

# Analysis of the Traditional Mechanism and Reform Strategy of College Counselor Team Construction - Taking Yancheng Teachers University as an Example

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**Abstract:** College counselors are important guides for college students during their school years. The construction of college counselor team is a necessary way for college quality education. The traditional mechanism has problems in the gap between the professional scope of counselors and the teaching policy, the professionalization construction of counselors and the flow of the counselor team, and the conflict between the student team and counselors' thinking. According to the regulations for the construction of counselor team in general colleges, the duties of the counselor team will be clarified and the construction of the counselor team will be deeply implemented, and the analysis of the reform strategy will be completed to support the construction of college counselor team.

**Keywords:** Counselor team construction; Counselors; Reform; College counselor team

## 1. Introduction

Counselors are no strangers to us, and counselors occupy an unassailable position in colleges and universities. Students' ideological and political education, daily management, employment guidance, mental health, and students' party construction work are the daily work of counselors[1]. Since the establishment of counselors in colleges and universities in 1961 to the reform and opening up in the 1990s, there has been no substantial development in the construction of counselor team. In the 21st century, the party and the country paid more attention to the construction of the counselor team. Since the promulgation of the No. 16 document in 2004, the national educational institutions have attached great importance to the construction of college counselor team. The construction of counselor team has become an important task in the cultivation of talents in higher education. The functions of counselors have been expanded from various aspects, which have made great efforts for the way out and the guarantee of counselors[2]. After more than ten years of struggle, the construction mechanism of the counselor team in higher education has reached a stable state, and the counselor team has reached an irreplaceable position with high quality and dedication, making great contributions to the cultivation of talents in colleges and universities. However, with the continuous reform of the country and education, the form of education has undergone great changes, and the social and ideological environment has also changed, the construction of the coun-

selor team still needs to be reformed with changes in society and the times.

## 2. There are Problems in the Construction Mechanism of College Counselor Team

In 2006, the Ministry of Education issued the "Regulations for the Construction of Counselor Team in General Colleges and Universities", stating that the main duties of college and university counselors are divided into two aspects: one is the daily ideological and political education of students, and the other is the daily management of students. Counselors are the backbone of colleges and universities, and student development is inseparable from counselors. Therefore, the construction of the counselor team has become the top priority in the development of academic studies in colleges and universities. After more than ten years of struggle since 2004, the overall quality of the counselor team has steadily improved. However, with the transformation of China's economy and society and the transformation of social thoughts, higher education still needs to be reformed with social changes in the process of reform. It is found that there are still many problems in the construction of traditional college counselor team needed to be solved by us[3].

### 2.1. There is a gap between the counselors' occupational scope and the teaching guidelines.

The "Regulations for the Construction of Counselor Team in General Colleges and Universities" points out

that the strength of counselors is the main force for the ideological and political education of college and university students. A counselor is not only a teacher for students in life and learning, but also an important friend for the healthy growth of students. The Eighteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China and the Third Plenary Session of the Eighteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed that regarding “strengthen moral education and cultivate people” as the fundamental task of education. Colleges and universities should respond to the strategic task of the Ministry of Education and regard “strengthen moral education and cultivate people” as the main goal of student development. Therefore, there are high requirements for the level standards and competency standards of the counselors’ occupation. However, the professional connotation of the counselors has not been clarified, and their duties in colleges and universities are not clearly delimited. These problems make the counselors’ work tasks greatly increased and thus can not effectively improve their professional quality. At the same time, the counselors’ work is heavy on weekdays, the students’ usual mind state, and the school’s study style construction are all basic tasks of the counselors. Therefore, the counselors will have unfair thoughts in their heart. The scope of the counselors’ duties is unclear, which will lead to a certain gap between the teaching and teaching guidelines. This is a problem that needs to be solved in the reform of the counselor team.

## **2.2. Professionalization construction of counselors and the great flow of counselors**

The value of the construction of counselor team in colleges and universities is reflected in the specialization, and specialization is the necessary way to achieve professionalism. In order to achieve the professionalization of the construction of the counselor team, professional training should be conducted for the counselor team. However, the reality is not the case, the lack of professional follow-up training for counselors in colleges and universities has led to a lack of planning for future careers in schools and counselors. Therefore, the counselors overall lack professional centripetal force, the professional and in-depth construction did not get a good response, the construction of the counselor team lack of professional talents.

The advent of the information age has brought the difficult historical mission to the counselors, and the reform of the college and university management system has created new challenges for the management of counselors. The change of students’ political thoughts such as the quality education proposed by the Ministry of Education and some other reasons makes the mobility of the counselor team increase, so the loss of counselors’ talents

is also a problem that needs to be solved in the construction of the counselor team.

## **2.3. Challenge of the contradiction between the student team changes and counselors’ thinking**

Nowadays, most of the college students are post-90s. They were born in the era of rapid information dissemination in China. China’s post-90s have the idea of being free and unrestrained, while being able to view the problems by standing on the forefront of technology. The post-90s advocate liberalism and individuality. Their ideas were different from those of previous generations. They are brave in risk and getting more and more brave when they are frustrated, and they are always optimistic when viewing the problems. At the same time, their “Buddha life” is more different from the post-70s and post-80s. Nowadays, the counselors in colleges and universities are composed of post-60s, post-70s, and post-80s. The differences in their ideas have lead to obstacles in the communication between counselors and students, which makes the counselors’ work impossible to complete efficiently. Therefore, these ideological changes require counselors to quickly improve self-cultivation, and make their thoughts follow the trend of the times, effectively responding to the mind changes and value changes of students.

Yancheng Teachers University has attached great importance to the construction of counselor team, and vigorously promoted the specialization and professionalization construction of the counselor team to ensure that the counselors have “conditions for work, platforms for affairs, guaranteed treatment, and space for development”, which is conducive to escorting the talent base and intellectual support for the growth of college students. According to the spirit of the “Notice of the Provincial Department of Education on Forwarding the Special Investigation of the Construction of College Counselor Team in the Office of the Ministry of Education” (Su Education Letter [2018] No. 14), combined with the actual situation of Yancheng Teachers University, the construction situation of its counselor team is summarized as follows:

### **2.3.1. Guided by the spirit of the National College Ideological and Political Work Conference, construct a management system**

In strict accordance with the spirit of the National College Ideological and Political Work Conference, Yancheng Teachers University regards the construction of counselor team as an important part of the construction of teachers and management teams, and takes effective measures to continuously strengthen the scientific and standardized management of the counselor team. It has held many activities such as “Counselor Salon” and “Counselor Special Lecture” and organized school coun-

selsors and class teachers to study the spirit of the National College Ideological and Political Work Conference and fully understand the importance and necessity of strengthening the construction of college counselor team. Through special lectures and seminars, we will further enhance the sense of responsibility and mission of our school counselors. We formulate rules and regulations such as "Implementation Measures for the Construction of Counselor Team", "Measures for the Management and Assessment of Class Teachers", "Counselors' Daily Management System", and further refine and improve the counselors talks, visits to the dormitory, in-depth classes, theme classes, and regular contact with classroom teachers and parents and other work links. We will improve the work system for selecting, hiring, cultivating, managing, and assessing counselors, and construct a student education management model in which counselors and class teachers work in parallel, and continuously improve the normative and scientific work of counselors.

### 2.3.2. Strengthening team construction with the Order NO. 43 as the guideline

Open selection, full-time and part-time combination:

Under the unified leadership of the school party committee and administration, the recruitment of counselors is conducted by means of open recruitment, and a clear selection and appointment system is formulated, strictly in accordance with the recruitment process of material review → written test → interview → physical examination → signing employment contract → selection of one-year probation period to ensure that the employed counselors are politically qualified, business-savvy, and excellent in style.

Build a platform to boost growth:

Our school actively builds a platform for counselors to carry out practice and theoretical research, and gradually establishes a comprehensive (pre-job training, on-the-job training, transfer training, development training, etc.), multiple forms (daily training, special training, inter-school exchange, etc.) counselor training system, regularly organizes counselor salons and work seminars to achieve 100% training coverage. Our school also conducts counselor work boutique project cultivation project, strengthens the theoretical research and team building of full-time counselors, and encourages and supports front-line counselors to carry out forward-looking research in the field of moral education. Each year, a group of student work research special projects will be funded, and it will be included in the school-level scientific research project management. 2017 is designated as the counselors' "Ideological and Political Work Research Year", and 2018 is designated as the counselors' "Team Construction Year" to promote the counselor team shift from the "practice type" to "practice-research type".

Our school actively implements the counselors' professional ability improvement plan. According to the actual work needs of ideological and political education, mental health education, career development education, innovation and entrepreneurship education and emergencies, our school actively selects counselors to participate in typical case consultation activities, relying on work practice, and using cooperative research as a link to discuss and solve difficult and complex practical cases to enhance the core skills and professionalism of the counselors. According to the internal development level of the counselor team and the characteristics of different individuals, the counselors at different stages of development are classified and guided. Through the activities of the counselors' quality ability contest, the counselors and class teachers awareness contest, and the counselors' quality development, the counselors' professional ability is continuously improved, and the cohesiveness, team awareness and dedication of the student work team are effectively enhanced.

Improve measures and broaden the path:

Our school adheres to the management system of "double identity", "dual management" and "two-line promotion". According to the requirement of "Regulations on the Construction of Counselors in General Colleges and Universities" (No. 43 Order of the Ministry of Education), that the "Determining the corresponding level of administrative treatment according to the counselor's tenure and actual work performance, and giving the corresponding tilt policy", a competitive rating mechanism based on years of work, performance, and performance appraisal is established in our school.

In order to promote the healthy development of the counselor team, our school incorporates the training of counselors into the teacher training plan and personnel training plan for the same period, and takes practical measures to encourage and support the counselors to improve their academic qualifications. The full-time counselor can evaluate the professional and technical positions of the ideological and political education subject according to the requirements of teaching assistants, lecturers, associate professors and professors. The professional and technical posts of the full-time counselors are subject to separate lists and evaluations. At the same time, our school combines the actual work, without prejudice to the normal management work, encourages counselors with certain teaching experience to undertake the teaching tasks of courses, such as "Ideological and Moral Cultivation", "Outer Modern History Outline", "Situation and Policy", "Military Theory", "College Students Career Planning", which has expanded the professional knowledge of counselors and laid the foundation for the future growth and development of counselors.

Our school adheres to the principle of combining relatively stable and reasonable mobility. According to the

professional background, comprehensive quality and personal wishes of the counselors, we help them to choose and clarify the future development direction and formulate career development plans. Counselors who are suitable and willing to continue their work in the ideological and political work of students are encouraged to take the path of professionalism and they will be cultivated as the backbone of ideological and political work. For counselors who are willing to continue their ideological and political work and work for higher degrees, they will be included in training programs for full-time teachers. For counselors who are suitable and willing to engage in teaching, research or other work, they will be arranged according to policy requirements and actual needs. The school regards the team of full-time counselors as an important source for the training and selection of party and government reserve cadres, and actively sends excellent talents to the management positions in the school.

### **2.3.3. Based on the reality of ideological and political education in colleges and universities in the new era, innovative working methods**

Taking multiple measures to strengthen the pertinence of ideological and political education for college students:

Our school requires and guides counselors and class teachers to strengthen ideological and political education of students. Through the theme class meeting, group day activities, special lectures, skill competitions and so on, strengthen the physical and mental health education of students. Pay attention to students' interpersonal relationships, love and make friends, find jobs, guide students to improve their psychological quality, establish a healthy self-image, and create a perfect personality. Strengthen daily safety education for students, especially personal safety education, strengthen the safety and stability education of the class during major political events and politically sensitive periods, and ensure the correct political direction of students.

Building a network to promote the ideological and political education of college students:

In October 2016, our school issued the "Opinions on Further Strengthening the Counselors, Class Teachers and Students' Heart-to-Heart Work", aiming to establish a network of students as the main body and counselors as the mainstay, respecting students, caring for students and giving full play to students' subjective initiative. We will promote the ideological and political education of college students in a solid manner and give new vitality to the work of school students. Through the use of the "four major positions" (dormitories, classrooms, offices, networks), each semester we will hold a summary meeting of talks, highlight the network of talks, and strengthen the pertinence of talks.

Quantifying standards and implementing the "five ones" project:

Our school requires counselors and class teachers to do "five ones" in the work: listen to one class per week, visit to the student dormitory one time every week, one morning exercise with the students, one weekly student meeting every week, and one class meeting every class in a month, and relevant records will be done. The school arranges counselors to be on duty in the student dormitory areas of the two campuses, and sets up an evening duty hotline. The on duty time is from 7:00 pm to 6:00 am the next day. During the on duty time, the counselors should inspect the self-study situation of each college, prevent emergencies, and inspect the morning exercises. By formulating specific and quantifiable work standards, the counselors will know what to do and how to do it, and at the same time, they can strengthen the emotional communication with the students, so that the students can fully trust the counselors and regard the counselors as friends and family members, thus improving the students' ideological and political work's pertinence and effectiveness.

Recruiting more capable personnel and encouraging professional teachers to participate in students' ideological and political work:

Our school supports the professional teachers with good ideological quality, high level of professionalism and strong dedication as part-time class teachers by revising the conditions for reviewing titles and the methods for determining the workload, to promote moral education and intellectual education together. At the same time, we actively encourage professional teachers and well-known professors to serve as academic tutors of students. At the same time, we actively encourage professional teachers and well-known professors to serve as academic tutors of students. Based on the characteristics of various disciplines, students and professional teachers, subject knowledge and ideological education are connected by holding various professional skills competitions, college students' innovation and entrepreneurship competitions, and professional social practice, making students receive ideological and political education while gaining professional knowledge, and assume the mission and responsibility of college students in the new era.

### **3. Implementation of Reform Strategy for the Construction of College Counselor Team**

Since the founding of New China, the party and the country have attached great importance to education. In 1953, Jiang Nanxiang, a famous educator and revolutionary of the president of Tsinghua University, proposed and implemented a counselor system. In 2004, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued "Several Opinions on Further Strengthening and Improving School Moral Education." The Ministry of Education issued "Several Opinions on Further Strengthening the Ideological and Political Work Team in Higher Educa-

tion Institutions” in 2000, stipulating that colleges and universities should be equipped with full-time ideological and political personnel. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China issued the “Opinions on Further Strengthening and Improving College Students’ Ideological and Political Education” in 2004, the policy pointed out that it is necessary to take effective measures to build a high-level team of counselors and class teachers. The speech delivered by Hu Jintao in 2005 at the conference on strengthening and improving the ideological and political education of college students fully demonstrated that the party and the country attach great importance to the ideological and political education of college students. In 2006, the program for the construction of the counselor team was officially implemented. The duties of the counselors are more clear after the implementation of the construction program of the counselor team. Therefore, colleges and universities pay more attention to the construction of the counselor team. As the party and the country attach more importance to education, the construction of the counselor team becomes more and more important. Therefore, the construction of the counselor team should be reformed accordingly with the development and needs of the society. The most representative reform is the Order No. 24 and No. 43 issued by the Ministry of Education. The issuance of these two policies marks the importance attached by our party and people to education. It also marks the construction of the counselor team are carrying out the corresponding reforms suitable for quality education in colleges and universities in China with the changes of economy.

### 3.1. Clarify the duties of the counselor team

Order No. 24 of the Ministry of Education was released after discussion on May 20, 2006, and was officially implemented on September 1, 2006. The release of the Order No. 24 made the duties and positioning of the counselor team clear. The Ministry of Education’s Order No. 24 has six chapters and twenty-six articles. Since the implementation of the Order No. 24 of the Ministry of Education, it has been more than ten years. This decade is an important period for China’s socialist construction and a crucial period for quality education in China. In line with the development of the times and science and technology, China found the deficiency in the process of implementation, and believes that education is the foundation of a strong country. Therefore, after more than ten years of struggle, on August 31, 2017, after the 32nd discussion and revision of the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Education Order No. 43 was issued, and the Ministry of Education Order No. 43 was implemented on October 1, 2017. Order No. 43 of the Ministry of Education consists of six chapters and twenty-two articles. From the issuance and implementation of the Ministry of Education Order No. 24 to the issuance and implementation of the

Ministry of Education Order No. 43, this is an important reform of the construction of the counselor team. In the past ten years, the institutional norm system of the counselor team management has basically taken shape, but there are still problems. Therefore, the release of Order No. 43 of the Ministry of Education can meet the shortcomings of the Ministry of Education Order No. 24 in line with the development of the times.

### 3.2. Thoroughly implement the construction of the counselor team

Comparing the policy of the Ministry of Education on the construction of the counselor team ten years ago with that at present, it is more obvious that the construction of the counselor team is being reformed. Ten years ago, the reform strategy proposed: strengthening the construction of college counselors and strengthening the implementation of the spirit of the “Opinions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on Further Strengthening and Improving College Students’ Ideological and Political Education”. In line with the development of the times, today’s reform strategy proposes: strengthening the ideological and political education of college students nationwide, and implementing the professionalization of the construction of counselor team. Ten years ago, the strategy proposed that counselors are an important part of colleges and universities with dual identity of teachers and cadres. The ideological and political education of college students and the daily life management are inseparable from the management of the counselor team. Therefore, college counselors are a very important role in the study and life of college students. In today’s reform strategy, there is not much change in the positioning of the counselor team. Ten years ago, the strategy proposed: colleges and universities should regard the construction of counselor team as an important part of college quality education. Further strengthen the construction of counselors, so that the team of counselors will become the most powerful team for quality education, promote the cultivation of “four have” young people, and enable young people in the new era to become qualified socialist successors. In today’s strategy, it proposes that institutions of higher education should insist on regarding “strengthen moral education and cultivate people” as a central link. When constructing a team of counselors, guaranteeing sufficient work enthusiasm of counselors and ensuring the immediate interests of them can give room for the further development of counselor team. Ten years ago, the strategy proposed five job requirements and eight job responsibilities. Nowadays, on the basis of the five requirements, the reformed strategy puts forward that the team of counselors should enable students to correctly understand the responsibility of the times and the obligations of contemporary young people, so that contemporary college students can understand the development

trend of our country. The counselors' nine job responsibilities include party group and class construction, study style construction, student daily affairs management, mental health education and counseling, network ideological and political education, campus crisis response, career planning and employment entrepreneurship guidance, theoretical and practical research and so on. In terms of equipment and selection, the strategy of ten years ago proposed that colleges should be equipped with special counselors, full-time counselors and part-time counselors should be combined, and full-time counselors should be set up in each grade. Nowadays, after the reform, we must propose that colleges and universities should establish personnel employment relationships with full-time counselors. For those who are concurrently counselors, colleges and universities can choose among the teachers who have the ability. For the selection criteria of counselors, the selection criteria for ten years ago are divided into three categories: political and disciplinary requirements, bachelor degree or above, and professional background with relevant disciplines. Ten years later, we propose that college counselors should have high political quality and firm ideals and beliefs, master the ideological and political education work and knowledge related to laws and regulations, as well as organizational management and language skills. Comparing the construction strategy of the counselor team ten years ago with today's reformed strategy, it proves the importance of the construction of the counselor team in colleges and universities to the quality education in the new era. It also proves that the policy reform of the counselor team construction changes with the times and the development of technology.

#### 4. Conclusion

The increasingly perfect team of counselors has always played a positive role in the healthy growth of college students, the study style construction of colleges and universities, and the development of society. Science and technology are developing, the times are changing, and the standards for education are constantly changing. "Removing the old and establishing the new" is an important strategy for quality education in China. Finding problems in implementation and discussing and correcting them in time is our necessary ability for the long-term development. Therefore, the construction of the counselor team as the foundation of quality education in colleges and universities should be reformed in response to the constant changes of the times.

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