeliers can be divided into elementary, intermediate and advanced levels. The three levels are progressively advanced. The high level covers the low-level vocational skills requirements [6].

Junior sommelier: is able to master the basic knowledge of wine planting and brewing, master the wine tasting system for tasting common grape varieties; is able to identify wine labels, and provides customers with food and wine pairing suggestions;

Intermediate Sommelier: on the basis of performing primary duties, is proficient in grape planting, winemaking and wine region grade regulations, analyzes the main factors affecting wine and wine tasting skills, and can taste grape varieties in different regions to further improve. The ability to match dishes and wine, wine list design and wine sales.

Senior Sommelier: on the basis of performing intermediate duties, can perform blind wine tasting, has the correct knowledge of wine storage and management and practical skills, studies new theories of food and wine matching, and new trends in the wine market.

Table 2 Requirements for Professional Skill Levels of Sommeliers

Professional Skill Level Certificate	Certificate level	Professional ability requirements
Sommelier	primary	Performing wine service
		Tasting common wine varieties
		Pairing food and wine
	intermediate	Tasting wines from different regions
		Wine sales
		Wine list design, wine preservation
	advanced	Wine cellar management
		Wine training, education and promotion
		Wine design and development

### 3.2.3 Targeted Colleges and Majors

This certificate is applicable to colleges and majors:

Secondary Vocational Education: School: brewing technology and technology, high-star hotel operation and management, tourism service and management, tourism foreign language, western cuisine;

Higher Vocational Education School: hotel management, wine technology, food nutrition and hygiene, Western food technology, etc.,

Applied Undergraduate Colleges: tourism management, hotel management, grape and wine engineering and other majors.

## 4. Course Reform of “Wine Culture and Tasting” under Professional Skill Level Certificate

### 4.1 Curriculum Status and Existing Problems

This course aims to cultivate international high-quality technical and skilled hotel talents. The hotel management major has opened a school-based course “Wine Culture and Tasting” since 2016. As a professional development course, the total hours are 36 hours, and the theory-to-practice ratio is 1:1, it is a very practical course. The courses enable students to better master the basic knowledge of wine, improve their wine service and wine tasting skills, increase their knowledge of wine, and broaden their international vision by participating in the World Skills Competition.

The following problems were found in actual teaching:

Inadequate adaptation to the needs of the industry: the teaching process focuses on basic wine knowledge and basic wine service skills. After graduation, students can only engage in basic wine service, and their wine tasting and sales capabilities are weak. Few students can take further positions in wine cellar management.

Insufficient connection with professional qualification certificates: due to serious disconnection between course teaching and related professional qualification certification, students pay less attention to and obtain the international professional qualification certificate for wine.

Insufficient structured characteristics of teachers: professional teachers have more experience in hotel teaching, but lack of experience in wine cultivation and wine tasting techniques.

## 4.2 Development Suggestions

In view of the current implementation of the “1+X” system, the course should aim to cultivate international sommeliers, refer to the professional skill level standards, compare the catering service items of the World Skills Competition, and focus on the course objectives, course content and course evaluation, etc.

### 4.2.1 Implement Ideological and Political Courses, Integrate Ideological, Political, and Moral Skills

The course should integrate ideological and political education elements into professional courses, link the development of the times and social life, and train students to pay attention to industry trends, policies and regulations while studying, and integrate beverage safety, nutrition and health; Curriculum teaching digs deep into traditional excellent culture, enhances labor awareness through training inside and outside the school, accumulates professional experience, implements the construction of the connotation of “ Strengthening Morality Education”. Course teaching will enhance the professional ethics and professional quality of students as sommeliers.

### 4.2.2 Determine the Teaching Objectives and Content According to the Job Standard, Industry Standard, Competition Standard

Benchmarking the work process of the sommelier, professional skill level certificate, and the content of the blind wine tasting of the World Skills Competition, the course should emphasize the integration of “knowledge and skills”. On one hand, it involves the cultural connotation of wine history, grape varieties and producing areas. On the other hand, it strengthens the professional skills of wine tasting and evaluation, food and wine pairing, and increases the content of wine making, wine cellar management, marketing.

Table 3 Teaching Content of “Wine Culture and Tasting”

Project	Task unit	Teaching content	Key points, difficulties, assessment points
Wine basis	1.1	Wine overview	Key points: understand the importance of wine in the hotel management industry; master different wine types and main producing countries Difficulty: understand the brewing process and special brewing methods of different wines; understand the relationship between grape growing environment and wine quality Assessment points: wine classification, wine making
	1.2	Wine classification	
	1.3	Wine making	
	1.4	Vineyard management	
Wine service	2.1	Sommelier operation	Key points: master wine tasting etiquette and learn to write wine tasting notes Difficulty: master the laws and regulations of wine, wine grades and famous wine grading Assessment points: wine tasting notes, wine label interpretation
	2.2	Basic tasting and training	
	2.3	Wine label term	
Wine region	4.1	French wine	Key points: master the three major wine producing regions in France and understand other wine regions; grasp the representative grape varieties and representative wines of the main wine producing countries Difficulty: the representative grape varieties and styles of each producing area, and the identification of famous vineyards Assessment points: representative varieties, identification of famous vineyards, wine tasting
	4.2	World wine	
	4.3	Famous vineyard	
Marketing	5.1	Wine list design	Key points: master the pairing techniques of wine, food and dishes; master wine list design and wine sales skills Difficulty: master the method of wine preservation Assessment points: wine consultation, wine pairing, wine tasting
	5.2	Food and wine pairing	
	5.3	Wine preservation	

### **4.2.3 Take Multiple Measures to Carry out the Reform of Teaching Textbook, Teaching Methods, and Teacher Teams**

In order to ensure that the theoretical knowledge and skill requirements correspond to the professional skill level, new forms of loose-leaf textbooks and comprehensive training textbooks for certificate courses should be compiled [7]. Online resources should be developed, such as theoretical micro-classes, skill operation videos, theoretical question banks, skill assessments, online tests, etc.

Introduce teachers with relevant work and teaching experience in wine planting, brewing, professional sensory evaluation and other related work and teaching experience in the teaching reform, division of labour and collaboration for modular teaching, and multiple measures to explore structured, international teaching innovation team.

The curriculum should take Multiple measures should be taken to explore a structured and international teacher teaching innovation team, such as introducing teachers with relevant work and teaching experience in wine planting, brewing, professional sensory evaluation, etc., and implementing modular teaching based on division of labor.

### **4.2.4 Integrate the Certification and Examination**

Combining national vocational standards, professional skill levels and course assessment goals, the curriculum will set up online test question bank, introducing professional skills competitions, professional skills appraisal and other content into the course practice assessment. Closely following the professional standards of sommeliers, the course conducts special assessment and evaluation of students' wine tasting, wine service and sales ability.

Combining the learning content and learning effects of students, the course will organize students to obtain the sommelier professional skill level certificate, and the corresponding credits can be obtained after the certificate, which lays the foundation for the “double certificate” of graduation.

## **5. Conclusion**

Based on deepening the cultivation of compound technical skills talents and promoting the popularization of “1+X”, the construction of course certificate integration is implemented in higher vocational hotel management majors. This project effectively links curriculum reforms with professional skill level certificates and World Skill Competitions, integrates the skill level certificate examination with professional construction, curriculum construction, and teacher team construction, So it form a school-based curriculum construction with the characteristics of higher vocational application-oriented talent training.

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