Exploration of Teaching Reform in "Media Ethics and Regulations" Course

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Abstract:

As an important part of the teaching reform in the field of journalism and communication, the course of "Media Ethics and Regulations" faces three urgent problems: the lagging behind of existing textbooks and materials due to the successive introduction and implementation of media-related laws and regulations, the changing ethical values in media-related issues leading to the coexistence of diverse perspectives, and the complexity of professional theories making it difficult for students to understand. In order to adapt to the development needs of the new era, promote educational and teaching innovation, and facilitate students' comprehensive development, it is necessary to improve the quality of curriculum construction by subdividing professional theoretical courses and setting goals at different stages, enhance students' engagement through classroom debates, and establish a case library to improve teaching efficiency, ultimately perfecting the curriculum reform.

Keywords: Media Ethics and Regulations; Teaching Reform; Path Exploration

1. Introduction

Curriculum reform is to change the previous tendency of focusing too much on knowledge transmission by changing teaching and learning methods, emphasizing the formation of active learning attitudes among students. Among them, technology is an important means and tool to change teaching and learning methods. Moreover, media technology, as an important means and tool for information dissemination, has a profound impact on the development of journalism and communication studies. As a discipline with strong practicality and innovation, it is of utmost importance to promote curriculum reform and construction through new technological innovation, and adapt to the needs of the new era. Looking at existing research, firstly, an overall analysis of the curriculum reform of journalism and communication in universities is conducted, proposing new requirements for the cultivation of journalism and communication talents under the construction of new liberal arts. That is, the continuous development of technology requires journalism and communication talents to understand new technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, 5G, and master new technological tools for new media editing. The positions urgently require versatile talents. And faced with common problems such as "insufficient mutual support between training objectives and curriculum system", "professional course content deviating from the forefront and outdated knowledge", "insufficient practical extension of professional courses", and "difficulty in matching teaching and learning situations with course assessment methods". [1]The second part is based on the specific curriculum reform of Journalism and Communication. For example, analyzing the teaching reforms of courses such as "News Editing", "History of Chinese Journalism and Communication", "Broadcasting and Television", "News Reporting Planning", and "News Editing and

Writing", the commonality of the research lies in explaining the necessity of curriculum reform, exploring the main problems faced by curriculum teaching, and formulating appropriate reform paths based on the unique attributes of the curriculum. Overall, technological changes have a great impact on the field of journalism and communication studies. It is necessary to reform the curriculum and teaching of journalism and communication studies in universities, not only by changing the previous teaching philosophy from the top-level design, but also by strengthening the teaching staff, aligning professional content with cutting-edge technology, constantly exploring new teaching methods, adjusting teaching content to enable students to effectively participate in course teaching, and cultivating high-level composite talents needed for society.

However, there is little research on the interdisciplinary nature of the "Media Ethics and Regulations" course. Therefore, this article takes the course "Media Ethics and Regulations" as an example to analyze the current problems in the teaching process, explain the necessity of curriculum reform, explore innovative courses and professional development paths to improve the quality of higher education and teaching.

2. Introduction to the Course on "Media Ethics and Regulations"

With the rapid development of emerging media, media responsibility and media regulation have attracted widespread attention. As one of the core courses in the field of communication in higher education, the course on "Media Ethics and Regulations" aims to help students develop a deep understanding of the professional ethics of media practitioners and the legal regulations governing media operations, providing professional guidance for students' future work in news communication. The main contents of the course include:

1. **Fundamentals of Media Ethics:** This module mainly introduces the concept, characteristics, and theoretical basis of media ethics, such as journalistic professional ethics, advertising ethics, and ethics in online communication. It also analyzes and discusses typical cases in recent years, such as the "Guidelines for Scientific Communication Ethics" released in 2020, which emphasizes that media practitioners should adhere to the principles of objectivity and fairness when reporting on research achievements.

2. **Introduction to Media Regulations:** This module mainly introduces the laws and regulations related to news reporting, advertising, and online content, such as the News Publication Law, Advertising Law, and Cybersecurity Law. It focuses on analyzing the key clauses and their meanings, such as the boundaries of press freedom and information disclosure, and the requirements for online content review. For example, the "Measures for the Administration of Internet Information Services" implemented in 2021 clearly stipulate the specific requirements for content management on internet platforms.

3. **Analysis of Typical Cases:** This module will delve into the analysis of some typical cases of "Media Ethics and Regulations", such as false news reporting, false advertising, and the spread of online rumors. It will discuss the background, nature, impact of the cases, and the responsibilities of the relevant parties. Students will be guided to propose reasonable handling suggestions based on the cases, to cultivate their ability to analyze and solve problems.

4. **Media Responsibility and Social Responsibility:** This module will explore the social responsibilities of the media from a macro perspective, such as information disclosure, public opinion supervision, and value guidance. It will also analyze the current status and existing problems in the fulfillment of media responsibilities, while also focusing on the professional responsibilities of individual media

practitioners to cultivate students' sense of responsibility.

In summary, the course on "Media Ethics and Regulations" is based on the ethical dilemmas and legal challenges in the era of emerging media, systematically cultivating students' professional qualities. Through a variety of teaching methods, such as theoretical lectures, case studies, and role-playing, as well as a combination of formative and summative assessments, the course aims to help students master the course content.

3.   The Current Situation of Teaching in the "Media Ethics and Regulations "Course

"Media Ethics and Regulations" is a compulsory course for journalism and communication majors, and the theoretical knowledge it provides is essential for students to engage in media-related industries after graduation. Therefore, the construction and reform of this course need to be given high attention. Currently, the course faces the following three problems in teaching.

Firstly, the successive introduction and implementation of media-related laws and regulations have caused a lag in existing textbooks and materials. In recent years, with the continuous development of technology, personalized services have been provided to people, bringing new dividends but also facing many risks and challenges. While vigorously developing technology, as a country under the rule of law, China has timely introduced multiple laws and regulations to deal with existing or potential issues. The legal part of the "Media Ethics and Regulations" courseinvolves the content of news communication and citizen protection, mainly including the enjoyment of news rights, characteristics and elements of news infringements, defenses and prevention of news infringements, in which rights to reputation, image, privacy, and copyright are the core content of news rights and infringements. In recent years, several related laws have been promulgated and implemented, such as the Civil Code (promulgated on May 28, 2020, and implemented on January 1, 2021), the Personal Information Protection Law (passed on August 20, 2021, and implemented on November 1, 2021), and the Copyright Law (2020 revision). However, the publication and revision of textbooks require a certain amount of time, resulting in the lagging behind of the currently used textbooks and materials. Moreover, the introduction of relevant laws and regulations has put forward new requirements for the teaching content, teaching methods, and practical teaching of the course. In terms of teaching content, the new laws and regulations require the "Media Ethics and Regulations" course to be consistent with their provisions; in terms of teaching methods, the existing textbooks, materials, and teaching approaches are no longer able to meet the demands of the new era; in terms of practical teaching, the new laws and regulations impose higher requirements on how teachers and students use and learn them. [2]Therefore, how to reorganize and optimize the teaching content of this course in accordance with the new laws has become an important direction to consider in the teaching reform.

Secondly, the ethical values related to media have undergone changes, leading to the coexistence of diverse perspectives on the same issues. With the continuous progress of society, people's values have become more diversified, and views on traditional ethics have become increasingly diverse. In addition, technological empowerment has also had an impact on media ethics. On the one hand, the emergence of new media has made everyone a communicator, which has weakened the authority and professionalism of mainstream media to some extent. On the other hand, the virtuality and anonymity of technology have also led to the rampant spread of false information and even the occurrence of online violence, which were relatively rare issues in the past. Therefore, it is necessary to re-examine the ethical and moral issues brought about by technology. More importantly, students are no longer just the objects of education; their subjectivity is gradually increasing. When facing issues related to public order and social customs,

different students consider the problems from different perspectives. For example, regarding the topic of "covert interviews" ,some students approach it from a "human" perspective, believing that the media should expose all social problems unconditionally and give a voice to ordinary people. On the other hand, some students approach it from a "journalist" perspective, believing that as qualified journalists, they should always uphold the professionalism of journalism, avoid improper interviews, and limit covert interviews. They argue that news workers are only engaged in specialized work and cannot satisfy everyone, as long as they do not violate professional ethics. The above examples are sufficient to illustrate that students are increasingly taking a dialectical approach to ethical and moral issues in the new era. Therefore, how to uphold human nature without violating professional ethics becomes a core issue that must be addressed in the teaching reform.

Thirdly, the professional theories involved in the course are too complex for students to understand. The "Media Ethics and Regulations" course covers both ethical and legal aspects, with a complex and intricate content framework. Moreover, the knowledge system includes key and difficult contents of civil law that require teachers to have a background in law to deeply understand and analyze theoretical content. On the other hand, journalism and communication students lack the foundation of studying civil law-related courses, making them relatively unfamiliar with professional terms. It is difficult for them to analyze case studies without understanding the terminology. At the same time, the course is usually only set as a 2-credit course, with 34 class hours in one semester. In the limited class hours, teachers not only need to explain the meanings of professional terms but also constantly provide new knowledge. There is not much time for students to ask questions or participate in classroom discussions, resulting in less interaction between teachers and students in the classroom. As a result, students find it difficult to digest all the knowledge points during class time, and the continuous output of theoretical knowledge may not allow students to concentrate for 90 minutes. If they are not careful, they may miss the explanation of professional terms by the teacher, making it even more difficult for them to understand the subsequent case analysis. Therefore, how to teach all the professional knowledge points to students and how students can maintain their attention and grasp the professional theoretical content become important issues to consider in the teaching reform.

4. The Necessity of Teaching Reform in "Media Ethics and Regulations" Course

Teaching reform is an inevitable trend in the development of the education sector. The reform of the "Media Ethics and Regulations" course, as an important part of the teaching reform in the journalism and communication major in universities, aims to improve the quality of education, cultivate more excellent compound talents, and play a crucial role in the development of journalism and communication education. Firstly, the reform of course teaching adapts to the development needs of the new era. The integration of the new technological revolution with the reform of liberal arts education has reached a preliminary consensus. Specifically, new technologies have given rise to new industries and formats characterized by cross-disciplinary integration. The development of these new industries and formats has created an urgent need for new talents with knowledge integration, interdisciplinary integration, and strong practical abilities, leading to the emergence of interdisciplinary new majors, the establishment of new courses, and the exploration of new models for nurturing talents.[3] As a field closely related to cutting-edge media technologies, journalism and communication studies should not only focus on traditional news reporting and editing but also emphasize interdisciplinary integration and innovation according to specific course requirements. Utilizing new technologies to empower course teaching reform and continuously updating and adjusting the teaching system of relevant courses is essential.

Secondly, course reform promotes educational and teaching innovation. Course reform advocates innovative educational concepts and encourages teachers to actively explore new modes and methods of education and teaching. Regarding innovative teaching concepts, as "Media Ethics and Regulations" is an interdisciplinary course involving law, ethics, and journalism and communication studies, it is necessary to address the issues of overly singular and specialized courses by incorporating new educational concepts and emphasizing the importance of interdisciplinary studies. [4]Through course reform, continuous exploration of new teaching modes and methods for the course is essential. For example, using online courses, MOOCs, and other modern teaching methods to provide students with more learning resources and study plans for pre-class preview and post-class review. Additionally, introducing teaching methods such as best-case scenario teaching and discussion-based teaching to stimulate students' initiative in learning. Overall, whether it is innovative educational concepts or the exploration of teaching models and methods, the aim is to enhance the teaching level of professional teachers and promote course reform to improve educational quality.

Thirdly, course reform promotes the comprehensive development of students. The "Media Ethics and Regulations" course requires professional teachers to possess interdisciplinary and composite thinking to help students form a comprehensive knowledge system. For students, based on the demand for high-level compound talents in the new era, emphasis is placed on the comprehensiveness, practicality, and innovation of the curriculum, with a focus on developing students' comprehensive qualities and abilities. The comprehensiveness of the course refers to students mastering professional knowledge while also having a cross-disciplinary knowledge background and thinking mode. Practicality involves increasing courses such as experiments and practical training, allowing students to simulate potential challenges they may face in actual work and enhancing their problem-solving abilities. Innovation entails guiding students to independently propose, analyze, and solve problems, cultivating their critical thinking and innovative abilities. Moreover, course reform considers assessing and evaluating students from multiple dimensions, guiding students towards comprehensive development.

5. Exploring the Path of Curriculum Teaching Reform in "Media Ethics and Regulations"

In order to better adapt to the development of the times and the needs of students, it is necessary to change the traditional curriculum which focuses too much on imparting theoretical knowledge. By exploring the appropriate path of curriculum teaching reform, the process of learning theoretical knowledge and acquiring professional skills can become a process for students to learn and form the correct values.

Firstly, it is important to divide the goals of professional theory courses and improve the quality of curriculum teaching. The key point of curriculum reform lies in updating teaching concepts. Due to the high level of the professional knowledge system designed in "Media Ethics and Regulations", its stage-wise deconstruction and reorganization are more in line with the training plan for journalism talents. Specifically, the first stage is for students to find relevant cases before class based on different topics, and have a rough understanding of the professional knowledge content through case analysis. In this stage, students need to independently and autonomously complete the study of professional knowledge in "Media Ethics and Regulations", use the case library of the course to gain preliminary understanding of relevant knowledge and theoretical knowledge framework, record any doubts, and enter the classroom with a list of needs. In the second stage, the teacher gathers the doubts raised by students before class, integrates these fragmented doubts into systematic questions, and focuses on solving these systematic questions while teaching professional knowledge. This helps students become more interested in the course and allows them to find answers to their questions in the classroom, making their memory more

profound. In the third stage, there is the transformation stage of post-class practice. Students summarize the content taught by the teacher in class and the answers to the doubts raised before class.[5] At the same time, they pay attention to independent analysis of recent news events, expand their professional knowledge field through reading literature, online resources, and other means.

Secondly, organizing classroom debates to increase student engagement. Curriculum reform requires changes in teaching behavior, emphasizing that teachers' teaching behavior should be in line with students' learning needs and promote students' active development. Classroom debates are a beneficial way to reform teaching behavior. They are different from teachers being the protagonist in imparting professional knowledge, and also different from group presentations. The purpose is to stimulate students' thinking and exploration of specific topics through debate format. On one hand, it further improves students' teamwork and fosters team spirit. On the other hand, all members of each group need to participate, which trains students' logical thinking and language expression abilities as individuals, enabling them to analyze problems not only on the surface but also in depth and form independent ideas and opinions. Based on the experience of teaching "Media Ethics and Regulations", some students have expressed the desire to learn specific topics in the form of classroom debates. Since this course involves many ethical aspects, there may be completely different ways of dealing with the same problem from the perspective of ordinary people and professional journalists. Therefore, before teaching each controversial topic, a learning task is assigned, dividing students into two sides (4 people each) to search for information related to the topic, organize their viewpoints, and construct argument frameworks. Then, in the first 15 minutes of class, they present and debate their views. It is important for students to be well prepared to avoid having vague arguments or insufficient evidence. Teachers also need to adjust the content of the debate in a timely manner to avoid deviation from the topic. Additionally, it is important to pay attention to the emotional changes of the students during the debate, ensuring that the debate is positive and efficient.

Furthermore, establishing a curriculum case library to improve teaching efficiency. The concept of constructing a curriculum case library in the new era is similar to the knowledge service platform of China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI), where evidence from various levels can be queried and used by the target audience, saving time and cost in collecting evidence and meeting the different needs of the target audience in a precise manner. The construction of the "Media Ethics and Regulations" curriculum case library is consistent with the concept of constructing a curriculum case library in the new era, aiming to provide a platform for teachers and students to access detailed analysis of classic cases and recent hot cases at any time. The premise for the construction of the "Media Ethics and Regulations" curriculum case library is to comprehensively and accurately select relevant cases for the curriculum, analyze the selected cases using techniques such as meta-analysis and systematic evaluation to obtain more scientific cases. Specifically, cases can be classified according to ethics and regulations, as well as different topics. Through internal and external channels, a wide range of cases related to professional courses should be collected, and it is important to note the classification and grading of cases. Firstly, cases should be classified according to ethics and regulations, as well as different topics. The number of cases for each chapter in the entire semester should be determined based on the importance of each chapter in the curriculum, for example, 3-5 cases for key chapters and 1-2 cases for foundational chapters. Secondly, cases should be graded based on difficulty level. They can be divided into general curriculum cases (where students can quickly identify the core knowledge points by reading case analysis) and special curriculum cases (including cases with strong professional and interdisciplinary attributes that require analysis and explanation by professional course teachers). When constructing the curriculum case library, it is not just a matter of listing cases, but also analyzing the selected cases. For lower difficulty general cases, textual

analysis can be used. For influential special curriculum cases, different types of analysis, such as text, animation, and audio-visual media, should be used to avoid a single and dull textual analysis.[6] Additionally, the database of cases should be constantly updated, with the latest hot cases being added in a timely manner. Regular evaluation of the usage and effectiveness of the curriculum case library should also be conducted to continuously improve and optimize it, in order to increase the usage rate and satisfaction of teachers and students.

6. Conclusion

Traditional teaching concepts, methods, and practices are no longer suitable for the development of the new era, and are unable to meet the needs of students. The constantly emerging new technologies and applications have brought many opportunities, requiring new professional knowledge and skill support.Therefore, the reform of the "Media Ethics and Regulations" curriculum is particularly important. By promoting curriculum reform, it is ensured that teaching concepts are continuously updated, with emphasis on the cutting-edge and systematic nature of professional knowledge, teaching methods are constantly changing to encourage students' active participation and exploration, and teaching practices are continuously deepened to solve the difficulties and challenges faced by the curriculum. Ultimately, the learned professional knowledge is transformed into practice, and more versatile talents required by society are cultivated to meet the job demands in interdisciplinary fields.It should be noted that while technology brings opportunities, it also brings new challenges. Educators must continuously deepen curriculum and teaching reforms in order to grasp the pulse of technological development and minimize visible and potential risks. Only in this way can we effectively improve the quality of talent cultivation and provide more excellent news and communication talents for society and the industry.

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