

Interdisciplinary Teaching Reconstruction of the Brand Image Design Course from the Perspective of New Liberal Arts

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Abstract

The construction of new liberal arts takes interdisciplinary integration, in-depth industry-education collaboration and comprehensive literacy cultivation as its core, providing a new paradigm for the teaching reform of art courses in universities. As a core course of visual communication design majors, Brand Image Design is characterized by aesthetics, applicability and cultural communication, with prominent interdisciplinary attributes. Based on the concept of new liberal arts, combined with industry development trends and university teaching status quo, this paper constructs a five-in-one teaching system featuring "disciplinary crossover, content restructuring, scenario linkage, digital intelligent empowerment and diversified evaluation", and innovates teaching and practice modes through interdisciplinary knowledge integration. Teaching practice proves that this system can break the barriers of single-discipline teaching, cultivate students' cross-border thinking, innovative design and market landing capabilities, promote the transformation of courses from single skill teaching to literacy-oriented and integrated teaching, and provide feasible practical and theoretical references for the new liberal arts reform of art courses.

Keywords

New liberal arts, Brand Image Design, interdisciplinary teaching, curriculum restructuring, industry-education integration.

1. Introduction

The construction of new liberal arts is the core strategy for the high-quality development of China's higher education in the new era. It breaks the disciplinary barriers of traditional liberal arts, art and business, and promotes the transformation of literature and art courses from single knowledge teaching to comprehensive literacy cultivation with the goals of "interdisciplinary integration, integrity and innovation, industrial empowerment and moral education". With the rise of national trend culture, the development of digital economy and the upgrading of the brand industry, the industry's demand for brand design talents has changed. Instead of only valuing basic visual skills, the industry is increasingly eager for compound cross-border talents with aesthetic creation, market research and judgment, cultural interpretation, digital application and brand operation capabilities. As a core course connecting artistic creation, commercial market and cultural communication, Brand Image Design undertakes the tasks of brand visual construction, cultural shaping and communication promotion. Restricted by the single discipline of art design, traditional teaching focuses on skill training such as LOGO design, layout and visual specifications, while lacking contents of marketing, cultural empowerment and digital communication. This leads to designs that prioritize aesthetics over practicality, with creations divorced from the market and lacking cultural connotation, failing to meet the industry's requirements for full-case design. Based on the interdisciplinary education concept of new liberal arts, this paper conducts an overall restructuring of the

teaching system, content, mode and evaluation in view of the existing problems of the course, and explores an interdisciplinary teaching path suitable for talent cultivation in the new era.

2. Existing Teaching Problems of Brand Image Design Courses from the Perspective of New Liberal Arts

Under the traditional teaching system, Brand Image Design courses have formed a solidified teaching framework centered on artistic aesthetics and visual skill training. Prominent problems in disciplinary barriers, teaching modes, practice systems and evaluation mechanisms have gradually emerged, which are incompatible with the new liberal arts requirements of interdisciplinary integration, industry-education collaboration and literacy-oriented education, mainly reflected in the following four aspects.[1]

2.1. Solidified Disciplinary Barriers and Simplified Knowledge System

The course suffers from the problem of "disciplinary isolation", with teaching content limited to the field of visual design. Centering on VI system skill training including graphics, colors, layout and material extension, it lacks in-depth integration of marketing, brand planning, consumer psychology, cultural communication, digital technology and other disciplines, resulting in a one-sided knowledge structure among students. Most students only master visual creation skills without understanding the logic of market research, brand positioning and brand operation, and their designs rely on subjective creativity and deviate from commercial reality. Meanwhile, the insufficient integration of humanistic culture leads to serious homogenization of works, which lack traditional and regional cultural connotations, failing to realize brand building through culture and empowerment through aesthetics, and deviating from the new liberal arts education philosophy of integrating art with business and culture with technology.

2.2. Solidified Teaching Modes and Flat Classroom Scenarios

The course generally adopts a one-way teaching mode of "theoretical lecture + case appreciation + after-class assignments" with insufficient interaction and limited scenario expansion. Classroom teaching is dominated by fragmented theoretical output from teachers, and students learn passively, making it difficult to develop cross-border thinking. Most practical tasks adopt simulated themes such as virtual brands and campus cultural and creative projects without support from real commercial projects. There is insufficient involvement of cutting-edge digital technologies such as AIGC, virtual simulation and new media communication, leading to inadequate digital design capabilities of students. School-enterprise collaboration remains superficial with low participation of industry tutors, resulting in disconnection between classroom teaching and industry practice.

2.3. Disconnected Practice System and Shallow Industry-Education Integration

Despite the prominent commercial practical attributes of the course, the existing practice system has obvious shortcomings. Most practical tasks are virtual topics set by teachers, without real constraints such as customer demands and budget limits. Students do not need to consider practical factors such as cost and communication effect, resulting in works with excellent creativity but poor practicability. School-enterprise cooperation is mostly limited to lectures and enterprise visits, lacking a normalized mechanism for project co-construction and teacher joint cultivation. Practical training only focuses on visual creation, without full-process training in market research, brand planning, scheme optimization and communication promotion, making it impossible for students to form complete brand full-case design capabilities.

2.4. One-Sided Evaluation System and Single Education Orientation

Traditional evaluation focuses on summative assessment with final works occupying the main weight. Evaluation criteria prioritize visual effect and creative performance, ignoring comprehensive literacy such as market adaptability, cultural connotation, scheme logic and team collaboration. Process evaluation is absent, and learning processes including research analysis and scheme iteration cannot be effectively assessed. Evaluation subjects are limited to course teachers without participation of enterprise designers and users, leading to strong subjectivity in evaluation. It fails to fully reflect students' interdisciplinary comprehensive abilities and does not conform to the new liberal arts goal of comprehensive and diversified education.

3. Core Logic and Principles of Curriculum Interdisciplinary Teaching Restructuring under the New Liberal Arts Perspective

The core essence of new liberal arts construction is to break disciplinary boundaries and realize interdisciplinary knowledge intersection, multi-dimensional capability integration and multi-scenario education collaboration.[2] The interdisciplinary teaching restructuring of Brand Image Design courses is not a simple superposition of multidisciplinary knowledge, but a systematic restructuring of the knowledge system, teaching mode, practice scenario and evaluation mechanism based on industry talent demands and curriculum education goals, which must adhere to scientific restructuring logic and core principles.

3.1. Core Restructuring Logic

Guided by the new liberal arts education philosophy and focusing on the cultivation of compound design talents, this curriculum restructuring builds a four-dimensional restructuring logic of "knowledge crossover - capability progression - literacy upgrading - industry adaptation" supported by interdisciplinary integration, in-depth industry-education collaboration, digital intelligent technology empowerment and cultural value empowerment. In terms of knowledge dimension, it breaks the single restriction of art design disciplines, integrates business, social science and other fields to build a compound knowledge system. In terms of capability dimension, it transforms from simple visual creation training to comprehensive capability cultivation including creative design, market research and judgment, cultural interpretation, digital application, team collaboration and commercial landing. In terms of literacy dimension, it integrates aesthetic education, business education, humanistic and digital literacy to realize all-round education. In terms of industry dimension, it connects with real industry demands, bridges the gap between teaching and industry, and forms a virtuous cycle of teaching empowering industry and practice feeding back teaching.

3.2. Core Restructuring Principles

The practical training system unfolds across four progressively complex tiers. At the foundational level, students complete short classroom exercises - such as market surveys, cultural symbol extraction, and digital brand mock-ups - to build specific interdisciplinary competencies. Once these basics are secure, they move to campus-based projects, tackling real tasks like developing cultural products for the university, revitalizing a local community brand, or designing visuals for a campus event. This stage gives them their first taste of end-to-end project management. Beyond campus, the program channels students into commercial partnerships with local businesses, where they must deliver brand modernization or cultural packaging solutions that satisfy actual client requirements and budget limits. The final tier extends beyond the university entirely: students collaborate with tourism boards, small and medium enterprises, and rural development programs to produce public-interest branding and cultural creative work that directly benefits local industries. Across all four stages, the full

workflow - from research and planning through creation, iteration, implementation, and final review - trains students to manage complete branding projects from start to finish.

4. Interdisciplinary Teaching Restructuring System of Brand Image Design Courses from the Perspective of New Liberal Arts

Combined with the existing problems and core restructuring logic of the course, this paper constructs an all-round and systematic interdisciplinary teaching restructuring system from five dimensions: teaching content, teaching mode, practice system, teacher team and evaluation mechanism, so as to realize in-depth reform and comprehensive upgrading of curriculum teaching.

4.1. Interdisciplinary Teaching Content Restructuring: Breaking Knowledge Barriers and Building a Compound Knowledge System

Based on the complete process of brand full-case design, the course abandons the traditional single visual skill teaching mode and constructs a four-in-one interdisciplinary knowledge system of "artistic aesthetics + business thinking + cultural connotation + digital technology". [3]The course retains core design contents such as VI system, graphic creativity, color layout and material extension to consolidate students' professional foundation. Meanwhile, it integrates cross-border knowledge of multiple fields: adding business contents including market research, brand positioning, consumer psychology, marketing planning and IP operation to cultivate students' business thinking and solve the problem of disconnection between design and market; integrating humanistic contents such as national trend culture, regional folk customs and urban culture to teach the extraction and transformation methods of cultural symbols and improve the cultural heritage and emotional value of works; adding digital contents such as AIGC creative design, dynamic visual design, virtual scene construction and new media communication to adapt to the digital development needs of the industry. The course builds a gradient content system of "basic cognition - interdisciplinary progression - comprehensive innovation", consolidates basic design and interdisciplinary knowledge for lower-grade students, and focuses on knowledge integration, full-case innovation and commercial landing for middle and upper-grade students, forming a progressive teaching structure.

4.2. Interdisciplinary Teaching Mode Restructuring: Innovating Classroom Forms and Realizing Multi-Dimensional Teaching Linkage

Aiming at the one-way and flat drawbacks of traditional classrooms, a multi-dimensional teaching mode integrating online and offline learning, theoretical and practical linkage, school-enterprise dual-teacher collaboration and digital intelligent technology empowerment is constructed based on the new liberal arts education philosophy. A compound teaching team is established, including on-campus design teachers, interdisciplinary teachers of marketing and communication, and senior enterprise designers, who are respectively responsible for professional skills, interdisciplinary theories and practical guidance teaching. Meanwhile, integrated project-based and inquiry-based teaching is implemented. Taking real projects such as commercial brands, local cultural and creative innovation and campus brand upgrading as carriers, students are guided to complete the whole process of market research, brand positioning, cultural refinement, visual design, scheme optimization and communication promotion through group collaboration, so as to cultivate their ability to solve cross-border problems. In addition, a digital mixed teaching scenario is built: online frontier cases and interdisciplinary resources are pushed for autonomous learning, while offline teaching focuses on key and difficult point discussion and practical operation training. AIGC and virtual

simulation tools are introduced to assist creative iteration, realizing in-depth integration of digital technology and classroom teaching.

4.3. Interdisciplinary Practice System Restructuring: Deepening Industry-Education Integration and Building a Full-Chain Practice Ecosystem

To solve the problems of superficial and disconnected traditional practice, a four-level linked full-chain interdisciplinary practice system is constructed to deepen industry-education integration. First, classroom basic training: small-scale tasks such as market research, cultural symbol transformation and digital brand design are set to consolidate students' single interdisciplinary application ability. Second, campus practical projects: real scenarios such as campus cultural and creative development, community brand upgrading and activity visual design are adopted to carry out small-scale full-case design practice and accumulate basic practical experience. Third, enterprise real project training: through a normalized school-enterprise cooperation mechanism, real enterprise projects such as brand upgrading and cultural and creative packaging are introduced, requiring students to complete landing design in strict accordance with commercial standards and cost requirements. Fourth, social cultural and creative services: connecting with local cultural tourism, micro and small enterprises and rural revitalization projects, public welfare brand design and cultural and creative development are carried out to realize the empowerment of local industries through design. Meanwhile, the practice process is optimized to form a full-process model covering research and planning, creative design, scheme iteration, landing communication and review summary, comprehensively cultivating students' full-case design and interdisciplinary practical capabilities.

4.4. Teacher Team Restructuring: Building a Compound Interdisciplinary Teaching Echelon

To meet the needs of interdisciplinary teaching and solve the problems of single knowledge structure and insufficient industry experience of teachers, a compound teacher echelon of "on-campus cultivation + off-campus introduction" is constructed. For on-campus teachers, efforts are focused on improving their interdisciplinary capabilities: organizing design teachers to participate in special training in marketing, cultural communication and digital technology, encouraging teachers to take temporary posts in enterprises and participate in commercial projects to update their knowledge system and accumulate industry practical experience.[4] Off-campus, brand designers, planners and cultural and creative industry experts are regularly introduced as part-time tutors to deeply participate in curriculum teaching, project guidance and assessment, making up for the practical shortcomings of on-campus teachers. Meanwhile, an interdisciplinary teaching and research team is established, with teachers majoring in design, business, humanities and digital technology collaborating in teaching and research, jointly developing teaching resources, polishing curriculum schemes and optimizing practical projects to ensure the professionalism and systematicness of interdisciplinary teaching.

4.5. Teaching Evaluation Restructuring: Building a Diversified and Three-Dimensional Comprehensive Evaluation System

Based on the new liberal arts comprehensive education goal, the single summative evaluation mode is abandoned, and a diversified and three-dimensional comprehensive evaluation system is constructed. The evaluation content is no longer limited to the visual effect of works, but adds multi-dimensional indicators such as interdisciplinary knowledge application, market adaptability, cultural connotation, digital technology application, team collaboration, innovation ability and landing feasibility. In terms of evaluation methods, a 50-50 weight distribution is adopted: 50% for process evaluation covering classroom discussion, research analysis, scheme iteration and group collaboration throughout the learning process; 50% for

summative evaluation centered on brand full-case works, design reports and defense presentations, balancing achievement quality and design logic. Evaluation subjects include student self-evaluation, group mutual evaluation, on-campus teacher evaluation and enterprise tutor evaluation to objectively judge students' comprehensive capabilities from multiple dimensions. Meanwhile, an evaluation iteration and feedback mechanism is established to guide students to identify deficiencies and optimize schemes based on evaluation results, realizing the education goals of promoting learning, reform and innovation through evaluation.

5. Practical Value and Education Effect of Curriculum Restructuring

The interdisciplinary teaching restructuring of Brand Image Design courses based on the new liberal arts concept breaks the disciplinary limitations, teaching bottlenecks and education shortcomings of traditional courses, realizes multiple upgrades in curriculum teaching, talent cultivation and industrial empowerment, and has significant practical value and education effects.

From the perspective of curriculum teaching, the restructured course breaks disciplinary isolation, constructs a systematic and compound interdisciplinary teaching system, and realizes in-depth integration of art, business, culture and technology. It enriches curriculum teaching content, innovates teaching modes, and improves practice and evaluation systems, effectively solving the traditional problems of single content, solidified modes, disconnected practice and one-sided evaluation. It promotes the transformation of Brand Image Design courses from traditional skill teaching to new liberal arts literacy teaching, and improves the teaching quality and education level of the course.[5]

From the perspective of talent cultivation, interdisciplinary teaching can effectively cultivate students' cross-border, business, cultural and digital innovative thinking, helping students get rid of the design misunderstanding of "prioritizing aesthetics over practicality and creativity over connotation". Students not only master solid visual design skills, but also possess comprehensive capabilities including market research, brand planning, cultural empowerment, digital design and project landing. With a more complete knowledge structure and comprehensive professional literacy, they can adapt to the post demands of compound talents in the new-era brand design industry, and effectively improve their employment competitiveness and innovation and entrepreneurship capabilities.

From the perspective of industry and society, curriculum restructuring deepens industry-education integration and university-local collaboration. Through practical teaching based on real commercial projects and local cultural and creative projects, it realizes accurate docking between university talent cultivation and local cultural and creative industries and brand economy. Students' cross-border design achievements can directly serve enterprise brand upgrading, local cultural tourism and cultural and creative development, and rural brand construction, empowering industrial upgrading and inheriting regional culture through design innovation, fully reflecting the core value of new liberal arts in serving society and empowering industry, and providing talent and creative support for local cultural communication and brand economic development.

6. Conclusion

The construction of new liberal arts clarifies the reform direction of interdisciplinary integration, literacy-oriented education and industry-education collaboration for art courses. Running through artistic creation, commercial market and cultural communication, the interdisciplinary teaching restructuring of Brand Image Design courses is an inevitable measure to adapt to the reform of higher education, industrial upgrading and compound talent cultivation demands. Targeting at the pain points of traditional teaching and guided by the new

liberal arts education concept, this paper carries out systematic restructuring from five dimensions: teaching content, teaching mode, practice system, teacher echelon and evaluation mechanism, building a new education system with interdisciplinary integration and multi-scenario linkage. This reform breaks the barriers of single-discipline teaching, realizes in-depth integration of aesthetic education, business education, humanities and digital education, and promotes the transformation of courses from skill teaching to comprehensive literacy cultivation and from closed classroom teaching to open industry-education-oriented teaching. In the future, we will continuously optimize the teaching system and deepen industry-education integration in line with the digital and cultural innovation trends of the industry, so as to provide theoretical and practical support for the reform of art design courses and the high-quality development of cultural and creative industries.

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