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Some Thoughts on the Public Compulsory Course of *Chinese Modern History* in Advanced Vocational Colleges

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Abstract

This article has provided thoughts and research on offering general compulsory *Chinese Modern History* course in advanced vocational School, and it also pointed out the teaching object and its main content of this course; it is necessary that teaching need to combine with the characteristic of the advanced vocational students in order to increase the efficiency of the class. Teachers need to take care of the relationship between college history teaching and middle school history teaching, theoretical teaching in class and practical teaching outside the class, traditional “spoon-feeding” teaching method and modern interactive teaching method, and teaching and research. Meanwhile, the department needs to enhance the construction of the teaching team for *Chinese Modern History* course, combine internal training with importation of scholars from the outside, and guarantee a well-constructed system and financial support.

Key word: Advanced vocational school; *Chinese Modern History*; Common compulsory course

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INTRODUCTION

Currently, Outline of *Chinese Modern History* is a general compulsory course for undergraduate students in normal colleges but for students in advanced vocational colleges. The writer thinks that according to reality of advanced vocational colleges, it should have *Outline of Chinese Modern History* as general compulsory course.

1. TEACHING PURPOSES AND MAIN CONTENT OF *CHINESE MODERN HISTORY* AS A GENERAL COMPULSORY COURSE

1.1 Teaching Purpose

To try to provide *Chinese Modern History* as a general compulsory course in advanced vocational college, there are two purposes. The first purpose is to strengthen education of patriotism. By studying history of how CPC has led troubled Chinese people to independence and evolution, students' emotion to CPC will be developed and faith in path, theory and system of socialism with Chinese characteristics will be strengthened. The second is to promote students' personal historic accomplishments and to serve students' sustainable development. To grow certain level of historic accomplishment it helpful for student to gain life wits, to learn poetry and the future from profound Chinese history, which could be extremely beneficial.

1.2 Main Contents

Considering the character of short term in advanced vocational college, it is not suggested to set *Outline of Chinese Modern History* in advanced vocational colleges as in universities but to set *Chinese Modern History* instead, which has 36 credit hours. It mainly focuses on history between Opium War in 1840 and establishment of Peoples' Republic of China in 1949 which includes

invasions from foreign countries, failure of farmer class, westernists from landowner class, reformists from national bourgeois class, revolutionists from national bourgeois class on searching method for saving the nation and people of China, timely born of CPC, and especially of how did CPC lead people from every race to fight against Japan, get independence and liberation and finally be real owner of China. About history after the establishment of PR China, which is close to right now, it is encouraged to learn them by using spare time.

2. COMBINING CHARACTERS OF VOCATIONAL STUDENTS TO MAKE MODERN HISTORY OF CHINA MORE PRACTICAL AS A GENERAL COMPULSORY COURSE

As a different education form from normal university, advanced vocational college has its own property that is biased practice rather than theory. In order to make the course more practical, need to handle relations below.

2.1 Handle Relation Between History Teaching in College and in High School

When teaching *Modern History of China* in Chongqing Youth Vocational College, it is found that some students are good at history in high school and have no interest in learning repeated historical knowledges. Thus we need to take care of relation between history teaching in college and in high school. In high school, key point is to learn and remember history knowledge. In college, it needs to change the core of study. It can simplify historical knowledges that are repeated from high school and develop thinking method of students on history. For example, when students are studying farmer activities of Taipintianguo, they can compare it with revolution led by Yuanzhang Zhu. As both are farmer revolutions, the one led by Yuanzhang Zhu has established Min dynasty successfully, however the one led by Taipintianguo was executed. Analyzing the cause of it, we can compare and find that the key reason that Yuanzhang Zhu has succeeded is that he has kept absorbing intelligentsia to join his revolution team. While Taipintianguo that led by Xiuquan Hong did not. Most of leaders in Taipin army are poorly educated. They have narrow sight and old thoughts but scientific theory to guide them. In addition they did not absorb intelligentsia during development to make strategies for them. This is why they failed. As a result, how important it is to learn advanced theory and thought and to equip them with the army.

2.2 Handling Relation Between In-Class Theory Teaching and Out-of-Class Practical Teaching

It is found that students in vocational colleges have better practical ability and comprehensive quality than taking

an exam and in-class study. They have intensive interest and enthusiasm in practice after their tense study in high school. According to this, we can apply combination of in-class theory teaching and out-of-class practical teaching to teach. During theory teaching, it can use historical relic and stories of famous people to attract students. At the same time, it can lead students to museum, memorial hall, exhibition, former houses and historic relics to process practical teaching. For example, in Chongqing, we can organize student to visit Baigong House, Zazi Cave to learn revolutionists' histories. Also we can organize student to visit the former house of Angong Yang to feel that how did a capitalist born intelligentsia give up wealthy life, select great communism and join the revolution. It can also organize student to visit the memorial hall of Shiqiu Liang, She Lao's former house, memorial hall of Xingzhi Tao to contact great masters of culture. It can also organize them to visit former place of Fudan University, former place of Chinese Western Academy of Sciences. In one word, we need to fully utilize historic cultural resources, pay attention to educational meaning and value of historic cultural resources. It needs to teach students via historic culture, to develop their revolution feeling, firm faith to communism and love to CPC.

2.3 Take Care of the Relationship Between the Traditional "Spoon-Feeding" Teaching and the Modern Interactive Teaching

Traditional teaching methods are mostly rote, by definition, "spoon-fed" indoctrination. Teachers mainly teach the knowledge unilaterally to the students. Whether they understood it or to what degrees did they understand, was not the same for the students. The drawback is less interactions with the students, which may cause the phenomenon where teachers were very into it but the students were asleep. Of course, this method has been criticized by many scholars. Nowadays, scholars advocate interactive teaching, that is teachers and students interacting with each other during the class. Teachers inspire students to think independently with the guidance of teachers, or even by themselves, in order to achieve better learning experiences. Results have proved that the effect of heuristic teaching is much better than the traditional method, and it is necessary to implement this kind of teaching method for the vocational students during *Chinese Modern History* course. Students have a strong sense of themselves nowadays and have little patience for the known during class. Teachers can design a question to guide students to think and answer the part that cannot be answered by the students. In this way, teachers not only to promote students' initiatives, but also enhance the particularity of teaching. For example, during the study of the previous revolutionary movement led by Sun Yat-sen, teachers can throw a point of view to the students: Some people believe that Sun Yat-sen's life seemed to be "fight and defeated, defeated and fight". They can

guide students to analyze this viewpoint. If it is correct, in which area? If it is wrong, which arguments should be used to refute it? In this way, the students are not passively receiving knowledge, but actively thinking and looking for information, organizing evidences and their arguments, and eventually forming their own opinions. Historical habits of mind will gradually be formed in such training. Another example could be: There would be no PRC without the Communist Party. Teachers can organize students for discussions and guide them through extensive research on the collection of historical data for argumentations.

2.4 Take Care of the Relationship Between Teaching and Research

Some people think there is little time left for research if they are engaged in teaching, and if they focus on research, they will not have time to work on their teaching method, which makes it seem that teaching and research are against each other. In fact, this point of view is short-sighted. Working on teaching provides first hand data for research and doing research and strengthening research on relevant theories provides theoretical guidance for teaching, and it promotes continuous improvement of teaching quality, achieving the purpose of mutually reinforcing of those two. It is necessary to do good, relevant research after teaching *Chinese Modern History* course well. The team can either carry out research on teaching or theories to make sure a high-quality paper is published on core journals each year, and every year. The team should follow a certain direction on a long term during research because it is easy to perform in-depth research and easy to make achievements. Meanwhile, the results from research can also be used in classroom teaching. For example, the Republican era is the era for masters. Literacy masters such as Yutang Lin, Xingzhi Tao, Lao She, Moruo Guo, Ba Jin, Bing Xin, Huiyin Lin, Shih-Chiu Liang, Yuelin Jin, Zhimo Xu, Shi Hu, Taofen Zou and others had played important roles in the history of cultural development. Their enriched literacy work has brought valuable spiritual wealth to the later generations, and many of them have yet to be surpassed. The team could conduct research on the intellectuals or cultural groups during the Republican era, or special research on the master they are interested in. They can use their research experiences as the lecture topic for students and guide them to in-depth studies.

3. STRENGTH CONSTRUCTION OF THE TEACHING TEAM FOR CHINESE MODERN HISTORY COURSE

3.1 Internal Training for Professionals

In order to ensure the quality of *Chinese Modern History* course teaching team, we must first strengthen our internal training to build a full-time professional teaching team. The Department can carry out collective classes to improve and to learn through interactions and

communications with each other; it can implement lecture listening sessions on a regular basis to urge scholars to learn from each other; it can carry out teaching competition regularly to discover the team's potentials through their competitive spirit; it can organize visits to other universities on a regular basis to learn from each other; it can regularly offer trainings for the team and invite experts to teach in the school and send the team out; it needs to strengthen the construction of *Chinese Modern History* course, build team spirit and brand for this program.

3.2 Introduction of High-Level External Talented

"Only by enriching new knowledge can you reach a higher level". On the basis of internal training, it is inseparable from importing the talented from the outside in order to create high-quality teachers. The importance of the talented need to be really high-level personnel in the field and have certain academic achievements. It is necessary to implement incentives system to make an assessment of his academic achievement and contributions during this period. For example, he is only paid by the high-level personal expenses if he passes a certain exam. The internal and external personnel need to communicate and learn from each other to achieve "one plus one is greater than two" results.

3.3 System Security

A perfect system is an important feature to guarantee the creation of high-quality teaching team. It is necessary to establish and improve relevant systems, such as scientific research institution, teaching supervision system, lecturing system, introduction of high-level personnel talented system, training system, financial system and other mechanisms to provide protection and to ensure the continuity and the relative stability of teach building.

3.4 Fund Security

One cannot make bricks without straw. Stable fund is necessary in order to form a high-quality team of teachers. It is necessary to implement the financial budget and final accounts system, establish funds only for teaching staff, especially for the construction of *Chinese Modern History* course, introduction of the talented, team training, teaching competitions, study tours and so on.

In conclusion, not only it is necessary to offer *Chinese Modern History* course as a public compulsory course in advanced vocational college, but it is also feasible; however, the effectiveness of teaching this course should be further exam and improved in practice.

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