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Problems and Solutions Upon University Counselor's Work on Ideological and Political Education

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Abstract

Universities are the main frontier of ideological and political education for university students. The quality of Ideological and political education for university students is not only related to the healthy growth of a student, but also the prosperity of his family, his country and the future development of its cause. University counselors, who regularly have the most frequent contact with students, have an immense influence on students in terms of Ideological and political education. During students' daily life and study, university counselors provide guidance on Ideological and political education. They bear an important responsibility of reinforcing Ideological and political education of university students. Therefore, university counselors need to conform to the requirements of the times, adapt to the requirement of their profession, continuously upgrade their professionalism, employ a variety of means of education, create a favorable atmosphere for education, and make outstanding contributions to the reform of education and the making of a stable and harmonious society.

Key words: University; Counselor; Ideological and political education

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INTRODUCTION

Universities are where talent is created. However, as college enrollment expanded nationwide since 1999, the overall quality of university students has declined in varying degrees. This has added a great deal of difficulty as well as challenges to the work of university counselors. As a result, to succeed in ideological and political education for university students, university counselors first need to enhance their skill levels as well as professionalism, in order to give a full play to the role of counselors.

1. PROBLEMS UNIVERSITY COUNSELORS FACE DURING IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION

1.1 Personal Issues of Modern University Students

In order to improve citizens' personal qualities, nine-year compulsory education has been extensively adapted in China. As society develops, universities also expand. The expansion has resulted in the decline of overall quality of university students. On the other hand, because of factors such as the great increase of material and spiritual needs of the people, rapid development of market economy and adverse social factors, the number of single parent families has increased. Subsequently, the proportion of children from single parent families has also increased among university students. The majority of children from single parent families exhibit a tendency of being

withdrawn, suspicious, sensitive, and unconfident. They have formed a vulnerable group on university campuses, which added difficulty for counselors to provide help.

After the implementation of Family Planning Policy in our country, and along with the development and advancement of the society, 90% of the Chinese families have become single-child families. The education problems of single children have drawn concerns from society, schools and families alike. Family education has also changed dramatically during the transition from traditional multiple children families to single children families. The single children are stubborn, self-centered, and less bearing when facing difficulty and frustration. In addition, since single children are over-protected in the family and have everything handed to them on a plate, they have not been honed by any hardship in life, making them vulnerable, having no sense of collectivism, and lack ability of living an independent life. These new situations and problems have brought challenges to the work of university counselors.

At a time of information technology and network, as Internet rapidly develops, using it has become a widespread phenomenon among university students. However, Internet is a double-edged sword. On one hand, it enables university students to receive a vast variety of information; being the carrier of knowledge and information, internet can help students absorb all kinds of knowledge and common sense, open their eyes and make space for their innovation, thereby bringing dynamic energy to the current and future economic development of the country. On the other hand, Internet also provides new places and means for many unethical behaviors; as Internet is a virtual space, people can say whatever they want, even including irresponsible nonsense, which is bound to reduce the ideological and moral qualities of students. Moreover, university students' bodies and minds are still at the development stage; some students were pressured to study during high school and didn't have time to play, so once they have time in the university, they spend it on online games and chats. Especially on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, many students pass entire days and nights in Internet cafes, making them physically and mentally exhausted. What's more, online gaming and chatting has caught a small amount of students in a fantasy world, unable to extricate themselves. Their young mind has been twisted, some even stepped astray, and their study, life and health have been heavily affected by their overuse of Internet.

1.2 Issues of University System

According to the regulations of national education administration, there should be a dedicated student counselor for every 150 to 200 students. However, under current situation, very few universities reach this proportion. It is impossible to cater to the need of largely expanded universities with the current amount

of counselors. At the same time, most of the counselors nowadays are bachelor students from the same university who stayed after graduation. The universities do not emphasize on the work of counselors, and the salary is not high, which have affected the counselors' enthusiasm.

Because of the lack of emphasis on counselors' work, universities seldom organize external studies and trainings for counselors. This has caused their disconnection with frontier knowledge and new technics. It also dissatisfied counselors and university ideological and political education workers, prompting many of them to move on to a position with more future. This instability of idea and workforce has a lot of negative impact on university students' ideological and political education.

2. CONTINUOUSLY ADVANCING UNIVERSITY COUNSELORS' PROFESSIONALISM IN IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION

As for the aforementioned problems I have encountered and discovered during years of university counselor practice, I believe that university counselors' "non-professional" status has become the bottleneck of establishing the workforce of university students' ideological and political education. Being responsible for the university students' ideological and political education, counselors should establish a firm faith in their cause; they should understand the scientific connotations of being a professional counselor, the basic requirement and the essential fact that counselors should be a focused, expert-driven and lifelong profession; they need to set up a lifelong learning attitude, strengthen guidance to students as well as explore their own career development path. Holding the ideal of contributing to the university and the country, university counselors should continuously enhance their abilities, advance their professionalism, and strive for cultivating university students into qualified successors to the cause of socialism.

Universities are important bases for training high quality talents for the future society. University counselors, as the frontline administrators who most frequently interact with students as well as the backbone of university students' ideological and political education, their professionalism greatly affects the outcome of university students' ideological and political education and determines how to build a harmonious campus and how to cultivate talents. I believe that university counselors should improve in the following aspects:

2.1 Political Literacy

The 16th Central Document of 2004, "Opinions on Further Strengthening and Improving ideological and political education", clearly states that, "All personnel of university students' ideological and political education

must adhere to the correct political direction... Those who cannot stay consistent with the Party Central Committee in terms of political principles, political position and political direction, must not engage in university students' ideological and political education."

Through this document, the author means that university counselors are not only in charge of the communication and implementation of the department's document essence and university's administration standard and regulations, they also need to process these information, actively spread some new ideas and new concepts adapted to the socialist spiritual civilization, and also help students to establish correct life outlook, world outlook and values. They need to actively provide students proper guidance, and establish the students' understanding of China's socialist road with Chinese characteristics under the leadership of the Communist Party of China. To do this, university counselors have to continuously study the political theories, improve their political, ideological and theoretical level, arm themselves with Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory and the important thought of Three Represents; they also have to establish a good image in front of the students, win respect and trust from students, enhance their self-education ability, keep themselves updated with new information, changes and directions, apply theoretical knowledge to the real world, form a more scientific and effective evaluation criteria, educate and guide students properly so that their political stance would always be consistent with the Party Central Committee.

2.2 Professionalism

The work of university counselors involves all aspects of students' life, learning and thinking, etc. As the work is trivial, numerous and complex, it is inevitable to encounter various difficult problems. To assess these issues, counselors should have a clear goal and thinking, flexible means and methods; they should have a keen mind to capture new situations and problems. In an era of information and internet technology, we shall make good use of internet as a tool by building a harmonious campus culture through university website; we shall use words, sounds and images to properly advocate the national education policy and tell students what to do and what not; we shall also employ breakthrough thinking, innovation, and promote the effective implementation of the ideological and political education.

Counselors have the most frequent contact and spend most time with students; hence it is easiest for them to grasp the mental state of the students. Therefore, we should approach students in daily life and feel their inner world. For students from minority groups, I would actively approach them. First of all, I will respect their customs; I will send my regards in their most valued

festivals; I would chat with them from time to time to see if they have gotten used to the life and study here. If they have any problem, I will do my best to help them. I win their trust with my charisma, so that they consider me as a friend. After we become familiar, I will let them know indirectly that although minorities should be respected, respect is mutual, and true respect can only be gained by respecting others. I also ask the class cadres to make friends with the minority students, making them feel that we 56 ethnical groups in China make a family together. At the same time, I advocate the national policies for minorities, and let them know that the country cares about them, so that they feel the warmth of the nation. The idea is to enlighten them in the heart, so as to maintain the vitality and enthusiasm of efficient ideological and political education work.

University students' ideological and political education is a three-in-one intelligent work. University counselors, as the administrators and executors in ideological and political education, are the pillars of ideological education implementation. During daily administration, they are most frequently in contact with students for the longest time, therefore are essential for university students' ideological and political education. The personal qualities of university counselors are also very important to the success of ideological education. University counselors shall strengthen ideological and moral education and political philosophy education for students; with an attitude of "general help with focus", they ought to help students set long-term goals, create an atmosphere for students to actively participate in all activities organized by departments, and purify the campus, combine campus culture and social environment, as well as apply theory to reality, keep improving working methods and educational means of university students' ideological and political education. Counselors ought to continuously enhance the professionalism of university counselors, maximize the effectiveness of university students' ideological and political education, so that they really become guides for students' healthy growth, students' mentors and intimate friends, and contribute to training university students into qualified successors of the cause of socialism.

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