

Research on the Organization of Learning-oriented University Faculties and Departments in the Perspective of “Double World-Class” Strategy——Taking China University of Geosciences (Beijing) as an Example

Aiji Li

China University of Geosciences(Beijing), No. 29 Xueyuan Road, Haidian District,Beijing, 100083, China

Abstract: “Double world-class” is our national strategy to enhance the comprehensive competitiveness and international influence of higher education. As the main part of running a university, the faculties and departments’ organizational management system is an important part of improving the school’s running level. A learning-oriented organization is an organic, flexible, flat, human-friendly, and sustainable development organization that is established by giving full play to creative thinking capabilities. In the process of advancing the construction of “Double world-class”, the exploration and construction of learning-oriented university faculties and departments will help to further promote the construction of “Double world-class” through organizational change. Taking the China University of Geosciences (Beijing) as an example, this article focuses on the “five disciplines” of learning-oriented university faculties and departments, discusses and analyzes the practical path of learning-oriented university faculties and departments in the “Double world-class” strategy.

Keywords: “Double world-class” strategy; Learning-oriented faculties and departments; “Five disciplines”

The “Double world-class” construction is a national project leading the high-quality connotation development of China’s higher education in the new era, and its core connotation lies in the comprehensive competitiveness and international influence of China’s higher education. In the process of “Double world-class” construction, the construction and development of faculties and departments are crucial to achieve the high-level development of universities in terms of running schools, discipline construction, teachers, and student training. The organization and management system of modern university colleges and departments is an important part of improving the level of running schools of the college, and plays an important role in promoting the construction of “Double world-class”. The exploration and construction of learning-oriented faculties and departments will help to further rationalize the operation mechanism of university organizations and further promote the construction of “Double world-class” through organizational reform.

1. The basic connotation of the organization of a learning-oriented university faculties and departments

Learning-oriented organization aims to give full play to creative thinking skills and build sustained, organic, flat, humane and flexible organizations. Peter Senggi proposed that a learning organization means that the members of the organization constantly push the upper limit of their abilities, cultivate new and broad ways of thinking, create truly desired results, and strive to achieve common ambitions by constantly learning how to learn together. At the same time, he proposed five disciplines of a more core learning organization, namely self-transcendence, improving mental models, establishing a shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking.

Returning to the public organization of the university, in the European Middle Ages, the university was a primitive learning-oriented organization, based on the transfer of knowledge and joint learning, as Whitehead argues that “the reasons to exist of the

university brings together the young and the old, conducting imaginative exploration of scholarship and imparting knowledge in imaginative ways”. However, with the development of the times and the improvement of the subject system, the learning purpose of teachers gradually tends to be scientific research, the development of disciplines leads to the continuous improvement of knowledge specialization, the integration and intersection of subject knowledge is becoming more and more difficult, and universities gradually deviate from the connotation and main purpose of learning-oriented organizations.

The connotation of the learning-oriented university faculties and departments organization aims to further strengthen the learning of the three levels of college, discipline and teacher, and to practice the five disciplines through the three levels of college, discipline and teacher around the “common vision” of the organization, so that the department organization and its members can continue to learn, improve their level and ability in the learning process, and gradually achieve the organizational strategy and goals.

2. China University of Geosciences (Beijing) “Double world-class Construction” status analysis

China University of Geosciences (Beijing) has 17 teaching units, 42 undergraduate majors, 2 national first-level key disciplines, 8 national second-level key disciplines, and 14 provincial and ministerial key disciplines. Among them, geology, geological resources and geological engineering are two world-class disciplines. China University of Geosciences (Beijing) has formulated the “Double world-class” strategic goal based on its disciplinary characteristics, which is mainly divided into three stages:

The first stage, to take the high ground. From now on to 2023, geology, geological resources and geological engineering will enter the ranks of world-class disciplines, with the basic characteristics of a world-class university in the field of earth sciences.

The second stage, to the upper plateau. From 2023 to 2032, to build a world-class university in the field of earth sciences. The construction of earth system science related disciplines is complete, and the “geese array” discipline system develops in a coordinated manner, forming an open and integrated international talent training environment, and students’ comprehensive quality and innovation ability are comparable to the world-class level.

The third stage, to climb the peak. From 2032 to 2052, to enter the forefront of world-class universities in the field of earth sciences. It will continue to produce world-leading landmark achievements, establish international academic discourse, and become an important base for international geoscience research and an academic temple yearned for by global geoscience researchers.

In the process of “Double world-class” construction of universities, there are still many problems, such as the urgent need to rationalize the institutional mechanism for the construction of world-class disciplines with school characteristics and the adaptive transformation and upgrading of specific subject systems. The current challenges faced by the school include: First, the existing teaching quality, development direction and ability are not enough to adapt to the rapid development and change of contemporary society, structural optimization and transformation of power transformation. Second, the level of discipline construction in the field of earth sciences lags behind the overall level of international earth system science development. In addition, at the level of faculty governance of China University of Geosciences (Beijing), there is a general lack of autonomy and independence in discipline construction, strategic planning, and school-running direction. To sum up, there are three main aspects:

The first aspect is towards the academy level. China University of Geosciences (Beijing) has three main categories: one is the traditional advantageous discipline faculties, such as the School of Earth Sciences and Resources, and the School of Water Resources and Energy; The second is the special discipline faculties associated with traditional advantageous disciplines, such as the School of Jewelry and the College of Land Science and Technology; The third is the transformation and development and upgrading of basic disciplines, such as the School of Information Engineering and the School of Mathematics and Physics. There are significant differences in resource allocation, industry characteristics, and development ideas in various types of colleges. In addition, the implementation of the “Double world-class” strategy of China University of Geosciences (Beijing) is mainly led by the discipline office and the cooperation of relevant departments, and the voice and autonomy of the college level are greatly limited, and the key role of the “Academic Affairs Committee” and “Academic Committee” at the university level is still played.

The second aspect is towards the disciplinary level. In most of the current secondary faculties of universities in China, there is a general lack of top-level design of interdisciplinary and subject groups, and there are natural barriers between interdisciplinary disciplines and resource allocation between interdisciplinary disciplines, and there is also an internal vacuum between teaching and research departments within the faculty, and the flow of knowledge and resource sharing is not smooth. From the current operation

status, there is a certain gap between the discipline team, platform construction and development goals required by the school's "Double world-class" constructions.

The third aspect is towards the teacher level. The learning activities of teachers in science and engineering universities are mainly based on scientific research experiments, and under the influence of discipline division, knowledge is becoming more sophisticated, communication and collaboration difficulty is increasing, and based on the self-centered consciousness of disciplines, independent learning, interdisciplinary learning and self-breakthrough platforms among university teachers and scholars are lacking and the path is single.

3. Exploration and practice of learning-oriented faculties and departments organization under the strategic perspective of "Double world-class"

The practical exploration of learning-oriented faculties and departments under the strategic perspective of "Double world-class" should be based on the university environment, and on the basis of the differences in colleges, disciplines and teachers, combined with the requirements of "Double world-class" construction and the basic connotation of learning organizations, to promote the solution of development problems at the college, discipline and teacher levels.

3.1 Faculty level: Establish a shared vision, emphasizing systems thinking and team learning

The faculties are the foundation of the "Double world-class" construction. At the faculty level, it is first necessary to carry out systematic thinking, scientifically plan and correctly understand the layout, mission and tasks of its discipline system, establish the "common vision" of the faculty, and rebuild the spiritual temperament of "self-transcendence".

First, systems thinking is the core of the five disciplines of learning organizations. The systematic thinking of the faculty aims to analyze, design, plan and carry out the discipline construction, and clarify the overall situation of the discipline construction from the overall level, and clarify its action plan while determining the "common vision" of the discipline development of the faculty through top-level design and overall planning.

Secondly, to strengthen the construction of faculty team learning. By strengthening the construction of scientific research teams, laboratory workshops, project teams and other platforms, efforts are made to build a mechanism for joint learning, sharing and cooperation, and collaborative education, strengthen the interaction and collaboration of teachers' learning, encourage teachers to strengthen team learning interaction in scientific research, project application, and teaching research, explore the frontier of discipline development, and innovate research methods and methods.

In addition, the connotation of the "common vision" at the faculty level is to determine the positioning of the faculty under the goal of building world-class disciplines. No university can achieve the parallel development of all disciplines in the faculty, and the faculty's advantageous disciplines should drive the common development of emerging characteristic faculty and basic disciplines, and achieve resource sharing, information exchange, and knowledge exchange.

3.2 Disciplinary level: return to the discipline-based position, emphasizing interdisciplinary and open culture

The purpose of the discipline level is different from the faculty level, the faculty level emphasizes administrative management and development planning, while the discipline construction usually emphasizes the function of scientific research and academia. However, in the actual management of colleges and universities, there is generally a lack of clear definition of faculty management and discipline construction, the work of departments and teaching and research departments at the faculty level and the discipline level is not highly distinguished, and the teaching and research department plays more organizational management functions as a second-level internal institution of the faculty, and the autonomy of the development planning and direction positioning of discipline construction is insufficient, resulting in the intertwining of resources and unclear responsibilities between college development and discipline construction, and the result can only be poor results.

In the organizational construction at the discipline level, reform and improve the management system, and return to the discipline-based position more. For example, traditional organizational departments, teaching and research departments at the discipline level should take discipline construction as the foothold and starting point, and discipline-level organization and management should transcend disputes at the administrative level, build a "common vision" for discipline construction, establish an organizational environment that attaches importance to discipline contributions and teamwork, and establish corresponding assessment and incentive mechanisms. Secondly, full emphasis should be placed on interdisciplinary integration, top-level design should be strengthened from all aspects of concepts, mechanisms and actions, and schools should be encouraged to actively explore flexible mechanisms for

interdisciplinary disciplines, break the academic barriers of different disciplines, and enhance interdisciplinary integration and academic exchange. Thirdly, there is a need to establish an open organizational culture that encourages open and genuine communication among teachers, as well as constantly challenging their ability to think. Through a good open mechanism and values, differences of opinion and conflicts of interest within the organization are prohibited. Finally, learning-oriented discipline organization is the management of inaction, and it is necessary to break the traditional top-down management, enhance teachers' sense of responsibility for discipline development and construction, and make them deeply aware of the correlation between discipline construction and development, and teachers' learning initiative and comprehensiveness will be correspondingly improved.

3.3 Teacher level: Achieve self-transcendence and emphasize the improvement of teachers' mental models

In the learning department organization under the strategic vision of "Double world-class", teachers need to achieve self-transcendence in learning. Self-transcendence helps teachers to continuously transcend and improve within their own disciplines, and at the same time transcend the "self-limit" of interdisciplinary learning, combine the development goal of self-transcendence with the goal of subject construction and development, and constantly self-adjust, self-learn, and continuously improve.

First, establish a "vision" for teacher development. "Vision" is the concrete embodiment of "discipline construction goals". Vision is not competitive, it is intrinsic. Second, maintain creative tension. The gap between the vision and the status quo can be transformed into strength, self-motivation, continuous improvement, and pushing teachers to work towards the vision. Third, structural conflicts should be used rationally. Teachers are encouraged to achieve their goals with perseverance and full concentration in defeating all forms of resistance in the process of achieving their goals. Fourth, use the subconscious. Teachers can turn learning into the true "vision" of their subconscious, and when the phased goals are achieved, they will continue to motivate themselves to pursue higher goals, so as to use the subconscious mind to achieve a positive cycle and achieve higher achievements.

After completing self-transcendence, another important practice at the teacher level is to change the mental model. It is essential to establish mental models, and all new things and ideas are influenced by "mental models" because we always see the world through our own mental models. As the saying goes: rivers and mountains are easy to change, nature is difficult to shift. The mental model is actually a person's thinking method, way of thinking and thinking concept, which is a kind of deeply implicit mental activity and thinking activity. Improving mental models is one of the five most difficult but crucial of the five practices. The cultivation of mental models requires teachers to explore the assumptions and preconceptions of the inner world in a learning organization, re-examine and judge them, and re-absorb new ideas and knowledge with an open attitude. Learning faculties and departments with a "Double world-class" strategic vision also need to use mental models to promote self-innovation at the learning level through organizational adaptation, motivation and learning of new skills.

References:

- [1] Ahrens, T., & Khalifa, R. (2015). The impact of regulation on management control: Compliance as a strategic response to institutional logics of university accreditation. *Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management*, 12(2), 106–126.
- [2] Altbach, P. G. (2003). The costs and benefits of world-class universities. *International Higher Education* (33), 5–8.
- [3] Gao, X. S., & Zheng, Y. Y. (2020). 'Heavy mountains' for Chinese humanities and social science academics in the quest for world-class universities. *Compare-a Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 50(4), 554–572.
- [4] Zhang, Y. (2019). What kind of discipline evaluation is needed for the "Double World-Class" Construction: Reflection based on the meta-evaluation of discipline evaluation. *Tsinghua Journal of Education*, 40(5), 10–18.

About the author:

Aiji Li (1984-), male, Fenyang, ShanXi Province, Director of the inspection office of the Party Committee of China University of Geosciences (Beijing), lecturer, and doctoral candidate of the Institute of Education of Tsinghua University, mainly engaged in higher education management research.