

Exploring Paths and Models for Curriculum Ideology and Politics in Information Literacy Education in University Libraries: A Case Study of Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University Library (Postprint)

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Abstract

[Purpose/Significance] Taking the ideological and political education reform of information literacy courses at Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University Library as an example, this study explores the pathways and models for integrating ideological and political education with information literacy education. [Method/Process] Based on clarifying the characteristics of ideological and political education and information literacy education courses, this study investigates the current research status of ideological and political education in information literacy courses in China through literature review. Taking the reform at Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University Library as a case study, it explores pathways and models for integrating ideological and political elements into information literacy education, and reflects on issues such as teacher team construction, textbook development, and teaching quality evaluation during the reform process. [Results/Conclusion] The pathways for ideological and political education in information literacy courses are explored from three aspects: embedded, supportive, and collaborative. Three models for ideological and political education in information literacy courses are summarized: Model 1, new media technology application method; Model 2: case teaching method; Model 3: project-based teaching method. The key to reforming ideological and political education in information literacy courses lies in teachers, the foundation is textbook development, and the driving force is teaching evaluation.

Full Text

Preamble

Exploring Pathways and Models for Integrating Curriculum Ideology and Politics into Information Literacy Education in University Libraries: A Case Study of Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University Library

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Abstract: *[Purpose/Significance]* This paper examines the integration of curriculum ideology and politics into information literacy education, using the reform initiatives at Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University Library as a case study. *[Method/Process]* Through literature review and empirical research, this study first clarifies key concepts including curriculum ideology and politics and the characteristics of information literacy education courses. It then investigates the current state of research on this topic in China and explores pathways and models for embedding ideological and political elements into information literacy education based on the reform experience at Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University Library. The paper also reflects on challenges related to teacher development, textbook construction, and teaching quality evaluation. *[Result/Conclusion]* The study identifies three pathways for implementing curriculum ideology and politics in information literacy education: embedded, supporting, and collaborative. It further summarizes three pedagogical models: (1) new media technology application method, (2) case teaching method, and (3) project teaching method. The key to successful reform lies in teachers, with textbook construction as the foundation and teaching evaluation as the driving force.

Keywords: information literacy education; curriculum ideology and politics; university library

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In 2014, the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission first introduced the concept of “curriculum ideology and politics” [1] and launched pilot reforms at Shanghai University, developing a series of “China-themed” courses such as *Great Power Strategies* and *Innovative China*, which generated significant social response [2]. In 2016, President Xi Jinping emphasized at the National Conference on Ideological and Political Work in Higher Education that “all other courses must fulfill their responsibility, working in the same direction as ideological and political theory courses to create synergistic effects” [3], thereby “integrating ideological and political work throughout the entire education and teaching process to achieve comprehensive and whole-process education, and striving to create a new situation for the development of China’s higher ed-

ucation” [3]. In recent years, curriculum ideology and politics has attracted considerable academic attention, with numerous scholars conducting research from various perspectives and disciplines. As the concept has gradually become a consensus in Chinese universities, research has shifted from theoretical exploration to empirical studies [2].

Against this backdrop of vigorous curriculum ideology and politics initiatives in higher education, Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University Library has actively explored pathways and models for integrating these elements into information literacy education. Using two courses—*Information Retrieval and Utilization* and *Information Retrieval and Utilization (Embedded Teaching Practice)*—across three teaching modules, the library has thoroughly excavated ideological and political elements embedded in the curriculum. By leveraging the course structure, content, and library resources, the library has identified generative pathways for curriculum ideology and politics in information literacy education and constructed teaching models through smart teaching platforms and traditional classrooms, achieving organic integration that promotes the coordinated advancement of knowledge transmission, competency development, and value guidance.

2. Issues in the Reform of Curriculum Ideology and Politics in Information Literacy Education

The success of implementing curriculum ideology and politics in information literacy education hinges on accurately understanding the distinction between “curriculum ideology and politics” and “ideology and politics courses.” Only by clarifying their differences and logical relationship can we avoid transforming curriculum ideology and politics into mere ideology and politics courses and truly fulfill its educational function. Similarly, recognizing that information literacy education is a quality-oriented curriculum integrating general and professional education is crucial for effectively excavating ideological and political elements and identifying appropriate integration pathways.

2.1 Coordination: Curriculum Ideology and Politics vs. Ideology and Politics Courses

Although the terms “curriculum ideology and politics” and “ideology and politics courses” share the same characters in different arrangements, they represent fundamentally different yet interrelated concepts. The primary distinction lies in that ideology and politics courses are dedicated courses focusing on ideological and political education, whereas curriculum ideology and politics represents an educational philosophy and approach to holistic education. However, both share the same educational goals and tasks, exhibit synergistic functions in cultivating students, and interact within the higher education system—ideology and politics courses provide political direction and ideological value guidance for curriculum ideology and politics, while the latter expands teaching resources

and faculty support for the former.

2.2 Integration: General Education and Professional Education

From the perspective of knowledge transmission, professional education focuses on teaching specialized knowledge to cultivate professionals at various levels, while general education provides knowledge and values common across different populations. Information literacy education courses contain content suitable for general education (e.g., retrieval techniques) and content appropriate for professional education (e.g., retrieving discipline-specific information). Some topics possess both characteristics—for instance, the Chinese Library Classification system: its 22 main categories represent general knowledge that all students should understand, while detailed subcategories require discipline-specific instruction, representing professional knowledge. Therefore, information literacy education is a quality-oriented curriculum that integrates general and professional education. This inclusive nature provides limitless possibilities for implementing curriculum ideology and politics.

3. Research Status of Curriculum Ideology and Politics in University Library Information Literacy Education

Since the concept's introduction, research on curriculum ideology and politics has flourished. A precise search of the CNKI platform using “title, abstract, and keywords” fields retrieved 13,806 academic journal papers related to “curriculum ideology and politics” (as of July 24, 2021). However, research specifically addressing information literacy education remains scarce. To comprehensively survey the literature, the author expanded the search scope across CNKI and FULink (Fujian Academic Digital Library). After screening and deduplication, only 14 papers addressed curriculum ideology and politics in university information literacy education, with none published in core journals, plus two additional papers on libraries' role in curriculum ideology and politics.

Literature on this topic first emerged in 2019, with three papers on information literacy education and one on library science. Meng Yuan et al. [4] argued that information literacy education overemphasizes “instrumental rationality” and that deep integration with values education could correct this bias. Chu Lin et al. [5-6] excavated ideological and political elements in literature retrieval courses and proposed case-based integration methods, including constructing a specific ideological and political education case repository for literature retrieval courses. Wang Youfu [7] suggested that library science “golden courses” should incorporate curriculum ideology and politics in their construction.

In 2020, seven relevant papers were published. Zhang Jie et al. [8], Ma Su et al. [9], and Huang Yanshan et al. [10] conducted exploratory research on integrating curriculum ideology and politics into chemistry and chemical engineering information retrieval courses. Zhao Yiwei et al. [11] implemented curriculum ideology and politics in literature retrieval courses for e-commerce majors. Yin

Guiping et al. [12] explored infusing red education into information retrieval classrooms through cases. Zhang Lianmin et al. [13] embedded ideological elements through factual and patent retrieval instruction. Wang Dandan et al. [14] discussed potential contributions of library science scholars to curriculum ideology and politics research.

In the first quarter of 2021, five relevant papers appeared. Zhao Jianghui et al. [15] mentioned enriching teaching content through curriculum ideology and politics when exploring methods to improve textile engineering literature retrieval courses. Zhi Ling et al. [16] conducted exploratory practice of curriculum ideology and politics in medical literature retrieval courses. Li Yanfei [17] excavated ideological elements across five educational dimensions—information awareness, information ethics, patriotism, innovation and pragmatism, and excellent traditional culture—and proposed integration pathways. Li Dan [18] analyzed teaching methods and implementation steps under curriculum ideology and politics and proposed optimization strategies. Cao Zhanwei [19] analyzed measures university libraries should adopt to support curriculum ideology and politics construction.

Overall, existing domestic research remains superficial, focusing primarily on simple excavation and integration of ideological elements. Systematic excavation based on course characteristics, as well as research on generative pathways and teaching models for curriculum ideology and politics in information literacy education, is virtually nonexistent. Therefore, this paper's summary of pathways and models from Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University's reform experience holds significant value.

4. Practical Pathways and Models for Curriculum Ideology and Politics in University Library Information Literacy Education

While theoretical research on curriculum ideology and politics flourishes, practical reforms are also proceeding vigorously. At Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University, since 2019 the Academic Affairs Office has organized nearly 30 teaching skills activities related to curriculum ideology and politics, launched two rounds of teaching reform projects, and various colleges have organized teaching competitions. The university has even held curriculum ideology and politics teaching competitions for deans and associate deans. In this environment, the library's information literacy education courses have attempted to integrate curriculum ideology and politics.

4.1 Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University Library's Information Literacy Education System

Through decades of effort by generations of librarians, Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University Library's information literacy education program has matured. In recent years, committed to teaching reform and supported by library

leadership and the Academic Affairs Office, the information literacy education system has become increasingly comprehensive. The library has constructed a multi-level system tailored to different audiences, as shown in [Figure 1: see original paper].

The first level provides online freshman orientation education using a “task-based challenge” game format, which students complete before arriving on campus. Those who pass receive their library borrowing privileges upon enrollment.

The second level offers two public courses for all undergraduates: *Information Retrieval and Utilization* and *Information Retrieval and Utilization (Embedded Teaching Practice)*.

The third level provides diverse information literacy lectures for graduate students and faculty.

4.2 Pathway Exploration for Curriculum Ideology and Politics Reform

The library’s information literacy education has formed its own system. From the perspective of “comprehensive ideological and political education,” each level can incorporate ideological elements. However, since curriculum ideology and politics uses courses as its vehicle, the library has focused on the two undergraduate courses as the starting point for reform.

4.2.1 Course Structure Both courses are public basic courses for all undergraduate majors, serving over 10,000 students annually. Teaching is conducted by the Library’s Information Retrieval and Utilization Teaching and Research Office, which operates under dual management by the library and the Academic Affairs Office. The two courses comprise three modules: theoretical and practical instruction for *Information Retrieval and Utilization* (using blended online-offline teaching) and practical instruction for *Information Retrieval and Utilization (Embedded Teaching Practice)* (using purely online teaching), as detailed in [Figure 2: see original paper].

The theoretical component covers information and information resources, retrieval fundamentals, retrieval techniques, and information utilization. The practical component involves using Chinese and foreign retrieval platforms. The embedded teaching practice focuses on developing students’ ability to use literature management software to complete the entire research process—from topic selection and data collection to writing and plagiarism detection—within the context of course paper writing.

4.2.2 Generative Pathway Design The primary challenge was determining where to begin. After careful consideration, the teaching team decided to base the approach on existing curriculum structures and content, using the three teaching modules—theoretical, practical, and embedded—as entry points. Three pathways were developed to integrate ideological elements throughout the entire teaching process: embedded, supporting, and collaborative.

Pathway One: Embedded involves excavating ideological elements such as innovation, socialist core values, and traditional Chinese culture from theoretical teaching content and embedding them into online and offline instruction. Online integration occurs through independent SPOC teaching videos, announcements, discussions, assignments, and quizzes. Offline integration happens through MOOC classroom activities, teacher lectures, and discussions, achieving the dual goals of knowledge transmission and value cultivation.

Pathway Two: Supporting primarily applies to the practical training component, which is supported by the library's rich information resources. For example, carefully designed retrieval cases combining professional knowledge and ideological elements are presented to students through demonstration and explanation. Students' comprehensive internship reports must integrate ideology with professional knowledge, thereby fusing ideological education within practical training.

Pathway Three: Collaborative relies on library information resources through the embedded teaching practice course. Collaborating with teachers of ideological and political theory courses (such as Current Affairs and Policy), librarians guide students in using information management tools to collect literature and write course papers, which are then checked using CNKI's plagiarism detection system. This creates synergy with ideological and political courses. Additionally, in theoretical teaching, collaborative pathways are constructed by guiding students to apply Marxist dialectical materialism in analyzing and solving problems regarding platform universality and retrieval strategy adjustment, achieving coordinated education with ideological and political courses.

4.3 Implementation Strategies

With clear pathways established, the curriculum ideology and politics reform research group began developing implementation plans to integrate reforms into daily teaching.

4.3.1 Developing Guidelines for Ideological Elements Excavating ideological and political resources is a prerequisite. Given that information literacy education integrates general and professional education, the team first categorized course knowledge points into general, professional, and hybrid types. Team members then excavated implicit ideological elements in these knowledge points. General and hybrid (general portion) knowledge points were evenly distributed among all members. Professional and hybrid (professional portion) knowledge points were grouped by discipline category—agriculture and life sciences, engineering, and social sciences—according to members' academic backgrounds. The collected materials were compiled into guidelines for ideological elements in information literacy education, with excerpts shown in .

4.3.2 Teaching Models While excavating elements is essential, introducing them naturally and subtly without appearing forced remains challenging. Based on teaching experience and collected materials, the team summarized three pedagogical models.

Model One: New Media Technology Application Method integrates ideological elements into online tutorials using new media. The library's *Information Retrieval and Utilization* course employs blended teaching, with recorded videos uploaded to China MOOC's independent SPOC platform. To embed ideological elements, team members leveraged professional expertise to search for relevant video materials, using screen recording and video editing software to integrate these materials with course content. For example, when introducing the concept of literature, the team collected videos about "Wang Yirong's discovery of oracle bones," "learning enough to fill five carts," and discussions on civilization carriers by Ma Weidu. These were edited and integrated with courseware, helping students understand literature concepts while appreciating scientific research attitudes and Chinese cultural elements carried by literature carriers, thereby fostering cultural confidence. This model uses the embedded pathway and can be summarized in three steps: (1) identify suitable knowledge points, (2) search for relevant ideological video materials, and (3) use new media software to integrate them, as illustrated in [Figure 3: see original paper].

Model Two: Case Teaching Method permeates ideological elements through practical instruction. Developing retrieval competency is the core objective, making case teaching essential. The key lies in selecting and designing cases that effectively integrate ideological elements. The team developed both general and discipline-specific cases, using flipped classroom methods where students demonstrate operations and teachers provide heuristic commentary.

A general case example requires students to use FULink's professional search function to retrieve patents applied for by the university in two periods: the past five years (2016-2020) and the preceding period (1985-2015). This model uses the supporting pathway, embedding ideological education within the development of retrieval skills through analysis of subject concepts, logical relationships among search terms, and formulation of search strategies, as shown in [Figure 4: see original paper].

Model Three: Project Teaching Method achieves ideological objectives through completing practical tasks. This model uses the collaborative pathway in the embedded teaching practice module. Students complete projects in 4-5 person groups, fostering friendliness and collaboration. Project topics must incorporate ideological elements—either from ideological and political courses or professional courses with ideological components, requiring instructor approval. Students learn to use NoteExpress (NE) for literature management, document the process with screenshots, write papers following academic formatting standards, and submit to plagiarism detection (with a 20% similarity threshold). Finally, students conduct peer and intragroup evaluations based on assessment criteria, cultivating fairness and objectivity. Through project completion, this

model achieves collaborative education with ideological and political courses while nurturing socialist core values and academic integrity.

These three models emerged from teaching practice but require further refinement. Other approaches, such as discussion-based teaching and assessment integration, have been attempted but not yet formalized into models.

5. Reflections on Curriculum Ideology and Politics Practice in University Library Information Literacy Education

Curriculum ideology and politics represents a significant leap in higher education teaching philosophy, enriching course content and expanding educational functions while making ideological and political education more vibrant. Reflecting on over a year of reform practice yields several insights worth sharing with colleagues.

5.1 Strengthening Teacher Team Development

The success of curriculum ideology and politics reform ultimately depends on teachers. Enhancing teachers' political and ideological levels and strengthening their ideological awareness is essential for implementing the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education.

5.1.1 Unified Understanding The Information Retrieval and Utilization Teaching and Research Office has seven faculty members, some with over 30 years of teaching experience who believed ideological education was not their responsibility, and some non-Party members who felt unqualified to conduct ideological education. To address these challenges, the author, as office head, engaged in individual conversations and organized study sessions on President Xi Jinping's statements about curriculum ideology and politics, conducting "educators must first educate themselves" activities to unify understanding and build a cohesive team.

5.1.2 Avoiding Misconceptions After achieving ideological consensus, the team addressed implementation challenges by avoiding three pitfalls: (1) implementing curriculum ideology and politics rather than converting information literacy courses into ideology and politics courses; (2) ensuring all ideological content serves course content rather than appearing separate and forced; and (3) recognizing that ideological content should be concise and resonate with students through appropriate methods, playing a "finishing touch" role rather than becoming the teacher's monologue.

5.1.3 Collective Wisdom The team adopted collective lesson preparation, dividing general content among members for element excavation and integration design. Professional content was assigned by discipline category while maintaining collaboration through QQ and WeChat groups for sharing insights. This

approach allowed each teacher to specialize while benefiting from collective wisdom, ensuring successful reform implementation.

5.2 Textbook Construction Considerations

Textbook construction forms the foundation of curriculum development. Since 2000, the library has primarily used self-compiled or co-compiled textbooks that evolved from comprehensive to discipline-specific and back to comprehensive formats. The current textbook, *Information Retrieval and Utilization Tutorial* (Zhejiang University Press, 2014), synthesized three previous discipline-specific volumes and serves teaching needs well. However, with the emergence of curriculum ideology and politics, its content no longer meets reform requirements. Revising the textbook to incorporate ideological elements and fulfill the task of fostering virtue through education has become urgent. The team plans to develop digital textbooks in subsequent phases.

5.3 Teaching Quality Evaluation

As a new teaching model, curriculum ideology and politics in information literacy education remains exploratory, with no established evaluation experience. While evaluation of moral education outcomes has not yet become a formal agenda item, it will constitute a crucial component of the teaching process and a driving force for reform development. Evaluation can proceed from two perspectives: teacher assessment and student assessment.

5.3.1 Teacher Assessment Universities generally have well-established teacher evaluation systems comprising student online evaluations, teaching supervision observations, and annual performance reviews. Rather than creating a separate system, curriculum ideology and politics evaluation can be integrated by adding relevant indicators to student evaluation forms, including curriculum ideology and politics effectiveness in supervision observations, and strengthening evaluation of teachers' ideological learning and professional ethics in annual assessments. This enhances teachers' recognition of the importance of curriculum ideology and politics and promotes reform across all courses.

5.3.2 Student Assessment From the reform objectives' perspective, understanding whether curriculum ideology and politics achieves intended goals is essential. While knowledge acquisition can be evaluated through conventional exercises and examinations, assessing moral education outcomes requires alternative methods such as questionnaires and classroom discussions. Specific evaluation schemes remain to be designed in subsequent reform phases.

Curriculum ideology and politics represents a strategic measure for universities to fulfill their fundamental task of fostering virtue through education. Its advancement is a gradual process. Tactically, no universal model exists—"there is no fixed teaching method, only effective methods." Information literacy education curriculum ideology and politics requires continuous exploration. With

emerging theories and technologies, only through ongoing practice, exploration, and summarization can new ideological elements be integrated, keeping information literacy education fresh and relevant. As an educational philosophy, curriculum ideology and politics will remain a continuous journey.

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Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

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