

# INNOVATION OF TOURISM MANAGEMENT CURRICULUM SYSTEM IN APPLICATION-ORIENTED UNIVERSITIES IN JILIN PROVINCE FACING THE NEW LIBERAL ARTS

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**Abstract:** In response to the requirements of the construction of new Liberal Arts, this paper investigated the current status of the tourism management curriculum system in application-oriented universities in Jilin Province. It diagnosed the core issues in the existing curriculum system regarding objectives, structure, content, and methods. An innovative "pyramid-style" new curriculum system, characterized by "value-led, cross-integration, and competency-based" approaches, was constructed. This provides a theoretical framework and practical paradigm for the reform of tourism management majors in similar universities.

**Keywords:** New Liberal Arts; Application-oriented universities; Tourism management; Curriculum system; Innovation

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In 2018, China officially proposed the concept of "New Liberal Arts", which plays an important role in the reform of traditional liberal arts teaching paradigms and teaching concepts in China[1]. In 2020, the Ministry of Education issued the "Declaration on the Construction of New Liberal Arts", which elevated China's construction of new liberal arts to a new height[2]. The construction of "New Liberal Arts" is a major strategic measure proposed by Chinese higher education in response to the global technological revolution, industrial transformation, and profound social transformation in the context of the new era. It is not a simple negation or repair of traditional humanities, but a systematic and revolutionary reconstruction involving ideas, models, content, and methods. Given the background of educational development, the construction of a new liberal arts program for tourism management majors in application-oriented universities is urgently needed[3].

## 2 CURRENT SITUATION INVESTIGATION

In order to accurately understand the current situation of the curriculum system of tourism management majors in application-oriented universities and test its compatibility with the requirements of the New Liberal Arts construction, this study selected five representative application-oriented universities in Jilin Province as research objects, including Jilin Engineering Normal University, Jilin Business and Technology College, Tonghua Normal University, the Tourism College of Changchun University and Changchun Guanghua University. Through text analysis of its talent cultivation program and in-depth interviews with teachers and students, the research results are systematically sorted and analyzed from three dimensions: curriculum objectives and structure, teaching content and methods, evaluation system, and faculty team. The aim is to reveal existing problems and provide a basis for subsequent curriculum system innovation.

### 2.1 In terms of Course Objectives and Structure

#### 2.1.1 Consistency in course objective expression

In the 5 talent development plans surveyed, all texts mentioned "application-oriented", and some plans also mentioned "adapting to industry development" and "mastering modern technology". However, these goal statements generally lack specific, measurable, and actionable connotations that correspond to the core concepts of the New Liberal Arts. For example, there is no clear plan to include "interdisciplinary thinking" or "integrated innovation ability" as training objectives; For the specific meaning of "mastering modern technology", the vast majority of solutions still remain at the relatively outdated level of "tourism e-commerce" and "office software operation". This indicates that the training goal of many universities is still mainly to cultivate managers who master the traditional operational skills of tourism enterprises, and there is a clear lack of awareness in shaping industry leaders and entrepreneurs who can handle the integration of culture and tourism and digital transformation for the future.

#### 2.1.2 Course structure with obvious platformization

The obvious diversification of course structure is the most core issue discovered in this survey. Although almost all universities have established modules for "general education courses," "subject foundation courses," "professional core courses," and "professional direction courses," their internal integration logic is very weak, with overlapping and fragmented content between courses, and interdisciplinary course content being severely marginalized. Research shows that only 2 out of 5 universities offer independent courses on "tourism big data analysis"; Only Tonghua Normal University has offered local cultural characteristic courses such as "Changbai Mountain Regional Tourism" special

practice and "Intangible Cultural Heritage Skills Training"; Interdisciplinary courses such as "Tourism Geographic Information System" and "Cultural Heritage and Tourism" have not been offered.

### **2.1.3 Insufficient modular design**

The "problem oriented" and "personalized training" advocated by the New Liberal Arts require a highly flexible and modular curriculum structure. However, the current situation is that the course structure of the vast majority of universities is too rigid, with elective course credits generally accounting for less than 20%, and the elective course library is updated slowly, with serious homogenization of content, mostly conceptual introductions in traditional directions such as "exhibition tourism" and "health tourism", resulting in a single and rigid path for student knowledge construction.

## **2.2 In terms of Teaching Content and Methods**

### **2.2.1 Delayed updating of teaching content**

Through the analysis of talent training programs and core course syllabus for tourism management majors in five application-oriented universities in Jilin Province, it was found that the integration of new technologies such as cloud computing, big data, and artificial intelligence is low and superficial. More than 70% of the "Tourism Marketing" courses still revolve around traditional 4P theory, SWOT analysis, and questionnaire surveys as their core content. For new technology driven marketing paradigms such as social media marketing, user generated content, algorithm recommendations, and metaverse marketing, they only provide conceptual introductions and lack practical training based on real data platforms.

### **2.2.2 Teaching methods still primarily rely on lectures**

Traditional teaching methods dominate, and teaching activities guided by ability building are scarce. The interview results show that over 80% of students believe that the main teaching method for their professional courses is for teachers to teach and students to listen. Although case-based teaching is widely adopted, most cases are outdated and the analysis process is superficial, often requiring teachers to provide standard answers rather than guiding students to engage in open thinking and exploration. This one-dimensional knowledge imparting model cannot effectively cultivate students' critical thinking, complex problem-solving skills, and teamwork abilities. Although all universities have set up practical activities such as internships and course design, there are very few truly project-based teaching applications that run through the curriculum.

### **2.2.3 Insufficient application of digital teaching resources**

Most online teaching platforms such as "www.chaoxing.com" and "www.zhihuishu.com" in universities are mainly used as databases for publishing notifications, submitting assignments, and storing PPTs, and have not effectively supported the implementation of blended learning between online and offline. Lack of digital course resource packages specifically developed for core courses in tourism management, integrating industry data, simulation software, and interactive cases. This deprives innovation in teaching methods of important technological carriers, making it difficult to break through the limitations of time, space, and physical resources.

## **2.3 In Terms of Evaluation System and Faculty Team**

### **2.3.1 Lack of a diversified curriculum evaluation system**

In the assessment method of research courses, the average weight of final exams or course papers exceeds 70%. This evaluation method mainly tests students' memory and comprehension ability of isolated knowledge points, and cannot effectively evaluate their ability to integrate multidisciplinary knowledge to solve practical problems, innovation ability, teamwork and communication ability in complex and open real situations. Summative evaluation dominates and is difficult to measure the interdisciplinary comprehensive ability advocated by the New Liberal Arts. The evaluation subject is almost a single teaching teacher, and self-evaluation and peer evaluation by industry mentors and students are rarely included and have extremely low weight.

### **2.3.2 Teacher's knowledge structure needs improvement**

More than 85% of the tourism management teachers surveyed in universities hold doctoral degrees in management, economics, or geography, while there are very few teachers with interdisciplinary degrees or long-term experience in computer science, data science, design, sociology, environmental science, and other fields. Although there is a requirement for "Double-certificated Teacher", most of them are obtained through short-term training or certification, lacking a mechanism for long-term and in-depth on-the-job training in cultural and tourism technology enterprises, data companies, planning and design institutes, etc. This makes it difficult for teachers to bring the latest industry practices, technological trends, and real projects into the classroom.

### **2.3.3 Difficulties in Building Interdisciplinary Teaching Teams**

Although some universities have attempted to promote cross college collaboration, such as inviting teachers from the School of Computer Science to teach tourism majors or collaborating on course offerings. However, due to the barriers between colleges, the heavy workload of preparing for new courses, and the lack of common interest driving points and effective collaboration platforms, such cooperation mostly remains in lecture style sporadic participation, making it difficult to form a stable interdisciplinary teaching team responsible for course design and full teaching. The hired industry mentors mainly focus on giving lectures, and their wisdom and resources have not been systematically integrated into core teaching processes such as curriculum development, project guidance, and performance evaluation.

### 3 COUNTERMEASURES AND SUGGESTIONS

To overcome the core challenges of strict disciplinary barriers, shallow integration of industry and education, and weak innovation capabilities, it aims to construct a new curriculum system for tourism management majors that is oriented towards New Liberal Arts and rooted in application-oriented approaches[4].

#### 3.1 Target Dimension Enhancement and Structural Reorganization

The primary task of curriculum system innovation lies in the reconstruction of top-level design. The study proposes to construct a "pyramid shaped" curriculum system consisting of a value literacy layer, a cross core layer, and an open expansion layer, to achieve the transformation from disciplinary logic to growth logic.

##### ***3.1.1 Consolidate the foundation of general education and strengthen the cultural and tourism value literacy***

This layer corresponds to the general education module, aiming to solve the problem of the disconnect between general education and professional education[5]. Add new compulsory modules for liberal arts fundamentals, such as offering courses like "Fundamentals of Digital Literacy and Data Analysis" or "Fundamentals of AI Application Technology" to replace traditional "Fundamentals of Computer Science", covering courses such as Python basics, data visualization, and AI ethics. These courses focus on enhancing students' humanistic and technological literacy necessary for adapting to the development of modern tourism industry. Integrating cultural and tourism knowledge into general education courses, creating a cultural and tourism oriented elective module, aiming to build a bridge between the disciplines of literature, science, engineering, art, and tourism, guiding students to examine tourism phenomena from a multidisciplinary perspective, and achieving an organic connection between general education and professional education.

##### ***3.1.2 Breaking down disciplinary barriers and reshaping the core of professional competence***

This layer is the core of the reform, aimed at solving the problem of linear extension and outdated content in professional courses[6]. Thoroughly breaking the boundaries of traditional courses such as Tourism Economics, Marketing, and Travel Agency Management, and reconstructing interdisciplinary competency modules around the core value chain of the cultural and tourism industry. The module of cultural tourism integration and product innovation integrates knowledge from cultural studies, management, and design. The core course "Cultural Tourism Integration Product Planning and Practice" will replace related traditional courses. Students need to complete a full process project from cultural resource research, IP extraction, creative design to business model construction, such as "designing an immersive tourism experience product for Changbai Mountain intangible cultural heritage".

##### ***3.1.3 Connecting with the forefront of the industry and empowering students' individual development***

This layer aims to solve the problems of insufficient modularity and single path, and empower students with the right to make independent choices[7]. Establish a "micro specialty" direction. Based on industry trends, micro majors such as "Digital Cultural Tourism Marketing", "Digital Protection of Cultural Heritage", and "Smart Scenic Area Planning and Management" will be established. Each micro major consists of 3-4 courses, and students can choose to take them according to their interests and career plans. Open cutting-edge dynamic workshops and regularly invite industry experts to hold short-term workshops to ensure that teaching content is synchronized with the forefront of the industry. Promote interdisciplinary project practice, encourage students to form teams across disciplines, participate in teacher's horizontal projects and subject competition projects, and their achievements can be exchanged for credits at this level.

#### 3.2 Content Updates and Mode Changes

##### ***3.2.1 Promote the dynamic and cutting-edge iteration of teaching content***

Establish an "Industry Enterprise Curriculum Resource Library" and a "Real Project Case Library". Revise the teaching syllabus based on the latest developments in the industry. Collaborate with well-known local cultural and tourism enterprises to develop teaching cases based on real projects and data, and update them annually. Every academic year, professional teachers and industry mentors jointly review and revise the curriculum outline, timely incorporating new technologies, new formats, and new standards. Deeply integrating technological tools and local cultural context, in the course of "Tourism Marketing", the teaching content must cover practical skills such as social media data analysis tools and short video creation.

##### ***3.2.2 Fully establish the core position of project-based learning***

The project-based teaching method runs through the core competency module courses, with one or more real projects that run through the semester as the backbone. Students collaborate in groups and go through the entire process of requirement analysis, technology selection, functional design, prototype development, and solution presentation. Based on the requirements of project-based teaching, the role of teachers needs to shift from lecturers to project mentors and resource coordinators. In terms of teaching management, detailed project task books, team collaboration tools, and process evaluation criteria need to be provided to ensure that project-based teaching does not become a mere formality and effectively enhances students' ability to solve complex problems.

##### ***3.2.3 Deepening the integration of digitalization and industry education in teaching scenarios***

Build a smart tourism virtual simulation center, with a focus on investing in the construction or upgrading of training platforms with functions such as big data analysis, VR/AR experience, hotel and scenic area operation simulation. Enable students to make decisions, operate, and handle crises in a highly simulated environment, reducing practical costs and enhancing learning efficiency. Promote dual teacher co teaching and embedded industry teaching, deepening

the participation of enterprise mentors from lectures to joint project design, teaching, guidance, and grading. For example, in the project defense stage, the grading weight of enterprise mentors can account for 50%, directly testing the market value and feasibility of student proposals. At the same time, extending the classroom to the enterprise site and conducting on-site teaching at the Industry-University-Research Collaboration Base[8].

### 3.3 Evaluation Reform and Teacher Reshaping

#### 3.3.1 Building a multi-dimensional evaluation system

Strengthen process evaluation, downplay final assessment, reduce the weight of core course final exams to 30% to 40%, and distribute the remaining 60% to 70% in various stages of the project process, such as project proposal, mid-term defense, team contribution, work log, and final result presentation. Promote diverse subjects and methods. In addition to exams, the evaluation method vigorously promotes project reports, design proposals, roadshow defenses, portfolios, practical operations, etc., with a focus on testing comprehensive abilities such as knowledge integration, innovative thinking, and teamwork. To this end, it is necessary to develop refined evaluation metrics for different dimensions of abilities, so that evaluations can be based on evidence.

#### 3.3.2 Promote the transformation of the teaching staff

Implement a teacher knowledge update plan, support teachers to visit universities at home and abroad, focus on data science, digital humanities and other fields, or go to top cultural and tourism technology enterprises for full-time on-the-job training for more than six months, and require teachers to update their knowledge structure. Enhance teachers' teaching abilities, regularly organize specialized workshops such as "PBL Teaching Design" and "Blended Gold Course Construction", and incorporate teaching reform achievements into the professional title evaluation and performance assessment system. Establish an interdisciplinary teaching team [9], clarify the workload accounting and achievement sharing mechanism for interdisciplinary courses. Build a teaching community consisting of teachers from multiple disciplinary backgrounds around the core curriculum modules, implementing collective lesson preparation, collaborative teaching, and joint guidance.

#### 3.3.3 Establish a continuous improvement loop

Establish a "Curriculum Quality Committee" composed of professional leaders, backbone teachers, student representatives, and industry experts, to systematically collect teaching process data, student feedback, graduate surveys, and employer evaluations every semester, diagnose the implementation effect of the curriculum system, and dynamically improve the curriculum objectives, content, methods, and evaluations based on this, ensuring that the curriculum system remains dynamic and continues to move towards the construction goals of the New Liberal Arts.

## 4 CONCLUSION

Based on the research on the current situation and innovative construction of the curriculum system for tourism management majors in application-oriented universities in Jilin Province, it is concluded that the current curriculum system has systematic problems such as goal convergence, diversified structure, lagging content, and single evaluation. To achieve this, it is necessary to break through disciplinary barriers, construct a new "pyramid" curriculum system, and achieve a fundamental transformation from disciplinary logic to growth logic through systematic innovation in goal upgrading and structural restructuring, content updating and mode transformation, evaluation reform, and teacher reshaping. This system can effectively enhance students' interdisciplinary thinking and practical innovation abilities, providing a reference path for cultivating compound talents that adapt to the development of the cultural and tourism industry.

## COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

## FUNDING

This paper is sponsored by project fund from Leading Group Office of Jilin Provincial Educational Science (Project title: The Path to Improving the Quality of Practical Teaching in Tourism Majors of Applied Universities from the Perspective of New Liberal Arts; Contract NO. GH20339). It is also sponsored by the grant from the Higher Education Research Institute of Jilin Engineering Normal University.

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