

# New Challenges and Countermeasures of Calligraphy Education in Colleges and Universities in the New Era

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## Abstract

Calligraphy is an important part of China's traditional culture. In the new era, calligraphy can still blossom its charming brilliance. Calligraphy teaching in colleges and universities is an important link in the development of contemporary calligraphy art, but with the development of the times, calligraphy education in colleges and universities is faced with many new challenges, which hinder the progress of calligraphy education. Therefore, this paper first introduces multimedia and the multimedia age, then describes calligraphy education in multimedia era, then studies the value orientation of calligraphy education in colleges and universities in multimedia era, and at last puts forward the cultivation strategies of value orientation in calligraphy education in multimedia era, in order to promote the development of calligraphy education in colleges and universities.

## Keywords

Calligraphy Education, New Challenges, Countermeasure Research

## 1. Introduction

Calligraphy is an important part of Chinese traditional culture and a shining star in the long history of China. For a long time, the study of calligraphy can not only exercise people's writing ability, but also enable people to appreciate Chinese culture in the process of writing, and obtain the perception and edification of body and mind. Chinese college and university calligraphy education originated in the 1960s, which was first established by calligrapher Pan Tianshou at Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts. Later, Lu Weizhao, Sha Menghai, Ouyang Zhongshi and other calligraphy masters also joined the calligraphy education in

colleges and universities. They have opened calligraphy courses in Nanjing University of The Arts, Nanjing Normal University, Beijing Normal University and other colleges and universities, which is the beginning of calligraphy education in contemporary colleges and universities in China. At present, 69 colleges and universities in China offer calligraphy as a major, and many more offer calligraphy as a public course. Calligraphy education also occupies a place in the contemporary college education system. Through the form of calligraphy education, it helps students to obtain cultural education experience and improve their ability to understand and express Chinese culture, which is beneficial to the promotion of traditional Chinese culture. And under the background of ideological and political education, the integration of calligraphy education into ideological and political education can promote the comprehensive development of calligraphy art and students' quality. However, there are also some problems in the current calligraphy education, such as the integration of the times of calligraphy education and the selection of the content of calligraphy education, which affect the development of calligraphy education in colleges and universities. With the continuous change in the educational situation, calligraphy education in colleges and universities needs to make changes accordingly to cope with the new challenges of the times and put forward new strategies for the development of calligraphy education, so as to open a new door for the calligraphy education in colleges and universities (Bu, 2021).

## **2. The Importance of Calligraphy Education in Colleges and Universities**

### **2.1. Calligraphy Is an Art, But Also a Kind of Culture**

Countless calligraphers have emerged in China through the ages. These calligraphers depict the picture of Chinese culture with their own brush strokes, and the handed down scrolls allow us to explore the customs of history and culture. Compared with other art forms, calligraphy is intuitive for cultural inheritance. First, in the written form of calligraphy, it requires students to write on paper with the writing brush. The brush, ink, paper and inkstone used by the students are part of the traditional Chinese culture and are the treasures handed down from generation to generation by Chinese literati. When writing with traditional stationery, students can naturally feel the breadth of Chinese culture and demand themselves with the character of literati. In 2006, China issued the Outline of the National Cultural Development Plan for the Eleventh Five-Year Plan Period, pointing out that we should attach importance to the excellent traditional Chinese culture education and inheritance of traditional classics, and elevate calligraphy culture to a strategic position in the national cultural development, which also shows the promoting role of calligraphy in the development of traditional culture. Secondly, in terms of the writing content of calligraphy, it is an art form with words as the carrier. The content of calligraphy education is usually some warning quotes, such as "As heaven maintains vigor through movements,

a gentleman should constantly strive for self-perfection”, “social virtue carries things”, “Goodness is like water” and so on. These contents are the crystallization of five thousand years of Chinese culture, which contains the simple cultural perception and moral thoughts of The Chinese people. When students write these words and sentences, they write and think, and their understanding of Chinese culture will be improved accordingly. Third, in the expression of calligraphy, it is limited by paper length, etc., therefore, when students use calligraphy to express themselves, they need to condense their thoughts and concentrate the views they want to express, and finally write the best ideas on paper. This form can exercise students’ expression ability well, and let students learn to think before they express, which also conforms to the implicit and introverted cultural style in Chinese tradition.

## **2.2. Enhance Students’ Aesthetic Ability and Appreciation Ability**

Calligraphy is undoubtedly a beautiful art, in the development of calligraphy, we can see a number of calligraphers of different styles of calligraphy expression, and some of this calligraphy is strong and powerful, some strong and deep, some artistic conception is distant, and some elegant and beautiful, that different calligraphy expression constitutes a garden of calligraphy art. But no matter what form of calligraphy art, it reflects the pursuit of beauty of Chinese people. It is because of beauty that we have the unremitting efforts of calligraphers in past dynasties and the bright pearl that we see at present. Therefore, it can be said that calligraphy is the transmission of thousands of years of China’s aesthetic concept and the inheritance of the pursuit of beauty. Contemporary calligraphy art is also carried out on the basis of continuing the traditional pursuit of beauty. The development of calligraphy education in colleges and universities is essentially the inheritance and development of beauty. Whether it is the further study of calligraphy or the study of public classes, it reflects Chinese aesthetics to varying degrees. In the process of learning calligraphy, through the perception of iron painting and silver hook in calligraphy, students can discover beauty, experience beauty, and obtain beauty from writing, and then can express beauty and create beauty, and finally realize development in the inheritance of beauty.

And in the current globalization situation, the aesthetic cultures of various nationalities are constantly blending. Learning calligraphy can help students strengthen their cultural confidence, improve their recognition of their own national culture, and then help students make cultural choices in line with Chinese aesthetics in life. It is also an effective exercise for students’ appreciation ability.

## **2.3. Improve Students’ World Outlook, and Outlook on Life and Values**

The world outlook, outlook on life and values of college students are in the period of finalization. During this period, students go out of their families and start to enter society. Various complicated situations in society are easy to affect students’ values. Under the influence of the wrong views, some students may go as-

tray and make wrong life decisions, and calligraphy art has a positive guiding effect on the formation of students' three views. Every year, Chinese calligraphy major sends more than 5000 graduates to society, and countless students learn calligraphy courses in colleges and universities. Improving the teaching ability of calligraphy is of great benefit to the formation of these students' values. In the way of calligraphy practice, in order to achieve a breakthrough in calligraphy skills, students need to continue to practice hard, continuous writing at the desk is also the tempering of students' character. For example, the scholar Sun Guoting of Tang Dynasty said in book *Notation*: "In ancient times, those who were good at writing lived long lives, it is because of their calm hearts. Man who can calm his mind can do everything." In the process of practicing calligraphy, students can write in meditation without distractions, which helps students have space for self-dialogue. This mastery of "original mind" enables students to face other distractions in a calm manner and avoid making wrong choices. In the face of other difficulties in the future, he will be more determined to move forward and will not be affected by external things (Hao, 2021).

### **3. New Challenges Facing Calligraphy Education in Colleges and Universities**

#### **3.1. Shortage of Teachers**

Colleges and universities are an important part of the modern calligraphy education system. Compared with other ways of calligraphy teaching, calligraphy courses in colleges and universities are characterized by specialization and systematization. They can carry out teaching activities for a wider range of students, which is of great significance for the inheritance of calligraphy art. Therefore, this paper chooses colleges and universities as the background of calligraphy teaching research, on the one hand, it is conducive to the improvement of the educational level of calligraphy in colleges and universities, on the other hand, it is also conducive to the development of calligraphy art itself. With the development of the times, Chinese traditional culture has received more and more attention, and many people are willing to learn Chinese traditional culture, especially in the aspect of calligraphy. Therefore, calligraphy courses in colleges and universities are becoming more and more successful. Many colleges and universities have opened calligraphy courses and begun to teach calligraphy knowledge. However, with the increase of the number of students learning calligraphy, the teachers of calligraphy education in colleges and universities appear to be seriously insufficient. Many students can only have 1 or 2 hours of calligraphy courses in a week, and can not practice calligraphy after class. This model is obviously not enough to guarantee the learning quality of students. In addition, in terms of hardware facilities, calligraphy learning needs to prepare professional stationery such as paper and brushes, and schools need to open up special writing space to meet the needs of students to write, wash and grind brushes, and create a quiet and peaceful classroom atmosphere, so as to effectively improve the quality

of calligraphy education. At present, many colleges and universities offer calligraphy courses without considering the needs of calligraphy teaching for classrooms and other hardware facilities, so students' learning effect is not good.

The shortage of teachers is also reflected in the professional aspects of teachers. At present, calligraphy is in the stage of vigorous development in China, but the number of teachers teaching calligraphy is still small. Especially under the teaching mode of colleges and universities, colleges and universities without calligraphy major can hardly hire professional calligraphy teachers to offer public courses. In many schools, calligraphy courses are offered by teachers who are only interested in calligraphy, and there is not enough support from the school. Compared with the learning needs of students, the teaching resources provided by the school are severely inadequate.

### **3.2. Curriculum Ideology and Politics Can Not be Effectively Integrated**

Curriculum ideology and politics is a hot topic in current university teaching. The introduction of curriculum ideology and politics into campus can help teachers develop curriculum resources better. Through the general course teaching, students can get more ideological and political understanding, and their comprehensive quality could be promoted. However, in calligraphy teaching, due to the high degree of freedom in calligraphy teaching, the content teachers teach in calligraphy courses is decided by teachers themselves, and the development of course ideological and political teaching is also affected by teachers' teaching ability, so it is difficult to form a unified curriculum ideological and political teaching program. As a result, in the course of calligraphy, it is difficult to carry out course ideological and political teaching, and the effect of course ideological and political teaching is also difficult to judge. Calligraphy itself has a good teaching soil for course of ideological and political, for calligraphy art itself is closely related to students' thoughts and feelings. The course ideological and political teaching itself is not rigid teaching ideas, the integration, of course, ideological and political teaching and calligraphy teaching is beneficial to the development of both. Calligraphy teachers should conduct comprehensive research on the content, form and evaluation method of this course, so as to form an effective example of combining calligraphy teaching with course ideology and politics, and ensure the teaching effect of course ideology and politics.

### **3.3. The Evaluation System Is Rigid and Lacks Innovation**

The evaluation system in calligraphy teaching in colleges and universities is rigid, which is reflected in three aspects. First of all, in terms of the evaluation content, calligraphy courses in colleges and universities are usually graded in two aspects. One is students' daily performance, the other is students' final exam results, and the final exam results are composed of students' writing ability and knowledge of calligraphy. This evaluation method is progressive compared with the traditional examination method that only focuses on students' writing abili-

ty. However, with the development of the times, calligraphy art has become increasingly diversified, and students' ability to comprehend and understand calligraphy art is more important. Under the current evaluation model, students only need to exercise writing skills and memorize some calligraphy knowledge to pass the exam easily. This evaluation method is contrary to the original intention of calligraphy. Calligraphy teaching should create space for students' self-expression, rather than restrict students' self-expression with rules and regulations. Secondly, in terms of evaluation methods, examination is still the ultimate evaluation that students majoring in calligraphy need to face. Some schools require students to write papers related to calligraphy learning or create calligraphic works. Generally speaking, there are various evaluation methods for calligraphy education, but from the perspective of implementation, each university only chooses one or several evaluation methods, which are chosen by teachers rather than students according to their own strengths. Students still have to write papers or create works according to the requirements of the school, which is not their own intention. It exposes the lack of flexibility in the evaluation method. Thirdly, in terms of evaluation concept, the evaluation system of calligraphy courses in current colleges and universities still pays more attention to explicit evaluation indicators, such as students' mastery of brushwork and understanding of chapter writing layout, while the implicit indicators such as students' mastery of culture and understanding of feelings in calligraphy are not evaluated. This evaluation concept will also lead students to pay more attention to the surface of writing expression and ignore the cultivation of inner emotions, which is not conducive to the long-term development of students in the field of calligraphy (Hua & Fu, 2022).

### 3.4. Lack of Employment-Oriented Calligraphy Teaching

Employment is an issue that cannot be ignored in college education. Data survey shows that in 2022, the number of college graduates in China will exceed 10 million, and the employment situation is very severe. For a long time, studies on employment have focused on popular majors such as finance, teacher education and law, but ignored the employment problems of graduates of calligraphy and other minor majors. In college calligraphy teaching, there are few calligraphy teaching activities oriented to promoting students' employment. Teachers put more emphasis on students' performance in school than on career guidance. The employment of calligraphy major is relatively narrow, becoming a calligrapher is the ideal of every calligraphy student, but not every student could become a master calligrapher. When colleges and universities offer calligraphy majors and courses, they should study students' future employment, provide them with sufficient employment guidance, and help them combine calligraphy skills with their future work and life. But the current colleges and universities apparently ignored this point in the teaching of calligraphy. Colleges and universities are the turning point for students to enter the society from school. Only by carrying out adequate employment education can students obtain long-term development (Xia, 2022).

## **4. New Strategies of Calligraphy Education Development in Colleges and Universities**

### **4.1. Curriculum Executor—To Improve the Faculty**

In order to promote the development of calligraphy education in colleges and universities, it is necessary to improve the strength of teachers and meet the objective needs of students' calligraphy learning. In terms of teaching staff, colleges and universities offering calligraphy major should upgrade the teaching staff of this major and establish the assessment and admission system for calligraphy teachers. Only teachers who meet certain standards can set up calligraphy major to improve the professional quality of calligraphy teachers. Colleges and universities need to fully investigate the teaching content and teaching methods of calligraphy courses. Calligraphy teachers also need to continue to study the teaching methods in order to improve their teaching ability and meet the learning needs of students. Teachers can carry out experience exchange and summary activities regularly, and master the cutting-edge teaching knowledge of their major through theme lectures, symposia, experience seminars and other forms, which is conducive to the development of calligraphy teaching. In terms of hardware facilities, the colleges and universities should allocate some funds to optimize the environment of calligraphy teaching. Schools should build professional calligraphy classrooms and set up long tables, wash basins and other infrastructure in the classrooms. With the development of calligraphy teaching, colleges and universities should also equip calligraphy classrooms with multimedia equipment to meet the needs of diversified calligraphy teaching (Yang, 2020).

### **4.2. Content of the Course—To Integrate Curriculum Ideology and Politics**

Teachers of calligraphy major should discuss the course ideological and political teaching mode, study the central idea of the course ideological and political, deeply analyze the combination of calligraphy teaching and curriculum ideological and political, and dig into the teaching resources of calligraphy, and they should not only require students to master basic writing skills, but also require students to pay attention to the cultivation of comprehensive quality in learning. For curriculum ideological and political teaching, teachers can form teaching norms under the curriculum ideological and political mode. For example, when developing new calligraphy courses, first of all, expand the knowledge of calligraphy involved in this course to explain to students, so that students can understand the cultural connotation contained in calligraphy skills, and broaden the extension of calligraphy courses. Secondly, learning and practicing skills under the guidance of culture can get twice the result with half the effort. In the course of ideological and political teaching, attention should also be paid to the combination of traditional culture and modern culture. The traditional culture involved in calligraphy also has applicability in the current society. Many students only understand the traditional culture in their study, but do not pay at-

attention to the modern application of traditional culture. In the course of ideological and political teaching, teachers can make use of this ideological and political resource, so that students can not only understand history and culture, but also apply history and culture in modern society, and guide modern life with correct values, which is also a kind of cultural inheritance (Zeng, 2021).

#### **4.3. Evaluation Method of the Course—To Innovative Evaluation Mode**

The evaluation model of calligraphy education in colleges and universities needs to be innovated in two aspects. On the one hand, in the evaluation system, colleges and universities should give students more autonomy and respect the subject status of students in the course learning. For example, among the diversified course evaluation methods, students can choose their own preferred evaluation methods. Secondly, flexibility should be emphasized in the evaluation method. With the development of higher education, China's higher education is becoming more scientific and international, and can be more flexible in the way of evaluation. Colleges and universities can set flexible evaluation standards according to the actual situation of students' calligraphy learning. For example, in the calligraphy course with international students as the main body, we can add the evaluation content of Chinese culture perception ability. In this way, students' independent behavior in calligraphy learning is respected. Students can also combine their interests with calligraphy learning, making calligraphy learning no longer boring.

#### **4.4. Teaching Orientation—To Promote Students' Employment**

In calligraphy education, attention should be paid to the employment of students. Teachers should first understand the employment scope of students majoring in calligraphy, acquire relevant knowledge about calligraphy employment, and answer students' questions in time. For students who want to take calligraphy as the direction of employment, teachers can introduce relevant internship opportunities for students, so that students can get more vocational training. For students who do not take calligraphy as their employment direction, teachers can help them realize the auxiliary role that the study of calligraphy can provide for their employment. In calligraphy teaching in colleges and universities, teachers should guide students to think about employment, help them find the combination of calligraphy knowledge and employment, and improve their understanding of employment (Zhang, 2021).

### **5. Conclusion**

This paper studies the new challenges and countermeasures of calligraphy education in colleges and universities. The research finds that with the continuous development of higher education, calligraphy teaching in colleges and universities is facing many new challenges. There is still room for further development



in teaching staff resources, ideological and political teaching, evaluation methods and employment orientation. Therefore, this paper puts forward suggestions from four aspects: the executor of the course, the content of the course, the evaluation method of the course and the teaching orientation of the course, hoping to promote the new development of calligraphy teaching in colleges and universities and make it adapt to the needs of the development of the times.

### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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