

Research on the Multi-dimensional and Broad Collaborative Improvement of Teachers' Teaching Competence by Giving Full Play to the Advantages of a Normal University

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Abstract: A normal university is a working platform for cultivating teachers. The Teaching Development Center of Huzhou Normal University has given full play to the advantages of a normal university, formed a multi-dimensional and broad collaborative teaching competence training system as well as a “three-stages and four-collaborations” teaching competence development model for young teachers. By means of the “Famous Teacher Forum”, we have constructed the local university high-quality teaching resources database and effectively improved the teaching competence of teachers. So far, we have won the second prize of teaching achievement award of Zhejiang Higher Education, and become the provincial teaching demonstration center which has been included in the “Excellent Work Case Collection of Teaching Development” by Zhejiang Normal Training Center.

1. Introduction

The convening of the National Education Conference and the National Undergraduate Education Conference of Colleges and Universities in the new era has sounded the rallying cry of building a high-level undergraduate education and started a new journey of building a high-level talent cultivation system. High-level talent cultivation requires the support of high-level teachers, excellent teaching and educating capability as well. In the Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Speeding up the Construction of High-level Undergraduate Education and Comprehensively Improving Talent Cultivation Ability (referred to as the new Higher Education 40), 4 of them are specifically aimed at comprehensively improving teachers' teaching and educating competence, which puts forward new requirements for the work of teachers' teaching development center in the new era.

The Teaching Development Center of Huzhou Normal University has carried out its work under the guidance of the “Teachers' Teaching Development Steering Committee” of our university. The director of the center is the Vice President in charge of teaching, and the deputy directors are respectively the Director of Academic Affairs and the Director of Personnel. In the center there is an office located in the Office of Academic Affairs. Under the Teaching Development Center in our university, each secondary school has set up a Teaching Development Sub-center, the director is the dean or full-time professor of the secondary school, thus, a teaching development center management system at university and school levels has been formed and promoted the professional development of teachers.

As one of the three universities with the name of “Normal University” in Zhejiang Province, our university has actively inherited the historical accumulation of Hu Academics and the fine tradition of teachers' (normal school) education for a hundred years, therefore, there are a good teaching standard and operation system, which creates excellent conditions for the development of teachers' teaching in our university. In the new era, the Teaching Development Center has focused on the core task of improving teachers' competence to teach and educate, given play to the characteristics of normal education and innovated the teaching concept. The Teaching Development Centers at university and school levels have worked together to build a teacher development community, serve teaching and let teachers develop. Moreover, we have set up Famous Teacher Forum, held teaching

training, organized teaching seminars, built resource platforms, constructed teaching culture, carried out teaching research and organized teaching competitions, thus, the professional and personalized service and support for teachers' teaching have been provided, a multi-dimensional and broad cooperative teaching competence training system as well as a "three-stage and four-collaboration" teaching competence development model been formed, as a result, we have effectively improved teachers' teaching capability and enhanced the teaching quality in an all-round way. In 2016, we won the second prize of Zhejiang Higher Education Teaching Achievement Award, and in 2020, we won the Teaching Development Demonstration Center in Zhejiang Province.

2. Main measures

2.1 Advocating gentleman culture, the education of teachers' professional ethics throughout the whole process of teacher occupation development.

We have strengthened the cultivation of teachers' morality and style, offered special topics on teachers' morality and style in Famous Teacher Forum, and invited national famous teachers to deliver lectures in our university so as to let teachers feel the personality charm of those famous teachers. Besides, we have advocated the concept of "Learning is the Best Teacher, Integrity is the Norm", guided teachers to stand by virtue, learn by virtue, teach by virtue, and cultivate students by virtue. Meanwhile, we have proposed the culture of "He who can teach must be a gentleman" with which the construction of teachers' morality has been promoted, teachers been guided to form a love of education and an indifference to fame and fortune.

2.2 Establishing the modern teaching concept and strengthening the systematic research of teachers' teaching competence

The Teaching Development Center for Teachers treats the following as its concept, that is, "Serving Teaching, Reinforcing Application, Multi-dimensional Driving, Open Coordination, and Developing Teachers", at the same time, we have attached importance to teaching science, developed optimum education and constructed teaching culture. Moreover, teachers' teaching ability, practical ability, research ability, innovation ability and guiding students' self-study ability have been strengthened, teacher development, college development and student development been integrated so as to serve the teaching development of teachers.

2.3 Relying on the advantages of a normal university, forming a system of cultivating teachers' teaching capability

2.3.1 Multiple dimensions

According to the actual needs of teachers, multi-level and multi-dimensional cultivation has been carried out which includes, first, from the perspective of time dimension of teachers' development, we have implemented new teachers' induction training, young teachers' assistant teaching system, excellent teachers' ability training class and other multi-level training. Secondly, from the perspective of category dimension of teachers' development, we have carried forth the different types of training with professional teachers, basic course teachers, public course teachers and experimental teachers. Thirdly, from the perspective of spatial dimension of teachers' development, we have carried out multiple forms of training such as visiting scholars at home and abroad, volunteer teaching and temporary post training.

2.3.2 Broad collaboration

First of all, the collaboration between all departments in our university: we have actively integrated resources and required the departments such as Academic Affairs Office, Personnel Department, Modern Teaching Technology Center and School of Teachers' Education to coordinate and participate in teachers' teaching ability cultivation. Secondly, the collaboration between center and sub-centers, that is to say, university center, college sub-centers and grassroots teaching organizations have worked together to make progress. The Teaching Development Center of our

university has focused on the general part, while the Teaching Development Sub-centers and grassroots teaching organizations have carried out personalized training through the specialty and teaching teams. Thirdly, the collaboration of cultivation process in which we have held the principles of teachers' teaching ability cultivation as follows: "collaboration between internal force stimulation and external force stimulation", "collaboration between theoretical learning and practical training", "collaboration between concentrated teaching and independent learning", and "collaboration between team development and individual growth", in this way, the multi-factor collaboration has been focused on and stimulated the inner motivation of teachers' teaching development. Furthermore, through "professional instructors, special reports, teaching salons, workshops, micro-teaching, teaching seminars, teaching research, teaching competitions, open demonstration classes", etc., the teaching skills have been improved and professional development of teachers been promoted. Through inviting famous scholars and sending our teachers to other universities, we have carried forth the domestic and foreign exchanges and seminars, strengthened university-locality cooperation, expanded the vision and competence of teachers' professional development as well.

2.4 Giving full play to the characteristics of teachers' education and building a resource platform for teachers' teaching competence.

First, we have constructed an online learning platform for teachers' teaching development, serving teachers' independent learning and personality development. Secondly, we have built a pan-Asia network resource platform integrating high-quality courses and mobile learning, thus, promoting the sharing of high-quality teaching resources, and providing conditions for the implementation of Mooc/Spoc flipped classrooms under information technology.

3. Positive results

3.1 Teachers' teaching competence has been constantly improved, and a team of teachers represented by famous teachers has been cultivated

The multi-dimensional and broad collaborative teaching ability training system and the "three-stages and four collaborations" teaching ability development model for young teachers have greatly stimulated the enthusiasm of teachers' independent development. In the past five years, there have been 4766 teachers who have received training, 180 young teachers have been trained with the help of senior teachers, the pass rate has reached 100% and excellent rate 20% respectively, hence, the teaching ability of teachers has been effectively enhanced, and a group of young teachers have stood out. Taking the "Young and Middle-aged Teachers' Excellent Teaching Ability Training Program Class" (27 students) for example, two of them won the special prize and the first prize respectively in the 10th Zhejiang Provincial Young Teachers' Teaching Competition of colleges and universities. Besides, 1 teacher has won the prize of education leading talent of "South Taihu Special Support Plan", 3 teachers have won the Lu Zengyong Teacher Award, 2 teachers have become the new outstanding teachers and 3 teachers have won the Teaching Achievement Award (host). The teaching competition is a demonstration of teachers' teaching level and teaching style, in the recent two provincial young teachers' teaching competitions, our university has won 1 special prize, 3 first prizes and 2 second prizes. In the past 5 years, our university has won 36 prizes in micro lessons and multimedia courseware competitions for young teachers in China and our province. According to the analysis report of national teaching competition for college and university teachers released by the Chinese Society of Higher Education (2012-2017), our university has been ranked 286 out of 734 colleges and universities. At present, there is 1 famous teacher of "Ten Thousand Teachers' Plan", 1 national famous teacher, the teaching teams led by national, provincial and university famous teachers have elevated the level of teachers' team in our university. In Wu Shulian's 2018 ranking list of China's undergraduate university, the academic level of teachers in our university has been ranked the 189th place out of 758 universities in China.

3.2 Quality of talent cultivation has been significantly enhanced, and graduates are well received by employers

Our university has highlighted the characteristics of normal education and deepened the cultivation model of high quality application-oriented talents with “Better Understanding of One’s Learning and Better Effectiveness of One’s Practice” based upon the co-education between university and locality. Meanwhile, the cultivation of teachers’ teaching competence has been run throughout the whole process of a normal university students’ education, and the collaborative development of a normal university students and future teachers, professional ability and normal skills have been emphasized so that the cultivation of teachers’ skills of a normal university students has become prominent and the training and assessment of teaching skills of a normal university students have been further standardized, comprehensively the teaching ability of a normal university students been improved. In recent five years, our university has won 75 prizes in which there are 10 first prizes in the national and provincial teaching skills competitions for the normal university students. Through training and other activities, the majority of teachers have enhanced the sense of responsibility and guidance ability of teaching and practice. Relying on the discipline competition base and the practical teaching base of co-education between university and locality, we have guided students to actively participate in professional practice as well as social practice. In the past five years, students have won 165 prizes in national discipline competitions, 717 prizes in provincial discipline competitions, 110 projects of National Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program for college and university students, and 557 papers have been published. The admission rate of postgraduates has been increasing year by year, reaching 11.3 percent in 2019. The employment rate of graduates has been above 96% for five consecutive years, ranking the top among similar universities in our province. According to the survey report released in 2017 by Zhejiang Provincial Institute of Educational Assessment about college and university graduates career development status and talent training quality, it shows that employing units are highly satisfied with our graduates’ professional level, practical ability, innovation ability, cooperation and coordination ability, interpersonal communication ability and other aspects, which is higher than the average level of provincial universities.

3.3 Theoretical research has yielded fruitful results and exerted a positive influence in and out of our province

The advantages of a normal university has been given into full play and the systematic theoretical achievements have been obtained. A monograph on *Teacher Quality Cultivation* has been published by Tianjin Education Publishing House, which won the first prize of Excellent Achievement of Zhejiang Social Science Association, the second prize of Educational Research Achievement of Zhejiang Province, and the second prize of scientific research achievement of Education Department of Zhejiang Province, and it has been issued 30,000 copies nationwide. So far, we have published many papers in *China Higher Education Research*, *Higher Engineering Education Research*, *Modern Education Management* and other important journals, systematically expounding a multi-dimensional and broad collaborative teaching ability training system as well as a “three-stages and four-collaborations” teaching competence development model for young teachers. In addition, *China Education Daily* has made a special introduction with the title “Teaching Reform Making Students Busy, Teachers Guide” and *Reference for Higher Education Leaders* has also introduced our university with the title “Various Measures Taken by Huzhou Normal University to Improve the Teaching Competence of Young Teachers”, all of which have had a positive impact on the whole country. Therefore, we have been invited to introduce our experience of teachers’ teaching ability training in the 4th “China University Teaching Forum”, the National Joint Conference of Newly-established Undergraduate Universities, the seminar of Teachers’ Teaching Development Center Construction in the Yangtze River Delta and the seminar of Teachers’ Development and Teaching Innovation of higher vocational education in Zhejiang province, more than 30 universities inside and outside our province have come to visit our university and we have learned from each other.

4. Scalable experience

4.1 Constructing a multi-dimensional and broad collaborative teaching competence training system through the organizations of teachers' teaching development in secondary schools and university.

We have, so far, realized that resources can be actively integrated, all departments in the university be coordinated, thus, building the collaborative promotion of university center, secondary school sub-centers and grassroots teaching organizations. According to the actual needs of teachers, the multi-level, multi-category and multi-dimensional training can be carried out such as, first, from the time dimension of teachers' development, new teachers' orientation training, young teachers' assistant teaching system and excellent teachers' ability training can be carried out at different levels. Secondly, from the category dimension of teachers' development, professional teachers, basic teachers, public teachers and experimental teachers can be trained by category. Thirdly, from the spatial dimension of teachers' development, various forms of training such as visiting scholars at home and abroad and temporary post training etc. can be implemented. Anyhow, teachers' teaching ability training system should cover all kinds of teachers horizontally and connects their whole career vertically. A training system of "surface expansion, on-line deepening and point-to-point improvement" should be formed.

4.2 "Three stages and four collaborations" teaching ability development model of young teachers has been realized through the tutorial system.

The tutorial system is the tradition of normal education in our university, which has been adhered to for many years. Each new teacher is paired up with an associate professor or above by the secondary schools according to the discipline and specialty arrangement. The tutorial system has been used to innovate the assistant teaching system for young teachers, according to the three stages of "pre-employment, entry and post-employment", and the principles of "collaboration between internal force and external stimulation", "collaboration between theoretical learning and practical training", "collaboration between concentrated teaching and independent learning", and "collaboration between team development and individual growth", the multi-factor collaboration of focusing on the teaching ability has, thus, stimulated the inner motivation of teachers' teaching development. Moreover, we have helped new teachers to master the basic teaching skills as soon as possible and stand firmly on the teaching platform. We have set up problem-oriented teaching ability improvement classes for key teachers, outstanding teaching ability training classes for young teachers, special subject training classes for professional construction, mixed classroom teaching mode reform training classes, in-depth integration of information technology with education and teaching, etc. so as to elevate the teaching level of our university.

4.3 High-quality teaching resource database of our local university has been constructed through the "Famous Teacher Forum".

The "Famous Teacher Forum" is a cultural brand established by our university integrating academic research, teaching classics and university spirit, we have invited national famous teachers and winners of national teaching achievement award to give lectures in our university, through experiencing the personality charm of those famous teachers, example demonstrations, face-to-face communications and comments with famous teachers, the emergence, growth and development of famous teachers and outstanding young teachers in our university have sprung up. Up to now, we have invited national famous teachers such as Gu Pei, Wang Jinfa, Zhou Xiaohong, Li Shangzhi, Lu Guodong and Sun Jianrong of MACAU University of Science and Technology to have the face-to-face communications with teachers and students of our university, which has injected a lot of valuable resources into the teaching of our university and absorbed the research experience of high-level professors at home and abroad. Together with our existing national, provincial and university level famous teachers and national, provincial and university quality courses, we have successfully built a high-quality teaching resource database of our local university.

5. Conclusion

A normal university is a working platform for cultivating teachers, The Teaching Development Center of our university has given full play to the advantages of our normal university, formed a multi-dimensional and broad collaborative teaching competence training system as well as a “three-stages and four-collaborations” teaching competence development model for young teachers, thus, effectively enhanced the teaching competence of teachers, all of this has been included in the “Excellent Work Case Collection of Teaching Development” by Zhejiang Normal Training Center.

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