

# Specialized Courses Teachers in Chinese Higher Education: Role and Strategies for Severe Employment Situation

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## Abstract

**As the domestic employment situation becomes increasingly complex and competitive, specialized course instructors in higher education play a vital role in employment guidance. This paper explores multiple roles of specialized course teachers based on the significance of their involvement in employment education. Furthermore, the paper proposes strategies for implementing effective employment education by professional course teachers in higher education, including the enhancement of professional employment guidance staff, strengthening the integration of professional courses with employment education, establishing school-enterprise cooperation and feedback mechanisms, and fostering collaboration between professional course teachers and career education departments. Overall, professional course teachers in higher education should take on key responsibilities in students' career planning and employment skills development, supporting them in achieving high-quality employment. Meanwhile, creating a positive interaction mechanism among teachers, students, universities, and society will advance the development of higher education and social progress.**

## Keywords

**Higher education; Teachers of specialized courses; Employment education; Role orientation; Path to realization.**

## 1. Introduction

The fierce competition in China's job market has made the employment of college students a focal point of social attention. Currently, the employment situation for college graduates in China is complex and influenced by various factors. On the one hand, the continual increase in the number of graduates has intensified competition for jobs. On the other hand, the gradual decline in employment opportunities within traditional industries, coupled with a rising demand for high-quality talent in emerging sectors, has led to a pronounced mismatch between supply and demand. Although the domestic economy is slowly recovering, the overall employment landscape remains challenging, due to structural issues and cyclical fluctuations in the economy<sup>[1]</sup>. Additionally, the employment expectations of young job seekers have evolved, with increased demands for higher salaries, job stability, and opportunities for personal development, further complicating the job search process<sup>[2]</sup>.

Against this backdrop, the role of specialized course instructors in higher education has become increasingly critical. These teachers not only serve as the key force driving the reform and development of higher education but also play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of education and promoting high-quality employment outcomes for students. However, the involvement of specialized course instructors in students' employment education remains insufficient. In most institutions, employment education is primarily managed by dedicated career guidance counselors or full-time career services staff, while professional course teachers typically focus on delivering subject-specific content, often neglecting the cultivation of

students' employability skills<sup>[3]</sup>. This limitation can be attributed to several factors: on one hand, the traditional academic-focused teaching model tends to prioritize academic research and the delivery of disciplinary knowledge, often at the expense of career planning and employability training; on the other hand, many professional course instructors exhibit a lack of motivation and awareness regarding their role in employment education, compounded by a lack of proper training and support for vocational guidance. Moreover, a disconnect often exists between the objectives of employment education and those of disciplinary education, resulting in many course instructors failing to align course content with industry needs or effectively guide students in clarifying their career development paths. Therefore, there is a pressing need to enhance the involvement of professional course instructors in employment education, allowing them to play a more substantial role in fostering students' employability.

## **2. The Significance of Participation in Employment Education by Teachers of Specialized Courses in Higher Education**

### **2.1. Guiding Students to Establish a Correct Concept of Employment**

In recent years, the unpredictable development of industries has led to misconceptions among college students regarding employment prospects. Many students lack a deep understanding of the labor market and employer needs, often blindly pursuing high-paying jobs without considering other essential factors, which leads to frustration and failure in the job search. Some students even express doubts about the value of higher education itself and develop a fearful attitude toward the workplace<sup>[4]</sup>. Others exhibit overconfidence during the job-seeking process, hastily accepting job offers without fully assessing their suitability. When these students encounter discrepancies between their expectations and reality or find more attractive opportunities elsewhere, they often experience regret and dissatisfaction. Additionally, some students may approach career choices with a misguided mindset, relying more on social connections than on their own abilities or market demands.

In light of these issues, teachers of specialized courses might consider leveraging their teaching as a platform for employment education. By assisting students in setting clear career goals, teachers can help them develop a rational and pragmatic perspective on employment. This will not only improve their career planning abilities but also enable them to make more informed and realistic decisions about their professional futures.

### **2.2. Improving the Effectiveness of University Employment Guidance**

The core objective of employment education is to improve the quality of graduates' employment outcomes. The stability and long-term success of graduates' career development are important indicators of the effectiveness of employment education.

Delivering subject knowledge may improve students' professional technology, while employment literacy education enhances students' broader employability. For example, practical training in areas such as simulated interviews, communication skills, teamwork, and problem-solving directly boosts students' competitiveness in the job market. By fostering strong workplace adaptability, teachers help students transition smoothly into the professional environment, reducing burnout and enhancing long-term career satisfaction. Additionally, as the demand for innovation and problem-solving skills grows in modern workplaces, specialized course instructors deepen the impact of employment education by nurturing students' creative thinking and independent learning abilities.

### **2.3. Enhancing the Social Service Function of Higher Education**

Encouraging teachers of professional courses in colleges and universities to participate in employment education will help improve the fit between talent training in colleges and

universities and social needs. By adapting curricula to meet industry needs, promoting school-enterprise collaborations, and integrating production, education, and research, teachers ensure that students' professional skills and innovation abilities align with societal development. In doing so, they contribute to sustainable development by cultivating a workforce capable of driving innovation and progress.

As the primary institutions responsible for talent cultivation, colleges and universities play a critical role in promoting social equity and mobility. The involvement of professional course teachers in employment education helps achieve this mission by offering targeted career guidance, particularly to students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This support enables them to overcome social barriers and attain greater social mobility, contributing to a more equitable and harmonious society. Moreover, by instilling a strong sense of professional ethics and social responsibility in students, teachers not only prepare them for successful careers but also empower them to make positive contributions to society, advancing social progress and collective well-being.

### **3. Multiple Roles of Specialized Course Teachers in Employment Education**

#### **3.1. Instructors of Vocational Knowledge and Skills**

Teachers of specialized courses, leveraging their academic expertise and industry experience, are uniquely positioned to address the evolving career needs of students and the dynamic trends within their respective fields. By continuously updating course content, these instructors ensure that students are exposed to the latest developments in professional knowledge and skills. Moreover, they bridge the gap between theoretical learning and practical application through case studies, laboratory exercises, site visits, and simulation projects, providing students with a comprehensive understanding of how academic concepts are applied in real-world contexts.

Understanding students' career choices, the instructors are well aware of the industry certifications and professional qualifications needed for entry into specific fields. They actively guide students in obtaining the necessary credentials to enhance their employability. Furthermore, by collaborating with industry partners, these teachers help develop talent cultivation programs that integrate cutting-edge technologies, refine curriculum structures, and create learning environments closely aligned with labor market demands. Through these efforts, they play a pivotal role in transferring vocational knowledge and skills, ensuring that students are effectively prepared for their future careers.

#### **3.2. Guiding Employment Concepts**

In light of the increasingly challenging employment landscape, characterized by rising instances of delayed employment and job insecurity, teachers of specialized courses bear the essential responsibility of guiding students toward pragmatic employment choices. Within the framework of employment education, instructors emphasize the principle of "employment first, then choose a job," encouraging students to adopt a realistic and flexible approach to career decision-making. By assisting students in adjusting their job selection criteria, teachers play a critical role in shaping their employment mindset, fostering a balanced and rational perspective on the job market.

For students who are uncertain about their professional direction, specialized course instructors support career exploration by providing insights into employment prospects and employer expectations. By optimizing the employment education system, teachers help students enhance their confidence in their career decisions and improve their decision-making abilities. Furthermore, they prevent and address potential psychological issues related to job

searching by offering tailored guidance and emotional support. In addition, teachers encourage students to make career choices that consider various personal factors, including family, work-life balance, and geographical location.

By analyzing students' academic performance and identifying strengths and areas for improvement, teachers promote self-awareness, guiding students toward careers that align with their academic strengths. Through personalized coaching and one-on-one conversations, instructors help students clarify their ideal career paths. Additionally, by serving as role models, specialized course teachers exemplify the spirit of the industry and instill a strong sense of professional responsibility in their students.

### **3.3. Interpreters of Industry Trends**

Specialized course instructors continuously monitor developments in their respective industries, conducting in-depth analyses of technological advancements, policy changes, and shifts in market demand. This vigilance enables them to play a role in interpreting industry trends for students.

Teachers can incorporate these industry dynamics into the curriculum by ensuring that course content is updated to reflect current industry standards and emerging trends. By integrating timely topics into the classroom, instructors help students understand the evolving demands of the labor market and the factors shaping the future of various professions. In this way, educators act as interpreters of industry trends, equipping students with the knowledge they need to anticipate and adapt to changes in the job market.

Furthermore, specialized course instructors can leverage their industry connections to invite prominent experts to share insights on the future of the industry. These experts, often possessing extensive practical experience and deep theoretical knowledge, provide invaluable perspectives that help students understand the characteristics and requirements of different career paths. Through interactions with these industry leaders, students gain critical information that aids in making informed career decisions and strategic career choices.

### **3.4. Connector Between Internship and Employment**

Specialized course teachers build a bridge between student internships and employment. Leveraging their industry experience and professional networks, instructors actively establish partnerships with enterprises to create internship opportunities that align with students' academic backgrounds and personal strengths. By understanding their students' professional characteristics, teachers are well-positioned to recommend suitable internship and employment opportunities, providing personalized guidance that enhances students' career prospects.

Moreover, teachers often serve as professional references, offering recommendations to employers based on students' performance during internships and their overall professional attributes. This collaboration allows students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world contexts and facilitates the development of valuable industry connections that can enhance their career trajectories.

Throughout the internship process, teachers assume the roles of mentors and coordinators, helping students navigate challenges, providing ongoing feedback, and maintaining communication with partnering organizations to ensure that students receive the necessary guidance and support. They are also actively involved in students' career planning, offering personalized advice to help students develop feasible career paths that align with their individual characteristics and market demands.

Furthermore, teachers organize internship experience-sharing sessions, where students can exchange insights and learn from one another's experiences. In collaboration with enterprises, teachers may also establish internship training bases, bringing real-world production projects

and case studies onto campus. This creates an environment that mirrors professional work settings, fostering students' analytical and practical abilities while helping them bridge the gap between academic learning and professional practice.

### **3.5. Trainer of Professional Ethics**

Teachers of specialized courses guide students in developing their professional qualities. In their daily instruction, educators emphasize key attributes such as responsibility, initiative, and teamwork. Through pedagogical methods like situational analysis and role-playing exercises, they enhance students' understanding of industry-specific practices while simultaneously fostering essential professional attitudes, including active learning, effective communication, and innovation.

In addition to classroom instruction, teachers organize opportunities for students to participate in social practice activities, enhancing their sense of social responsibility and civic awareness. These activities help students grasp the broader societal context in which their profession operates.

Equally important, specialized course instructors educate students about the professional ethics and codes of conduct that define their respective industries. By using real-world examples and case studies, they help students understand the significance of upholding ethical standards in their professional lives. In this process, educators serve as role models, embodying the values they aim to instill by adhering to high standards of professional behavior themselves. By setting a strong example, instructors not only shape students' professional ethics but also help them internalize the core values essential for their future careers.

## **4. Response Strategies of Specialized Course Instructors in Employment Education**

### **4.1. Improve the construction of employment guidance teachers**

Improving the guidance level of professional course teachers is a prerequisite for enhancing the quality of employment. Therefore, targeted career development training programs should be offered to help teachers acquire up-to-date career guidance skills<sup>[5]</sup>. These programs should be integrated into their daily teaching and interactions to ensure they reflect current trends and needs. Additionally, an incentive system should be established, linking career guidance training with performance evaluations and promotion opportunities, thus encouraging active participation.

Training should be tailored to teachers at different career stages, whether novice or experienced. Establishing employment guidance study groups can promote cross-disciplinary and inter-school exchanges, share best practices, and improve the overall quality of career guidance. Adequate financial support and flexible training schedules are necessary to ensure both new and senior teachers can access relevant professional development opportunities. Furthermore, integrating career guidance training for specialized course instructors into institutional policies will help create a conducive environment for their professional growth.

### **4.2. Strengthening the Integration of Specialized Courses and Employment Education**

Teachers should integrate employment education into their specialized course design. This can be achieved by incorporating case studies and project-based learning to show the real-world application of professional knowledge, making the courses more practical and relevant. Teachers can also organize career planning competitions and work experience simulations to raise students' awareness of career development and employability.

By incorporating hands-on experiences such as experiments, internships, and practical training, students can further develop their vocational skills and operational abilities. These activities help students clarify their career interests and better prepare for future employment. Moreover, course content should be regularly updated to reflect the latest industry advancements, ensuring that students receive knowledge that aligns with market demands. Teachers should remain attuned to industry trends, adapting their teaching materials and methods as needed. Inviting industry experts to share insights into current trends and career opportunities will further support students' understanding of the job market.

#### **4.3. Establishing School-Enterprise Connections and Feedback Mechanisms**

School-enterprise cooperation is an effective strategy. Colleges and universities should establish clear assessment standards for cooperative projects, which include the completion of internship tasks, the quality of internship reports, and the overall performance during internships. Through joint assessments between schools and enterprises, a comprehensive evaluation of the internship process and outcomes can be conducted, allowing for dual assessments and a thorough understanding of students' internship experiences.

Regular feedback strengthens the connection between schools and enterprises. Professional teachers should actively monitor the employment situations of graduates within their respective organizations, analyze this information, adjust course offerings, enrollment strategies, and course designs accordingly, and ensure that the teaching content aligns with students' employment needs. Schools should collaborate closely with enterprises, solicit feedback, and make recommendations for improvements in professional programs to better prepare students for employment.

#### **4.4. Promoting Collaboration Between Universities and Employment Education Departments**

Collaboration between specialized course teachers and employment education departments is essential for enhancing students' employment outcomes. Teachers should regularly meet with these departments to discuss current employment trends, market demands, and curriculum improvements. These collaborative efforts should focus on developing and optimizing employment guidance courses that closely align with real-world job requirements.

An effective information-sharing system is crucial for staying informed about job market dynamics, employer demands, and industry trends. This system enables real-time adjustments to teaching content and methods, ensuring that academic programs meet industry needs. Additionally, joint efforts to organize career planning workshops, job fairs, and enterprise visits can provide students with valuable opportunities to engage with industry professionals and gain a deeper understanding of career prospects.

By working together, specialized course teachers and employment education departments can offer students professional certifications and skills training, thereby enhancing their competitiveness in the job market. Encouraging teachers to participate in career development training organized by employment education departments will further improve their guidance skills. This collaboration will provide comprehensive support for students' employment success and long-term career development.

### **5. Conclusion**

As competition in my country's job market intensifies, colleges and universities must deeply understand the role of professional teachers and their coping strategies in enhancing students' employability and professional ethics. Key strategies to improve the quality of employment education include strengthening the professional development of employment guidance teachers, promoting the deep integration of professional teaching and employment education,

establishing an effective feedback mechanism between schools and enterprises, and fostering close cooperation with employment education departments. Implementing these strategies can facilitate a virtuous interaction among teachers, students, and institutions, ultimately advancing both higher education and society.

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