Thinking on Students’ Legal Education in Art Universities & Colleges

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Keywords: Art Universities & Colleges; Legal Education; Thinking and Researching

Abstract. Cultivating college students’ legal consciousness is conducive for college students to have respect and reverence on laws, and beneficial for them to better consciously abide by laws. In addition, it can facilitate them to apply legal consciousness to analyze their rights and obligations, and evaluate behavioral legality. Moreover, it is helpful for them to consciously maintain legitimate rights and interests applying legal weapons, resolve contradictions and disputes with legal measures, and initiatively boycott behaviors damaging law and social order.

The public’s belief on law is the important factor for evaluating state legalization. Legal belief is the progressive process from legal knowledge learning, to legal consciousness cultivation, and then to legal accomplishment fostering. Currently, lack of legal education atmosphere in art universities and colleges has become one prevalent phenomenon. Universities & colleges emphasize on the fostering of moral education, but neglect the cultivation of legal education. Moral education and legal education belong to the scope of social value education, but moral education highlights people’s inner world, while legal education is aimed at standardizing people’s behavior. Strengthening college students’ legal education can effectively alleviate and prevent the occurrence of juvenile delinquency, and meanwhile improve their comprehensive quality, which is beneficial for them to rapidly adapt to society after graduation.

Main Problems Existing in Legal Education in Art Universities & Colleges

The primary task of university & college legal education is to instruct basic legal knowledge to college students, shape legal consciousness and cultivate ability in resolving problems with law. Due to lack of specialized legal construction and the restriction of relevant environment in teaching staffs and legal education, problems still exist in legal education in art universities & colleges.

Unclear Responsible Department in Legal Education

The main objects of university & college legal education are students in universities & colleges. Therefore, lots of universities & colleges divide legal education work to students administrative department for execution, while its core work is moral education, i.e. ideological education, morality education, and psychological education, neglecting legal publicity and education. When law breaking injury incidents occur in campus, they are generally publicized by publicity department, coordinated and handled by security department.

The inexplicitness of responsible department of legal education results in that students administrative department, publicity department and security department fail to regard legal education as their due job. Without full-time personnel to be responsible for legal education, departments shall mutually shirk responsibilities when accidents occur.

Single Form and Approach in Legal Education

Currently, the course Ideological and Moral Cultivation and the Fundamentals of Law opened by universities & colleges is the main approach for college students to receive legal education. It has two modules, ideological and moral education and the fundamentals of law, which is instructed in about 32 class hours in each semester. The legal part is almost casually taught due to less class hours and heavy instruction task.

As to this course, the part of fundamentals of law is not the key content, and the contents of legal
part is the explanation on the spirit of rule of law, lacking practical action guidelines for college students. In addition, it is generally assumed by one instruction teacher in full-course. The instruction teachers are mostly of non-law major, lacking the cultivation on students’ legal consciousness, actual cases in life and daily substantive law in common use, resulting in that students have conflict emotion, absenteeism and drowsiness, thus legal education is out of the question.

**Ambiguous Legal Education Target**

After moral education, a passive situation preconditioned on no occurrence of accidents and spending campus life without mishaps has formed in art universities & colleges. Students’ ideological education, morality education, and psychological education are prioritized as the main contents of moral education, while legal education is almost forgotten, fundamentally not improving students’ legal consciousness to the height of moral education.

After the occurrence of law breaking incidents, relevant department on campus establish ad-hoc team for resolving, and transient education and publicity may terminate with the dilution of students on incident. Therefore, the lack of legal education consciousness results in certain hidden danger in campus safety and stability. The majorities of injury incidents among students were triggered due to students’ thin legal consciousness, improper handling and untimely finding of teachers, causing serious harm.

The inclusive approach “occurrence of law breaking incidents-downplaying (come to a conclusion)-publicity education” results in that students have nothing to fear and the occurrence of law and discipline breaking behaviors despite repeated prohibitions.

Currently, law is penetrating into each cell of daily life. Subject to the erosion of market, the legal context concerned by college students is increased to some extent, and they can often hear the topics of “complaints, engaging in lawsuit, invasion of privacy”. However, it failed to improve the cultivation on their legal consciousness. There is still certain gap between knowing law, respecting law, abiding by law, and law application.

**Main Measures for Legal Education in Art Universities & Colleges**

By virtue of a series of methods, universities & college can inspire students’ hobbies and interests in law learning, strengthen learning approaches and measures, and reverse the thin concept of art universities & colleges in legal education concept in a planned and procedural approach.

**Explicit Division of Responsibilities**

At the present stage, coordinating universities & colleges to conduct judicial education is obviously not the obligation of judiciary authorities. Therefore, competent authorities at the higher levels should issue explicit documents to require judiciary institutions (court, prison) to coordinate school work, and even establish fixed cooperation relations if necessary, so as to facilitate contact between judiciary authorities and universities & colleges, let students more contact the majesty of law, and enable personnel within in prison committed crime to present to universities & colleges for talking about law, thereby improving students’ legal consciousness.

Universities & colleges should establish ad-hoc department on legal education, teaching and research office on legal education. Full-time personnel can take charge of the formulation of students’ legal education publicity and systematic education plan. Starting from enrollment stage, universities & colleges should seize opportunities and grasp contents to facilitate students to learn basic legal knowledge and cultivate legal consciousness, thereby enabling legal resolving on surrounding contradictions and disputes to become one habit.

To truly develop legal education, universities & colleges must offer integrated planning and support on state policies, management institutions and teaching units. The joint control and common supervision can facilitate legal education to blossom.
Diversification of Education Contents

By virtue of heuristic teaching method, universities & colleges can let students become the subject of classroom, encourage them to obtain optimum answer via thinking and analysis. Teachers should continuously put forward problems, draw forth various kinds of possibilities, guide students to find the relations between legal norms, factual materials and factors, and guide students to brainstorm, then the knowledge mastered by students shall be more reliable and profound.

Teachers should conduct diversified teaching interaction via role change and simulated case, and carry out classroom analysis and discussion on real or simulated cases, so as to let more students learn useful knowledge via observation, comment, role change and debate. In addition, it can facilitate more students to participate in case analysis, and distinguish, screen and generate optimum scheme from multiple schemes via concerted efforts. Moreover, it can enable the relations among students and the relations among teachers and students to be more harmonious. Teachers shall no longer be pure educators and case providers, while equal case participators and student facilitators.

Legal education in universities & colleges are basically the instilling of classroom theory, seriously lacking practice teaching. Relying upon traditional classroom teaching is difficult to be successful, and the suitable approach should be facilitating students to feel why should observe and how to observe norms in lively and intuitive practice activities. The limit between in-class and off-class and segmentation between books and reality should be broken to open the second classroom teaching. In addition, teachers should often let students visit prisons and audit trial activities related to criminal, civil, economic and administrative cases, so as to facilitate them to consciously accept knowledge infection and value assimilation in face-to-face personal experience and facts analysis, thereby subtly influencing students’ self-attitude on law.

Universities & colleges should divide law contents as per certain rules, such as civil law, commercial law, and criminal law; open different courses of electives to let interested students pursue credits. Meanwhile, online courses can be opened to enable students to learn basic legal knowledge online.

Normalization of Legal Education

Universities & colleges should lay emphasis on the accumulation of institutionalized legal knowledge and the cultivation approach of legal consciousness. Legal education on college students is one systematic cultivation process, running through the overall learning period that cannot be interrupted. Therefore, general school education rule should be followed as law courses may not be opened in several years. Different tasks and emphases can be arranged at different grades, such as theory course at low-grade class, and moderate practice course at high-grade. In addition, the specific cultural transmission space of campus can be sufficiently utilized to exert the role and function of specialized courses in legal education, so as to facilitate students to receive systematic legal education in the process of learning cultural knowledge.

Social festivals can be sufficiently utilized to conduct legal publicity. Mar 15th is consumer rights & interests protection day each year. Relevant departments of universities & colleges can appropriately organize students to watch “Mar 15th evening party” to guide them to apply legal measures for maintaining legitimate rights & interests, and let them understand the heavy cost to be paid for law breaking. Dec 4th is legal publicity day each year, which can be utilized to conduct law popularization publicity education by liable department in universities & colleges.

Conclusion

As per state mid and long-term educational reform and development planning outline, universities & colleges should enhance the strength on students’ legal education and cultivate their consciousness in understanding law, respecting law, observing law and law application basing on comprehensively implementing rule of law.
Due to long-term deficiency of legal education and legal environment, art universities & colleges should enhance the publicity and cultivation on legal education. Students should not only understand law, but also establish legal concept. In addition, they should not only understand basic legal rules and articles, but also moderately master applicable general principles of law. Moreover, they should cognize the basic framework of China’s legal system and basic contents of main state legal departments, and seek legal protection right and master procedural law knowledge on resolving disputes via legal measures. Strengthening the popularization of legal knowledge for students in art universities & colleges is the important procedure for boosting the progress of rule of law.

References