

Exploration and Practice of Ideological and Political Education for Top-Notch Talents under the Academy System: A Case Study of Qian Xuesen Academy at Xi'an Jiaotong University (Post-print)

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Abstract

With the deepening of higher education reform, strengthening the cultivation of top-notch innovative talents constitutes an exploration and endeavor in China's educational enterprise, while ideological and political education for top talents represents a critical link in building a higher education powerhouse. However, under the existing residential college management model, ideological and political education for top students faces numerous practical challenges, constrained by objective factors such as the dual-college collaborative education mechanism and simultaneously influenced by subjective factors including the developmental characteristics of top students. In view of this, this article summarizes the significance and advantages of strengthening ideological and political education for top talents within the residential college system, analyzes the dilemmas encountered in implementing such education for top students, and elaborates on the explorations and practices conducted in this domain.

Full Text

Exploration and Practice of Ideological and Political Education for Top-tier Talents under the Academy System: A Case Study of Qian Xuesen Academy at Xi'an Jiaotong University

With the deepening of higher education reform, strengthening the cultivation of top-tier innovative talents represents an important exploration and endeavor in China's educational undertaking, while ideological and political education for these talents constitutes a critical link in building a strong higher education

nation. However, under the existing academy system management model, ideological and political education for top-tier students faces numerous practical challenges, constrained by both objective factors such as the dual-college collaborative education mechanism and subjective factors related to the developmental characteristics of top-tier students. In view of this, this article summarizes the significance and advantages of strengthening ideological and political education for top-tier talents under the academy system, analyzes the dilemmas faced in implementing such education, and elaborates on relevant explorations and practices.

Faced with new situations, characteristics, and requirements, implementing academy system management, like the top-tier innovative talent cultivation system, represents an active exploration and effective attempt at higher education reform. Advancing academy system pilots constitutes an important measure for implementing comprehensive university reforms, exploring talent cultivation models, improving talent cultivation quality, and promoting institutional development. Centered on fostering virtue through education, academy system education carries out ideological and political education through implementing a tutorial system, constructing rich and colorful second classroom systems, and other “one-stop” student community comprehensive management models to promote students’ all-round development.

The traditional model of ancient Chinese education was based on the academy system, which balanced knowledge transmission and moral cultivation to achieve individualized teaching. In recent years, the new academy system education model has drawn upon the fine traditions of ancient Chinese academies and the residential college system of Western universities, gathering students from different majors in a relatively concentrated small community for management. This educational model has become an active exploration and effective attempt at higher education reform in China, gradually making academies an important carrier for conducting ideological and political work for top-tier talents. This article takes Qian Xuesen Academy at Xi’an Jiaotong University as an example to explore the environmental advantages, dilemmas, and pathways of ideological and political education for top-tier talents within the framework of the “grand ideological and political education” cultivation pattern under the academy system model.

I. Advantages of the Academy System Background for Strengthening Ideological and Political Education for Top-tier Talents

Ideological and political work represents the lifeline of all university work, concerning the fundamental question of what kind of people to cultivate, how to cultivate them, and for whom. At the symposium for teachers of ideological and political theory courses, General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that “school ideological and political work is not simply a linear task, but should be

all-encompassing,” and emphasized the need to “leverage the integrated, embedded, and infiltrated collaborative effect of fostering virtue through education.” The academy system emerged in response to contemporary needs and during the active promotion of institutional innovation in ideological and political education in universities, serving as an important means for achieving all-staff education in ideological and political work. Under the academy system, the effective implementation of ideological and political education holds significant importance for the comprehensive cultivation of top-tier talents. The fundamental task of university talent cultivation is to nurture well-rounded socialist builders and successors with moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor education. Therefore, under the academy system background, how to effectively carry out ideological and political education for top-tier talents and enable this “lifeline” of ideological and political work to burst with new vitality in the new era holds important practical significance for answering the fundamental question of “what kind of people to cultivate, how to cultivate them, and for whom.”

To better adapt to the new situations, tasks, forms, and requirements of higher education in the new era, improve governance systems, actively yet prudently advance academy system reforms, and innovate talent cultivation models, the Ministry of Education and provincial education departments have repeatedly proposed in documents the need to actively explore innovative talent cultivation models. On September 24, 2017, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council issued the “Opinions on Deepening the Reform of Education Mechanisms and Systems,” which explicitly proposed in Article 6 on talent cultivation reform to “explore the establishment of learning and living platforms such as academy systems and residential college systems that facilitate communication and discussion between teachers and students.” On April 3, 2023, the Shaanxi Provincial Department of Education issued the “Notice from the Shaanxi Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China Education Work Committee and Shaanxi Provincial Department of Education on Comprehensively Carrying Out the Construction of ‘One-Stop’ Student Community Comprehensive Management Models,” aiming to break through the “last mile of education” and accelerate the construction of “one-stop” student community comprehensive management models. In other words, the “academy system” is proposed from the height of innovating talent cultivation mechanisms and represents an important measure for talent cultivation reform for three reasons:

First, under the academy system cultivation model, a long-term mechanism has been formed that integrates education through teaching, management, service, culture, and organization, incorporating ideological and political education into the entire process of top-tier students’ learning and life. Strengthening the integration of ideological education, general education, and professional education, and leveraging rich and diverse second classroom activities, can present ideological and political education content in vivid and engaging ways. Second, the academy system facilitates the construction of a whole-process education environment, providing more diverse work scenarios for ideological and political

education. The original model of conducting ideological and political education by grade and class, resembling a “one-size-fits-all” approach, can no longer fully meet the diverse needs of top-tier students. Additionally, students now have more varied channels for obtaining information, and the ways they express their thoughts are quietly changing. Under the credit system, students have more flexible autonomy in course selection, free time, and student activities, with top-tier students placing greater emphasis on personalized needs. Meanwhile, the rapid development of the internet has profoundly impacted students’ learning and lifestyles. Finally, academies can construct an all-round education space, possessing natural advantages for conducting ideological and political education. An academy serves as both students’ “living space” and an emotional community based on community space. Within this community, the academy’s internal atmosphere has implicit educational functions, allowing top-tier students’ initiative to be fully mobilized and their participation in various activities to be enhanced. Through high-level community life participation, top-tier students can develop a strong sense of ownership, strengthen their identification with and belonging to the academy community, and ultimately form centripetal force and cohesion. Through academy system construction, value concepts and emotional attitudes can be subtly guided across different scenarios, internalized in students’ hearts and externalized in their actions, thereby enabling them to establish correct worldviews, outlooks on life, and values.

II. Dilemmas in Conducting Ideological and Political Education for Top-tier Talents under the Academy System

1. Incomplete Academy Model and Hollow Spiritual Core

The academy system originated from the residential colleges of Oxford and Cambridge Universities and was introduced to mainland China after Hong Kong Chinese University successfully emulated the reform. Many scholars believe that China’s current academy system merely copies the Western model, ignoring both the Western tradition of “academies first, then universities” and the reality of China’s top-down university management model, considering it nothing more than “idealistic beauty and formalistic patchwork.” The name “academy” reflects a beautiful vision for inheriting the spiritual essence of traditional Chinese academies. However, in actual reform processes, some universities have only imitated Western academy management models in form, with most established academies lacking their own distinctive features and merely becoming new tools for student management.

Academy system reform must inherit the spiritual core of ancient Chinese traditional academies, aiming to build academies with unique institutional characteristics, offer school-based courses, and construct modern academies that align with socialist core values, embody the spirit of the times, promote students’ all-round development, and achieve the fundamental educational goal of fostering virtue through education.

2. Difficult Dual-College Coordination and Unclear Functional Posi-

tioning

Chinese universities implement a “dual-college system” under the academy system model, breaking the original organizational and management patterns. The two management systems of academies and colleges undoubtedly increase communication and coordination difficulties, leading to conflicts in scheduling, personnel allocation, and resource distribution, which hinder the development of ideological and political education work in academies. Many students, especially freshmen, easily become overwhelmed in student affairs management when they fail to fully understand the university’s student cultivation management system. Moreover, the problem of insufficiently deep collaboration with professional colleges persists, and further research is needed on how to form synergy among curriculum ideology, ideological and political courses, and academy ideological and political education work. Therefore, how to open up new institutional space for top-tier innovative talent cultivation within the framework designed for the majority of students, resolve conflicts, coordinate relationships, and form synergy represents an urgent issue to be addressed in the current ideological and political education process for top-tier talents.

3. Ineffective Education under Dual-College Collaborative Management

The general education conducted under the academy system is organized outside professional education classrooms based on students’ free time. However, since students come from different colleges and majors, effectively managing top-tier students’ free time to achieve cross-disciplinary general education has become a problem facing the current academy system. Reviewing the development of academies across various universities, significant issues remain in time coordination due to students’ scattered schedules. The general education in many academies has become formalistic, the effectiveness of the second classroom is weak, and some second classroom activities have even evolved into mandatory participation, resulting in low student enthusiasm for academy activities. This directly affects the achievement of general education goals intended by academy activities and the second classroom. Low participation reduces students’ sense of belonging and responsibility toward the academy, turning it into a burden. Therefore, the academy system should better leverage its advantages to improve student participation and the effectiveness of ideological and political education.

4. Individualistic Tendencies and Unsatisfactory Ideological and Political Education

Insufficient recognition of the importance of ideological and political education for top-tier students leads to a phenomenon of emphasizing professional skills over quality cultivation. Students themselves lack adequate understanding of ideological and political education and proper guidance and education. Constrained by the talent cultivation methods for top-tier students, the effectiveness of ideological and political education work is unsatisfactory.

First, most top-tier talent cultivation programs adopt elimination and diversion mechanisms. Changes in student status and counselors affect the normal devel-

opment of ideological and political work and constrain the growth of top-tier talents. Second, most programs use funding and credit exchange to encourage international exchange studies, creating inconveniences for academies in conducting ideological and political work. For example, party member development, investigation, and cultivation are affected, and some younger students from special programs, being more active thinkers, are susceptible to foreign ideological influences during overseas exchanges, increasing the difficulty of ideological and political education. Third, most top-tier talents are attracted through “guaranteed postgraduate recommendation with quotas.” After enrollment, students focus only on their own academic pursuits and show low enthusiasm for collective activities, party membership, and award applications that serve as leverage points for academy ideological and political work.

III. Paths for Conducting Ideological and Political Education for Top-tier Talents under the Academy System

1. Taking Ideological Guidance as the Main Line to Deepen the Second Classroom for Top-tier Talent Cultivation

Through freshman cultivation education to strengthen university adaptation, comprehensive ability programs to improve overall quality, and career planning to enhance motivation and direction, the three processes of adaptation, improvement, and development continuously deepen ideological and political education. This leverages the functional role of ideological and political education for top-tier students within the academy system framework and enhances the educational effectiveness of the second classroom.

1.1 Securing the Entry Point of Freshman Cultivation Education

Freshman cultivation education aims to help students complete their university adaptation as quickly as possible, guided by the goal of cultivating top-tier disciplinary innovative talents and ultimately promoting students’ all-round development in morality, intelligence, physique, aesthetics, and labor. First, freshman cultivation education represents an important link in implementing ideological and political education, with its primary goal being to help students establish correct political concepts, deeply understand and internalize the “Four Consciousnesses,” and establish the value concepts of the “Four Confidences.” Second, it serves as an important means to help freshmen adapt to university life. Qian Xuesen Academy, centering on the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education and the goal of cultivating top-tier innovative talents, conducts reports and activities for all freshmen in safety education, mental health education, overseas study guidelines, the “Four Hundred” thematic education, and academic and career development education. These initiatives aim to awaken students’ autonomous awareness of career development from the moment of enrollment, rationally plan their future development, promote healthy growth and all-round development, and enhance university talent cultivation quality. Finally, freshman cultivation education is an important pathway for freshmen to

complete their role transition and construct their identity as Jiaotong University members. Through this education, freshmen can deeply understand university history and context, trace the origins of institutional development, inherit and carry forward the core and contemporary connotations of the Westward Relocation Spirit, and better fulfill the mission of Jiaotong University members.

1.2 Promoting Comprehensive Quality Improvement for University Students

Following the educational philosophy of alumnus Qian Xuesen, Qian Xuesen Academy constructs a modern science and technology system, dedicated to developing a curriculum system that is interdisciplinary, broad-based, and systematic, cultivating students' diversified knowledge structures. Among these, social practice is an indispensable practical component in top-tier talent cultivation and also important content for deepening second classroom education. The purpose of the summer comprehensive ability practice is to allow students to enrich their extracurricular lives and develop interests and hobbies while studying, ultimately achieving the goal of expanding their knowledge, enhancing their self-competitiveness, and achieving all-round development. The course takes "theoretical lectures + practical experience + reflection sharing" as its main form, realizing the implementation of curriculum-based ideological and political education.

2. Taking Multi-dimensional Collaboration as the Guiding Thread to Advocate a Complementary Dual-College Co-education Model

First, construct the physical space of an "academy-style" honors college to further strengthen effective exploration of the "one-stop" student community comprehensive management model and continuously improve the education quality of the academy living community. The academy provides students with complete learning and living facilities: libraries, academic seminar rooms, lecture halls, laundries, multi-function activity rooms, dance studios, etc., all open to students throughout the day, creating a favorable learning and living environment. Meanwhile, regarding the issues of newly selected students and diverted or eliminated students, Qian Xuesen Academy actively coordinates with other departments, arranges campus dormitory resources, respects students' relocation preferences, and properly resolves accommodation issues. Additionally, it clarifies responsibility boundaries with professional colleges in student teaching, research, and daily affairs management, strengthens communication and integration, and forms a benign coordination and interaction mechanism. During freshman cultivation education, the relationship and functions between the two are introduced in detail to freshmen, ensuring that students can have their problems properly resolved in both academic learning and campus life, thereby grasping the focal points of ideological and political education.

Second, some top-tier students exhibit vague self-cognition, self-intoxication, and self-centered behavioral orientations, while simultaneously possessing excellent personalities such as great potential, independent thinking, and strong

achievement motivation. Therefore, the task of guiding top-tier innovative talents to overcome negative personality traits and develop positive ones becomes more prominent and important. As the backbone of academy ideological and political work, counselors must conduct more refined and personalized ideological and political education. This personalized work must take the disciplinary characteristics of experimental classes as the entry point, persist in delving into students' actual ideological, learning, and living conditions, grasp individual student characteristics, engage in face-to-face interaction and communication, help them solve practical problems, timely correct cognition and behavior, and use role models to inspire them to integrate knowledge with action and realize life values.

3. Taking Academy Characteristics as the Long-term Line to Highlight the Cultural Education Function of Academy Spirit

In 2018, Xi Jinping further emphasized at the National Conference on Propaganda and Ideological Work that “cultivating new people means adhering to fostering virtue through education and educating people through culture.” In September 2018, at the National Education Conference, he encouraged educators to “persist in educating and cultivating people through culture to improve students' aesthetic and humanistic qualities.” Therefore, ideological and political education and cultural education are interrelated, interactive, and internally unified: cultural education itself is a form of ideological and political work and an important focal point for ideological and political education. Cultural education is a natural measure for ideological and political education. Only by organically integrating and deeply infiltrating culture into ideological and political education, and leveraging the “soft” power of culture to influence and nurture people, can ideological and political education better educate and guide people, ultimately enhancing students' ideological and moral qualities and endowing them with spiritual strength. Culture rich in ideological and moral resources makes ideological and political education more humane, endowing it with intrinsic cultural heritage, characteristics, and quality. Overall, ideological and political work in universities should attach greater importance to and fully leverage the guiding role of cultural education.

3.1 Taking Culture as Content

Alumnus Qian Xuesen' s “Great Wisdom Science” is profound and extensive, and his “Qian Xuesen' s Question” is thought-provoking. His series of ideological propositions have effectively promoted the transformation of educational concepts and the modernization of education, becoming an important guide for knowledge innovation, educational innovation, and ideological and cultural innovation in the 21st century. Named after alumnus Qian Xuesen and guided by his great wisdom, Qian Xuesen Academy has formed its characteristic Qian Xuesen Spirit—patriotism, dedication, truth-seeking, and innovation. The academy also uses this “Qian Xuesen Spirit” as its spiritual guidance and action guide for directing the ideological and political education of top-tier talents.

3.2 Taking Politics as Guidance

Promoting and inheriting the Qian Xuesen Spirit runs through freshman cultivation education, daily ideological and political education, and party spirit education. Party and youth league branches adhere to the “four entries and two promotions,” with party members and youth league members “entering dormitories, entering branches, entering communities, and entering the masses.” They organize participation in various volunteer activities such as freshman orientation services, graduate dormitory cleaning, civilized dining tables, and academic tutoring, thereby “promoting the Qian Xuesen Spirit and promoting the Westward Relocation Spirit” in practice. Through cultural guidance, the remarkable effect of “party building leading youth league building, and youth league building promoting party building” is achieved.

3.3 Taking Education as the Carrier

Under the guidance of the Qian Xuesen Spirit, the academy carries out a series of characteristic cultural education activities to realize ideological and political education for top-tier talents.

—**Fostering virtue through education is the foundation.** To commemorate Qian Xuesen, December 11 is designated as Qian Xuesen Day. Qian Xuesen Academy organizes activities such as laying flowers at Qian’s bronze statue, coming-of-age ceremonies for gifted youth program students, “Qian and Qian Xun,” and Qian Xuesen fan qualification exams. These activities continuously inspire students to inherit and carry forward Qian’s scientific spirit, allowing them to genuinely feel his unremitting pioneering spirit and his great patriotic passion to serve the motherland, integrating the Qian Xuesen Spirit into daily ideological and political education.

—**Enlightening through wisdom is the core.** Following Qian Xuesen’s modern science and technology framework, the academy builds a curriculum system that breaks professional barriers and cultivates world-class engineering leaders with interdisciplinary backgrounds to meet the country’s diversified and major needs. The Qian Xuesen Lecture Hall invites domestic and foreign scholars to give lectures on cutting-edge technology, organizational behavior, astrophysics and geography, brain and cognitive science, military science, Qian Xuesen’s educational and ideological research, literature and art, etc., with over a hundred sessions held to date.

—**Cultivating through aesthetics is the breakthrough.** Centered on Qian Xuesen’s educational thought, the academy comprehensively shapes its unique cultural brand. Inspired by the exploration and reflection on “Qian Xuesen’s Question,” it designs and produces the academy emblem and image wall. Featuring the educational culture of “comprehensive mastery, gaining wisdom” and “integration of science and art,” it holds aesthetic education activities such as Qian Xuesen Academy concerts. To promote the Qian Xuesen Spirit, it stages the student-created drama “Return · Date,” making the Qian Xuesen Spirit vis-

ible, tangible, and perceptible, and taking practical actions to answer “Qian Xuesen’s Question.”

4. Taking Autonomous Management as the Baseline to Improve Student Organizational Capacity of Top-tier Talents

Today’s cultivation of top-tier talents not only pursues academic excellence but also focuses on capacity building and quality improvement. Strengthening students’ self-education, self-management, and self-service capabilities will bring about all-round education and cultivation.

Under the philosophy of “addressing students’ academic needs at different levels, organizing and coordinating various types of teaching resources both on and off campus, building bridges between teachers and students, constructing platforms, and providing high-quality personalized tutoring,” Qian Xuesen Academy has established an Academic Tutoring Center. Focusing on four aspects— “solidly promoting academic assistance, actively empowering growth, guiding innovation and entrepreneurship through multiple measures, and deeply promoting mutual teaching and learning”—the center strengthens top-tier students’ self-organization and management capabilities, fully leverages the positive role of role models, and achieves peer ideological guidance.

The Academic Tutoring Center has three departments: Office, Academic Research Department, and Publicity Department. The Office is responsible for daily Q&A and lecture arrangements, the Academic Research Department edits the “Everest Journal” and compiles learning materials, and the Publicity Department manages backend operations and online series promotions. The center currently has over 90 volunteers and has established specialized groups for mathematics experimental materials compilation, chemistry and biology materials compilation, C++ programming design, basic course Q&A, website construction team, and Everest Journal editorial department. Through self-management among top-tier students, it promotes the spirit of “achieving academic success and continuously climbing to new heights.”

The Academic Tutoring Center has signed agreements with Nanjing University, University of Science and Technology of China, Shanghai Jiaotong University, Chinese Academy of Sciences, and other top-tier institutions to establish the “University Basic Science Joint Academic Forum,” advancing winter vacation discussion classes and other activities. It also co-hosted the first cross-university science forum with the Student Union of Kuang Yaming College at Nanjing University and the Gewuzhizhi Society at the University of Science and Technology of China, promoting mutual influence and ideological and political education among top-tier talents through inter-university student linkages.

In conclusion, as an experimental field for China’s education and teaching reform, implementing academy system construction has become the mainstream trend in the education development of top-tier talents in Chinese universities. In the new era context, the effectiveness of ideological and political education for top-tier students under the academy system is of great significance and

far-reaching impact for China's higher education development and enhancing national scientific and technological innovation strength. Although ideological and political work for top-tier students under the academy system still faces many difficulties and challenges, strengthening multi-college integration, coordinating education mechanisms, considering the characteristics of top-tier talent cultivation models and the growth features of top-tier students within the existing academy ideological and political work system, and forming new practical experience in ideological and political work will not only benefit the development of the academy system but also provide new experience for cultivating top-tier talents into qualified socialist builders and successors.

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The Value Implications and Practical Paths of Academy Cultural Education from the Perspective of “Grand Ideological and Political Courses”

Academies serve not only as students' accommodation and activity spaces but also as their ideological and cultural exchange spaces and educational venues for conducting ideological and political education. Academies leveraging cultural education to continuously promote the construction of “Grand Ideological and Political Courses” represent an inevitable requirement for implementing the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, an inevitable choice for strengthening cultural confidence, and an inevitable measure for cultivating new era talents. With information technology development, educational objects and means in academies present new characteristics, while cultural education in academies still needs strengthening in functional cognition, resource excavation, team integration, and method innovation. To effectively promote the quality and efficiency of ideological and political work and achieve the goal of cultivating new era talents, it is necessary to optimize academy cultural space construction, deepen academy cultural resource excavation, strengthen academy cultural education teams, and transform academy cultural education methods to promote “Grand Ideological and Political Courses” construction.

Keywords: Academy System; Grand Ideological and Political Courses; Cultural Education

Since 2005, Fudan University and Xi'an Jiaotong University, inheriting the fine traditions of ancient Chinese academies and drawing upon Western academy system construction experience, were the first universities in China to establish academies and pioneer general education reforms. Since then, nearly a hundred domestic universities have begun exploring academy system talent cultivation

models. To date, academies have become not only students' accommodation and activity spaces but also their ideological and cultural exchange spaces and educational venues for ideological and political education. General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that "it is very necessary to offer ideological and political courses progressively and spirally in primary, secondary, and tertiary education, as it is an important guarantee for cultivating generations of socialist builders and successors" and that "we must make good use of the 'Grand Ideological and Political Courses,' which must be combined with reality." As an important front for universities to conduct ideological and political education for college students, academies possess rich educational resources and broad educational platforms for promoting "Grand Ideological and Political Courses" construction. Cultural education, as one of the ten major projects for improving the quality of ideological and political work in universities, holds important significance for implementing the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education and cultivating new era talents. Therefore, academies must fully leverage their cultural education role, continuously promote "Grand Ideological and Political Courses" construction, and effectively enhance the quality and efficiency of ideological and political work.

I. The Value Implications of "Grand Ideological and Political Courses" Construction for Academy Cultural Education

General Secretary Xi Jinping has repeatedly emphasized that education should achieve "educating and cultivating people through culture." Universities fully excavate the characteristic connotations of academy culture, integrate excellent traditional Chinese culture, revolutionary culture, and advanced socialist culture into the academy education system, use cultural education to boost academy general education construction, promote the organic combination of first and second classrooms, and advance ideological and political courses and curriculum ideology in the same direction. This holds important value for implementing the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, strengthening cultural confidence, and cultivating new era talents.

1. An Inevitable Requirement for Implementing the Fundamental Task of Fostering Virtue through Education

The concept of fostering virtue through education is rooted in Chinese culture. The "fostering virtue" idea can be traced back to the "Three Imperishables" proposed in the *Zuo Zhuan* (Xianggong 24th Year) during the Spring and Autumn period: "The highest is establishing virtue, second is establishing achievement, and third is establishing discourse, which never fade and are called the three imperishables." The "cultivating people" idea was first mentioned in *Guanzi* (Quanxiu) during the Spring and Autumn period: "For lifelong planning, nothing is better than cultivating people." The combined term "fostering virtue through education" was first used in 2007 when Comrade Hu Jintao stated at the National Forum on Outstanding Teachers: "We must adhere to education-oriented and moral education-first principles, taking fostering virtue through

education as the fundamental task of education.” In 2012, the report of the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China first explicitly wrote “taking fostering virtue through education as the fundamental task of education” into the work report. In the new era, General Secretary Xi Jinping has repeatedly emphasized the need to “implement the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education” and “persist in taking fostering virtue through education as the central link.” Ideological and political courses are the key to implementing this fundamental task, and “Grand Ideological and Political Courses” construction provides new ideas for answering the fundamental educational question of “for whom to cultivate people, what kind of people to cultivate, and how to cultivate people.” As an important field for universities to conduct ideological and political work, academies leveraging cultural education to promote “Grand Ideological and Political Courses” construction reflects the inevitable requirement for implementing the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education, requiring ideological and political work to run through the entire education process and making the background, confidence, and heritage of cultural education more vibrant, sufficient, and profound.

2. An Inevitable Choice for Strengthening Cultural Confidence

Culture carries ideas. To conduct good ideological and political work for students, it is necessary to fully utilize cultural resources to empower ideological and political work. On the one hand, the excellent traditional Chinese culture, revolutionary culture, and advanced socialist culture nurtured over 5,000 years of history constitute cultural resources for academy ideological and political education. Academies’ full utilization of these cultural resources in education helps students draw nourishment from splendid Chinese civilization, strengthen cultural confidence, enhance national pride, and foster patriotic feelings. On the other hand, academies possess distinctive academy culture. For example, Xi’an Jiaotong University’s Pengkang Academy, one of the earliest academies established in Chinese universities, is named after former President Peng Kang and takes his proposed “active thinking, active learning, active living” as its motto. Peng Kang was a banner figure of the Westward Relocation Spirit and the longest-serving president in Jiaotong University’s history, making indelible contributions to the university’s development. His patriotic struggle stories, revolutionary spirit, and educational thought have become unique cultural education resources for the academy. Similarly, among the 81 academies named after individuals nationwide, 29 are named after university founders or former presidents, 13 after donors, 19 after renowned scholars, and 20 after historical and cultural figures. These academies deeply excavate their stories and spiritual qualities to form unique academy cultures that enhance students’ identification with and belonging to their academies, injecting inexhaustible momentum into talent cultivation.

3. An Inevitable Measure for Cultivating New Era Talents

General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out in the report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China the need to “promote the Chinese Communist Party’s spiritual spectrum originating from the great founding spirit

of the Party, make good use of red resources, deeply carry out socialist core values publicity and education, and deepen patriotism...”

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

Source: ChinaXiv –Machine translation. Verify with original.