

Reflections on Standardizing University Class Management

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Abstract: University classes, serving as the primary organizational carriers for college students' self-education, self-management, and self-service, play a significant role in both academic and social spheres. This paper primarily explores university class management from three levels of class organization. The aim is to propose practical and feasible suggestions for current university class management, thereby achieving standardized self-management of university classes.

Keywords: University; Class Management; Standardization

1. Introduction

Classroom management is a dynamic process where teachers, with specific goals and requirements,^[1] use various means and measures to lead the entire class. They plan, organize, coordinate, and control various resources within the class to achieve educational objectives. This holds true for university classroom management as well. As an organizational form, university classes share attributes with other organizations but also possess unique characteristics. Hence, the exploration of university class management is particularly important.

2. University Classes and Their Management

2.1 The Role of University Classes

University classes have always been the most fundamental student organization in higher education. They are the main carriers of self-education, self-management, and self-service for college students. They ensure the normal functioning of education and management in universities, promote the socialization and personal development of students, and also act as a protective and developmental peer group.

2.1.1 Organizational Functions of University Classes

University classes are grassroots organizations established by universities for education. The creation of classes allows teachers to conduct lessons in a fixed setting and fulfill their teaching responsibilities. It also enables students to form a cohesive group within the class, playing an important role in university management. University classes are where students find a sense of psychological belonging, a necessity according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. This sense of belonging is vital for forming a good class collective in the later stages.^[2]

2.1.2 Educational Functions of University Classes

No matter how university classes evolve, they should not forget their original value pursuit. Since their inception, classes have been the fundamental units of schools. Their educational function is always present, mainly manifested in imparting higher education content efficiently. Moreover, they play a crucial role in shaping the value systems of students through a positive atmosphere and peer influence.

2.1.3 Socialization Functions of University Classes

Universities influence individuals mainly by promoting personalization and socialization.^[3] The socialization process is essential for transitioning from a natural person to a social one. As a grassroots university organization, classes play a crucial role in this process. They help students break away from excessive dependence on parents and teachers from high school, learn social norms and values, acquire knowledge and skills for social life, and develop a sense of responsibility for future social roles.

2.2 The Importance and Necessity of University Class Management

Strengthening university class management reflects a responsibility for the future development of students. College students, unlike high school students focused solely on exams, need to learn knowledge and the ability to acquire it, along with social norms. Effective class management guides their behavior towards healthy development and adaptation to school and class life, laying a solid foundation for their gradual transition to society.

Effective class management is also essential for the efficient operation of a university. Besides the need for correct leadership decisions, active cooperation from participants is crucial. Without managing the basic participants, university work could become chaotic. As a primary organization for students' self-education, self-management, and self-service, effective class management complements university work and fosters a positive internal atmosphere.

Strengthening class management is a responsibility towards the nation and society. College students are often considered societal elites, and their development affects not only themselves but also the entire society. They are a precious human resource, the hope of the nation, and the future of the country. Therefore, enhancing university class management to cultivate more talented individuals with both moral and intellectual integrity is of significant importance to the country's long-term planning and development.

3. Current Issues in University Class Management

University class organizations can be divided into three levels: "leadership", "management", and "grassroots". The "leadership" primarily handles the overall direction of the class, the "management" is responsible for implementing specific management policies and organizing activities, and the "grassroots" involves the participation and support of class activities to achieve set goals. Coordinating the interests of each level is beneficial for class management. Due to the continuous expansion of higher education, increasing student numbers, and growing class sizes, the difficulty of managing university classes has increased. Analyzing the current state of university class management from these three dimensions reveals several issues.

3.1 Leadership in University Class Management

Misalignment in Leadership. A distinct feature of university classes compared to other classes is their role as the main organizational body for students' self-education, self-management, and self-service. The leadership in university class management should consist of student leaders like class presidents, party secretaries, and vice-presidents. Currently, the actual control in university class management is often in the hands of counselors and class advisors. This misalignment in leadership raises questions about the purpose and effectiveness of university class management.

Specificity of Leaders. Due to the misalignment in leadership, counselors and class advisors have become the primary leaders in class management. Counselors, responsible for the specific student affairs in universities, handle a range of tasks including class construction, dormitory management, part-time jobs, career planning, employment services, psychological counseling, and ideological and political education. However, in practice, counselors often manage minutiae, reducing the efficiency of self-organization in university classes. Additionally, university class managers often treat students as immature, making the quality of class management dependent on the capabilities of the counselors or class advisors. Due to their varied responsibilities, they may not have enough time or energy to attend to every class, leading to superficial class management.

3.2 Management Layer in University Class Management

The "management" layer in class organizations is mainly responsible for implementing specific management policies and organizing activities. This layer typically includes class leaders such as the class president, party secretary, study committee members, life committee members, and publicity committee members. They play a crucial role in the management of university classes,^[4] and the effectiveness of class management is closely related to each committee member.

Incomplete Committee Teams. Committee members are essential for carrying out class work and cannot be replaced. They coordinate the relationship between counselors, teachers, and students, as well as between school work and class activities. An improvement in the committee team's construction can enhance internal self-management in the class and better implement student work in schools. However, the existing committee teams are not robust. Members lack guidance in their work, long-term planning and thinking, and institutional support. Combined with academic pressure, this leads to a lack of fulfillment and motivation in class management tasks, which is detrimental to both the members and the long-term development of the class.

Unreasonable Class Rules and Regulations. Class rules and regulations can act as a group norm, setting standards and constraints to

ensure the normal existence and development of a group. Due to the diversity of personalities within a university class, establishing widely accepted rules and regulations not only standardizes student behavior but also protects their individual interests. However, in reality, many university students, feeling that they are no longer the elementary students needing restraint, question the necessity of class rules. They enjoy absolute freedom but complain about the lack of transparent regulations when it affects their interests. Even if some classes have established rules, they are often ineffective due to being mostly derived from school policies, teachers' ideas, or the committee's wishes.

Idealization of Class Activities. Class activities promote self-education, enhance communication within the class, and build cohesion. The scope of existing class activities is broad, including large-scale school events, student union activities, and class-organized group day activities. However, the focus on participant numbers in every activity burdens students with excessive involvement, losing sight of the original intent of class activities. Organizers should consider students' real needs rather than arranging numerous superficial activities, which can dampen students' enthusiasm for participation instead of enriching their extracurricular life and creating a positive social environment.

Contradictions in Class Management. With reforms in university management systems, the traditional single administrative model is gradually being replaced by a more diverse governance model. This change has also affected the concept and approach of managing student organizations in universities. Student organizations are no longer passively managed but are granted a degree of autonomy, emphasizing self-governance. However, contradictions exist between this autonomy and school departments, hindering the normal functioning of self-education, self-management, and self-service.

3.3 Grassroots in University Class Management

The grassroots of university class management refer to all class members excluding class leaders. As the subjects of management, the grassroots play a supporting role in the execution of management, and as beneficiaries, they enjoy the advantages brought by the university class management system. Due to contemporary college students' distinct personalities, weakened collective consciousness, diverse values, and varied ways of interaction, a series of new characteristics have emerged. More and more class members feel a lack of class cohesion and a sense of belonging to the class, affecting their identification with the class. Class cohesion can provide psychological belonging to the students, and its absence can make the class members perceive the class as just a cold entity, rather than feeling the warmth of a collective group.

4. Thoughts on Strengthening the Standardization of University Class Management

Establishing effective class management is a dynamic and complex task. University educators must develop targeted management measures based on the distinct characteristics of different students and classes, continually refining these approaches during implementation.

4.1 Empowerment in the Leadership Layer of Class Management

The current challenges in university class management primarily stem from entrenched roles: teachers as educators and managers, and students as the educated and managed. This mindset concentrates management authority in the hands of teachers. However, teachers can delegate some of this authority to students. University students, capable of rational thinking and strong self-care skills, can be chosen as class committee members to manage day-to-day class affairs. As committee members come from the student body, their handling of class affairs tends to align more with the interests of most students and is more readily accepted. However, this management model is not without concerns. Firstly, decentralizing power can lead to a lack of necessary communication between teachers and the majority of the class. Secondly, entrusting power to an irresponsible committee team can have detrimental effects on class management. Therefore, the delegation of authority by the leadership layer should be within certain limits, and teachers should supervise to prevent abuse of power. Gradual decentralization of management authority will lay the foundation for truly realizing self-management in university classes.

4.2 Standardization in the Management Layer of Class Management

Addressing the issues in the management layer of class management requires targeted solutions. For the incomplete committee teams, improvements can be made in their operation, offering more support and psychological preparation; for the unreasonable class rules and reg-

ulations, efforts should be made to refine these rules to gain genuine acceptance from teachers, committee members, and class members; for the idealization of class activities, unique and meaningful class activities should be created to truly fulfill their intended purpose; and for the contradictions in class management, seeking resolution under the existing educational system and advocating for maximum autonomy for university classes. Standardized committee teams, class rules and regulations, class activities, and autonomy boundaries will all contribute to the enhancement of university class management.

4.3 Cooperation at the Grassroots Level of Class Management

Participants in class management should establish an unprecedented common understanding and a shared vision for development, thereby strengthening cohesion. When organizational members share a common vision, it becomes a crucial factor in unifying the group, significantly enhancing class cohesion and leading to support and recognition of class management from class members. The degree of cooperation among grassroots members is also an important criterion for assessing a class and a vital reference for improving class management. With joint efforts at all levels, standardized and institutionalized class management can be formed, thus promoting societal development.

5. Conclusion

University class management is both a science and an art. It cannot solely rely on management theories, nor should it focus exclusively on the educational aspect while neglecting the managerial nature. It is essential to consider the issues in current class management at different levels and integrate the best practices to advise and strategize for university class management.

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