Study on General Education in Military Academies of China
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Abstract. In this paper, the concept of general education and the developing situation in military colleges and universities are analyzed comprehensive. Based on the characteristics and processing of general education in our military colleges, discussion from the aspects of educational philosophy, educational goals, teaching mode and the supporting to construction of resources is processed to supply some reference for the further developing of general education in military academy.

Introduction

General education is actually about the purpose of education and educational content of an educational thinking and the implementation of education, and it’s the most effective way to achieve quality education, but also the practice of modern educational philosophy in China. The purpose of general education is to enable students to understand that the different disciplines and knowledge can be integrated, and ultimately develop a complete person.

Undergraduate education in China's universities and colleges is based on their own circumstances, for their undergraduate education students to build knowledge, ability, quality structure, and the realization of this structure. It fundamentally provides the characteristics of talent. The higher education thought and the education idea, "the higher education law". The 16th stipulation to the stratification goal (academic standard) clearly stipulates, the undergraduate education training goal is "undergraduate course education should make the student master systematically this subject". Necessary basic theory, basic knowledge, master the necessary basic skills, methods and related knowledge, have engaged in the professional real work and research work of the initial capacity. However, different grades, different types of institutions of higher learning, the level of training objectives are not the same. As a military academy to cultivate modern innovative talents, its training objectives should be based on this, focusing on the strategic needs of the troops, training the knowledge structure in the process of transformation from military training to informationization, competent for joint operations, and self-learning ability of military personnel.

High-quality soldiers are the decisive factor for the modern man-machine system. Training of knowledge structure of a comprehensive high-quality new talent is to require military personnel that can win the information warfare, but also to complete the anti-terrorism maintenance, disaster relief, emergency treatment and international peacekeeping and other non-war military operations, and institutions need to co-ordinate core, the cultivation of military capability and the training of non-war military action ability, cultivating students broad vision, diverse knowledge structure and higher comprehensive quality. The United States West Point military academy provides students with a wide range of education, covering almost literature, science and engineering of all disciplines of 42 majors. The military academies and military colleges of our army should make overall plans for cultivating level, subject specialty and curriculum design, increase the military basic education with high caliber and high standards, and cultivate the pace of interdisciplinary joint training, so as to form the advantage of military personnel training; So that it not only becomes a field clerk, but also grows into a leader in the building of the army.
In 1945, the famous Red Book of General Education in a Free Society was published by Harvard University, which is the history of American higher education and formally put forward the concept of general education, and meanwhile, it opened the curtain of general education reform world-wide [1].

Since 1952, learning from the former Soviet Union to build talent training model, our universities had begun to design training professionals from the aspects of educational philosophy, curriculum, teaching content and methods, training system, operating mechanism and organizational structure. From the surface we can see that general education is to set up some general courses and educational activities, but in fact, the development of general education will involve personnel training model and even the reform of university system.

As a part of university education, general education must obey and serve the overall goal of cultivating talents firstly, and should also conform to the inherent spiritual and essential characteristics of its own.

The Current Situation of General Education in Military Academies

With the introduction of the concept and the attention from domestic scholars, general education in China's higher education gradually spreads from the key institutions to general ones, and the research are fruitful numerous from theory to practice. Being a special group in higher education institutions, military academy has certain specialty in personnel training. General education and professional education in the military institutions should be fused to establish the undergraduate education system based on general education. Adhere to combine the comprehensive development and personality development, plan general education and professional education as a whole, strengthen the top-level design of general education so as to improve the overall quality of the curriculum. Carry forward the characteristics of professional education and optimize professional core courses to enhance the degree of curriculum challenges. Improve the flexibility of the training program, enhance the autonomy and selectivity of students on study, and effectively promote the shaping and sublimation of the students' values, enhance the understanding of the excellent traditional culture and human civilization, cultivate a complete personality of noble and independent, and cultivate the innovative spirit with scientific and criticism, and strengthen the practical ability and innovation training.

In military academies, personnel training is a challenging work, and it is significantly different from local in objectives. Military academy education is to cultivate talent with modern complex technology and command who know military, love military and understand military. The students are firstly required to have strong discipline in political and organizational, and then to master techniques and can command and fight. General education in military academy has the following characteristics.

On the education philosophy, the training goal is to serve the country and the military, so it emphasizes the unity of technology and management to transport high-quality personnel for the country and the military. Military academy is a combination of both national defense construction and education.

It is an important task for our military academy to cultivate military scientists and commanders who are highly loyal to the country, have a firm political stance, are brave and stubborn, firmly carry out orders, and have a high degree of organizational discipline and master modern military science and technology. Under the guidance of thought, the military academy has cultivated a large number of high-tech talents with keen political insight, solid basic knowledge and active and innovative thinking. They can consciously serve the country and the military construction as their responsibility, and strive to improve their overall quality and ability to work in the country and the army building.

On the teaching content, the teaching of natural science-oriented content will emphasize the professional course of study. At present, the general situation of our universities is making the basic knowledge of teaching as the leading, such as mathematics, physics and other natural science. This kind of teaching hour occupies a considerable part of the public and basic teaching class. In addition, the study of professional courses in China's higher education has also been a considerable attention. Peking University requires professional courses are 50 to 54 credits, which is more than 37% of the
required credits to graduate. Domestic students in the natural sciences and professional courses process more solid theoretical foundation, so they often can achieve excellent results in various international competitions.

The status quo of general education in military academy in China is similar to that in other local universities, and the importance of science and technology in natural sciences and specialties is emphasized. The importance and practice of general education should be further strengthened.

On the curriculum, the basic requirements of general education are reflected, but the practice is not perfect. The military academies in China have also actively explored and made a great deal of work in general education, and the curriculum has embodied the basic requirements of general education. For example, in the new round of academic education training personnel training program, the National Defense University of Science and Technology has increased two categories of general education courses, Leadership Management and Humanities and Social Sciences, which occupy 3.2% and 6.2% of the total requirements credits separately, and strengthen the students in the leadership of science, traditional culture, history, aesthetic education and other aspects of the overall quality. However, the practical courses of our military academy are few and the practice is not perfect. Therefore, we need to further strengthen the general education curriculum system construction, teaching resources and teaching practice.

On teaching conditions, the main force is one’s own faculty, the teaching resources are relatively limited, and the complete evaluation system of the students has not yet been established. Due to institutional education security mechanism and other reasons, our military teaching resources have a certain degree of closure, and the teaching staff and experimental conditions mostly rely on the limited resources of its own to protect the quality of teaching resources. In addition, the complete evaluation system of teaching evaluation has not been established yet, and the teaching evaluation is still mainly based on examination.

**Reflections on General Education in Military Academies**

The purpose of general education is to enable the educated to accept a certain degree of general education, and absorb nutrition from various cultural fields rapidly based on a certain field of knowledge so as to achieve self-realization with some knowledge adapting the times and explore its ability. By drawing lessons from the experience on general education of the worldwide first-class universities, and combining the characteristics of the military education in our country, the following inspirations are given to the general education of our military academy.

*Emphasize more on the concept of general education and establish an accurate objective.* The establishment of a general education goal should not only face the long-term needs of the future development of arm forces, but also be based on the actual situation of the school education and teaching as well as the personal development needs of the trainees. We believe that the general education goals of our military academies are referred to Applicability and Specialty, that is implementing a complete, high-level undergraduate education, enhancing students’ innovative spirit and ability, and training students qualified military and political quality. Moreover, according to the specific circumstances of trainees, the professional and technical expertise or leadership expertise are processed, and ultimately delivery outstanding engineering and technical personnel and military commanders for the army.

*A reasonable general education curriculum system should be planned in military academy combined with its own characteristics.* The task of modern higher education is not only to impart knowledge to students, more importantly, the ability of students to learn. Reasonable general education curriculum system can make the effect of education to achieve a multiplier effect. Curriculum system must be based on the existed teaching conditions and also, the ones that may be owned in a certain period. For the basic purpose of cultivating compound talents, we should treat the contradiction relationship scientifically between Wide and Specialist, and between the needs of first job and career development potential, we also have to unify the curriculum reform of general
education and professional education as a unity of knowledge and practice. The curriculum system must be based on the integration of humanities education, science education and military education, and strengthen the practical teaching with the modularization and serialization of curriculum structure as the main line, increase the proportion of practical teaching.

Innovate classroom teaching mode and enhance practical teaching ability. Teaching methods directly affect the quality and efficiency of teaching, and which play an important role in innovative personnel training. In traditional education, the learners are regarded as the passive ones and emphasis are placed on imparting and inculcating the existing knowledge, but in general education, the learning mode of teaching and accepting the knowledge object are changed, which focuses on the students thinking ability and innovation ability, and lays a solid foundation of knowledge to enhance the quality of military personnel under the premise of encouraging them to fully develop their own personality and expertise to develop a strong sense of innovation and mastery of scientific thinking, and the ability of solving problems creatively.

Reform the teaching mode and increase the number of discussion-based courses and the interactive discussions between different courses. It is necessary to set up different seminars or academic salon activities for different levels of students, break the barriers of various professions and strengthen the inter-professional and cross-curricular exchanges, so that the students can get to know other professions and courses as much as possible in a limited time and enrich their knowledge structure in communication.

Create and use the wealth of quality teaching resources and excellent teaching staff and other teaching conditions. On the one hand, our military academies should base on their own conditions, combined with the existing characteristics to co-ordinate the whole general studies (public electives) to open and daily management. On the other hand, as to curriculum construction and teaching organizations, many work should been done on establishing curriculum construction quality standards, fostering quality courses, emphasizing the selection of materials and adjusting class size, class form (listing courses, network courses, etc.) to create a series of high-quality curriculum teaching resources.

Strive to cultivate a noble morality, excellent business skills of the teaching team. The spirit of scholarship, attitude towards life and character of teachers play a lasting and far-reaching influence on students. Military academies should fully learn from and use of domestic and international first-class university experience in running schools and teachers, and share the excellent curriculum resources to increase the number of visiting professors or the number of troops outstanding lectures. Meanwhile, teacher resources can be integrated within the school to give full play to the potential of teachers and innovation awareness, and general education courses welcomed by the students can be established, and teachers can be introduced, trained and employed targeted to play well to guide the demonstration effect.

Conclusion

By implementing general education, military academies aim to correct the deviation of previous educational philosophy and educational practice, and return to the university road. Based on the characteristics and personnel training objectives, military academies should aim at the high-quality personnel training needs for new equipment and the need of future preparation for military struggle to process general education. Only in this way, the general education in military academies will truly enhance the post ability of the trainees, and to lay a solid basis for training high-quality talent adapting to the new military struggle.

References


