

Exploration and Practice of Blended Learning in Securities Investment and Analysis under the Background of "Golden Course" Development

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Abstract: The construction of first-class undergraduate courses is an important initiative of the Ministry of Education to implement the important exposition of President Xi Jinping on education, uphold the fundamental task of "cultivating talent through virtue," deepen the reform of higher education and teaching, and improve teaching quality. President Xi Jinping emphasizes the need to integrate ideological and political work into the entire process of education and teaching, and regards the effectiveness of "cultivating talent through virtue" as the fundamental criterion for evaluating all school work. By deeply exploring and extracting the ideological value and spiritual connotation embedded in the professional knowledge system, centered around "cultivating talent through virtue," this paper explores a blended learning model that organically combines online and offline teaching, promotes innovative teaching methods, stimulates the learning interest of young students, and effectively addresses the issue of the separation between professional education and ideological and political education. This not only cultivates talent through knowledge but also performs well in moral education, fostering in young students the idea of staying true to their original aspiration, adhering to the right path while innovating, and innovating the existing curriculum teaching framework.

Keywords: Golden Course; Securities Investment and Analysis; Blended Learning

1. Introduction

1.1 Related Concepts

"Golden Course," or first-class course, refers to courses of exceptional quality. The development of Golden Courses, or the construction of

first-class courses, was initiated by the Ministry of Education in China. In October 2019, the Ministry issued the "Implementation Opinions on the Construction of First-Class Undergraduate Courses" (No. 8 [2019] of the Ministry of Education), which proposed the construction of first-class undergraduate courses that meet the requirements of the new era, emphasizing the innovative, exemplary, and replicable nature of courses aimed at cultivating innovative, composite, and applied talents. Wu Yan, the Director of the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education, proposed the "two attributes and one degree" standard for Golden Courses, namely, high-level attributes, innovativeness, and challenge level. "High-level attributes" refer to the organic integration of knowledge, abilities, and qualities, aiming to cultivate students' comprehensive abilities and advanced thinking to solve complex problems. "Innovativeness" means that course content reflects cutting-edge and contemporary ideas, teaching methods demonstrate advanced and interactive characteristics, and learning outcomes exhibit exploratory and personalized traits. "Challenge level" signifies that courses possess a certain degree of difficulty, requiring both teachers to prepare thoroughly and students to strive actively after class.

Blended learning is an educational approach that combines the advantages of online and traditional teaching, integrating online ("virtual") and offline ("physical") components. It represents the harmonious fusion of classroom instruction with modern information technology. Blended learning emphasizes student autonomy, fostering students' self-directed learning abilities and encouraging them to set their own learning goals and analyze problems.[1] This teaching mode shifts from a traditional teacher-centered, student-passive approach to a student-centered, active exploration and learning model. Blended learning enhances the quality and efficiency of

classroom instruction by fully motivating learners' interest and potential.

The focus of blended learning lies in improving the quality of teaching. The goal of blended first-class courses is to cultivate new talents with high levels of knowledge, skills, and overall quality, with a particular emphasis on course quality.[2] This study aims to explore how to create blended first-class courses that not only effectively deliver instruction but also enhance course quality, nurturing socially responsible and capable individuals.

Under the background of "Golden Course Construction," this paper innovates the teaching mode of the "Investment and Analysis of Securities" course. By deeply exploring and extracting the ideological value and spiritual connotations embedded within the professional knowledge system, it seeks to establish a blended online and offline teaching mode and method. This initiative aims to promote innovative teaching methods, stimulate the learning interest of young students, and effectively address the issue of separation between professional education and ideological and political education. The objective is not only to cultivate talents through knowledge impartation but also to focus on moral education, fostering in young students the concepts of staying true to their original aspirations, adhering to proper values while innovating, firming their beliefs, and pursuing a life path aligned with the core socialist values. This study strives to innovate the existing course teaching framework.

1.2 Characteristics of Blended Teaching Mode

First, blended learning is an educational approach that organically combines online and offline teaching methods. In the new era, we oppose the past rote teaching methods in the classroom and instead focus more on cultivating students' autonomous learning abilities and fully mobilizing their learning enthusiasm. Blended learning integrates the advantages of online platforms like MOOCs and Rain Classroom, which allow learning anytime and anywhere, with the benefits of offline teaching, such as centralized discussions and Q&A sessions.

Second, online teaching is not merely a supplement to offline teaching; rather, it serves as the foundation for organizing and implementing teaching activities. Teachers first set pre-class learning objectives and classroom

learning content for students based on the course objectives and teaching plans of the "Investment and Analysis of Securities" course. Students utilize their prior knowledge of finance and investment theory to engage in targeted learning through online platforms like MOOCs and Rain Classroom, noting key points and difficulties for later discussion in class. With a foundation of knowledge and interest in securities investment, classroom instruction after online learning becomes more efficient and less burdensome.

Third, with the development of "Internet+" and information technology, renowned online teaching platforms such as MOOCs, micro-lectures, Rain Classroom, Tencent Classroom, and Chaoxing Learning have emerged. Compared to traditional offline teaching modes, online teaching is not constrained by time and space. Whenever and wherever there is an internet connection, teaching can take place. Online and offline teaching complement each other, allowing students to access lectures from famous professors at universities like Tsinghua and Peking, and to revisit difficult points repeatedly, thereby facilitating the achievement of high-quality teaching.

Fourth, it is important to note that not all courses are suitable for blended online and offline teaching. The choice of online teaching platforms and teaching methods should be matched with the characteristics of the course.[3] For example, the "Investment and Analysis of Securities" course is well-suited for a blended "online + offline" teaching mode. Firstly, students majoring in financial engineering have developed certain learning abilities through their first and second years of study, coupled with a knowledge foundation in finance and investment, making it easier for them to learn the course. Secondly, as China's financial market develops, an increasing number of people view securities investment as an essential skill, and there is a strong interest in learning. Through online self-study, students can acquire a certain level of knowledge, which, combined with teacher guidance and classroom instruction, can fully meet teaching requirements and learning objectives.

2. Current Status

Securities Investment and Analysis is a core course for financial engineering majors, primarily focusing on how investors correctly

select securities investment objects, participate in securities market operations, scientifically conduct securities investment decision analysis, and how the government effectively regulates securities investment activities.[4] Through this course, students lay the foundation for further study in other professional courses and receive an introductory guide to investing in the securities market. Employment opportunities are mainly oriented towards grassroots positions in securities business departments or futures company branches, engaging in securities brokerage, securities investment consulting, futures trading, fund management, and other related work. Currently, the teaching content of the Securities Investment and Analysis course is primarily theory-based, supplemented by practical training, with a total of 32 class hours and 8 hours of in-class practical training. In terms of the design of theoretical classes alone, it is obviously very challenging to cover all knowledge points within the limited time available.

In terms of teaching mode, the traditional method of teachers lecturing in the classroom while students listen passively remains prevalent. This teacher-centered approach makes it difficult to mobilize students' enthusiasm, and the learning outcomes are often suboptimal. The assessment method for Securities Investment and Analysis primarily consists of "regular grades" and a "final exam." Regular grades include attendance, assignments, and classroom performance, while the final exam is a unified closed-book test conducted before the end of each semester. This single assessment method cannot comprehensively evaluate students' learning outcomes. Such a teaching and assessment approach is also difficult to motivate students' learning enthusiasm, improve their comprehensive quality and abilities, and achieve the ultimate training objectives. With the proposal to eliminate "water courses" and establish "golden courses," as well as the implementation of the Ministry of Education's "Double Ten Thousand Plan" for first-class courses, we should pay more attention to the reform of the Securities Investment Analysis course, which is a core course. Guided by the construction standards of "golden courses," we should actively reform the course teaching from three aspects: teaching content, teaching methods, and teaching evaluation, to stimulate students' learning interest and subjective

initiative, and achieve comprehensive development in the three-dimensional areas of knowledge, skills, and emotions, thereby creating a "golden course" classroom for Securities Investment and Analysis. [5]

3. Reform Measures

3.1 Integrating Ideological and Political Education into Teaching Process

Firstly, as teachers, we should not only be skilled educators who teach well but also be great mentors who cultivate individuals with character. Higher education institutions serve as the cradle for nurturing talent, and fostering virtue and cultivating talent are the fundamentals of higher education. China is a socialist country under the leadership of the Communist Party of China with Chinese characteristics, and it is imperative to clarify the questions of "for whom to cultivate talent, what kind of talent to cultivate, and how to cultivate talent." In ancient China, moral education was highly valued. The "Zuo Zhuan • Xiang Gong 24th Year" states, "The highest virtue is to establish one's moral character; the next is to establish one's achievements; the next is to establish one's words. These, though enduring for a long time, will not be forgotten; this is what is called immortality." This places the establishment of moral character at the forefront. When describing a person, there is also the saying "one's moral character does not match one's position," indicating that while achievements are important, one's moral character is even more crucial. The Securities Investment and Analysis course should go hand in hand with ideological and political education, fully leveraging its educational function, and deeply tapping into the ideological and political education elements contained within the course, centering around "the basic principles of how to behave and conduct oneself, the requirements of socialist core values, and the ideals and responsibilities for realizing national rejuvenation." This aims to achieve an organic unity of value shaping, ability cultivation, and knowledge impartation. Secondly, from the perspective of teaching implementation, ideological and political education in courses should pay attention to methodologies, emphasize practical results, and strive to achieve an effect that is "like spring in flowers, like salt in water." While optimizing course settings, improving instructional design,

and strengthening teaching management, teachers should also focus on uncovering scientific stories, Chinese stories, and stories of those around us, organically integrating them with the curriculum. This allows moral education concepts and ideological and political education to be subtly infused into the classroom, teaching, and the minds of students. If excessive or overly deliberate attention is not paid to the form of ideological and political education, it may backfire and fail to achieve the desired results. Blended learning and ideological and political education are dialectically unified. Blended learning provides practice and a carrier for ideological and political education, while ideological and political education helps enhance the effectiveness of blended learning. The two promote each other and are interconnected.

3.2 Reform Teaching Strategies

Observant teachers may have noticed an interesting phenomenon. In the context of the requirements put forward by the CPC Central Committee and the State Council to adhere to holistic education for all students, throughout the entire educational process, and in all aspects (abbreviated as "Three-Dimensional Education"), and to advance the implementation of first-class course construction (i.e., "Golden Course Construction"), some textbooks have become thicker while the allocated class hours have decreased. For instance, the "Securities Investment and Analysis" course at Guilin University of Electronic Technology is designed with only 32 class hours, yet the textbook by Professor Wu Xiaoqiu contains fifteen chapters spanning over 500 pages. It is impossible to cover the entire content through traditional classroom instruction. Therefore, it is necessary to reform the teaching mode and explore the application of blended learning that combines "online" and "offline" elements to drive innovation in teaching methods.

The combination of "online teaching" and "offline teaching" does not mean that teachers should repeat the classroom content on online teaching platforms or move the key and difficult points that should be covered in the classroom to online teaching to reduce offline content. Instead, it involves a shift from the traditional teacher-centered mode of instruction to a student-centered mode of autonomous learning through methods such as pre-class guidance,

online autonomous learning, classroom instruction on key and difficult points, in-depth online and offline discussions, and process-oriented assessments.[6] By employing the blended learning mode that combines "online + offline" elements, students' subjectivity is highlighted, and their initiative and enthusiasm are stimulated, which is conducive to cultivating students' autonomous learning ability and independent thinking skills. [7]

Researchers categorize the influencing factors of blended learning into internal and external factors. Internal factors include teachers' learning, beliefs, and attitudes towards teaching; external factors encompass institutional background, teaching workload, teacher-student interaction, and teacher-technology interaction.[8] Blended learning design addresses four key issues: integrating flexibility, fostering interaction, promoting the learning process of students, and creating an effective learning atmosphere.[9] These are also the crucial challenges faced in teaching.

Traditional teaching methods primarily adopt a teacher-centered approach, with a one-way transmission of knowledge as the main thread.[10] Students passively receive information, making it difficult to achieve ideal learning outcomes. Blended learning is not a simple overlap of "online" and "offline" elements, nor is it about students listening again in class after completing online learning. Instead, it is a student-centered teaching mode that effectively combines the advantages of online and classroom teaching. Routine knowledge points that were originally taught in the classroom can now be self-learned online, and the classroom is no longer dominated by one-sided instruction. The teacher's role shifts to guiding students' learning, answering questions, assessing and evaluating, stimulating students to learn autonomously, think actively, and collaborate with classmates to explore solutions and approaches to problems.

3.3 Emphasize Process Assessment and Evaluation

To thoroughly implement the spirit of the Ministry of Education's "Opinions on Deepening the Reform of Undergraduate Education and Teaching to Comprehensively Improve the Quality of Talent Cultivation," from the 2020 academic year, Guilin University of Electronic Technology has required teachers to strictly

adhere to Outcome-Based Education (OBE) principles for assessment and strengthen the guiding role of course objectives and syllabi in course implementation. OBE, an advanced educational philosophy proposed by Spady et al. in 1981, has quickly gained recognition and attention.

Under the guidance of the OBE educational philosophy, the "Securities Investment and Analysis" course adheres to the principles of "outcome-orientation, student-centeredness, emphasizing engineering education, and focusing on ability cultivation." It actively participates in teaching reforms, optimizes teaching modes, and adopts a blended learning mode that organically combines traditional classroom (in-person) teaching with online teaching platforms (such as Rain Classroom), laying the foundation for building a golden course.

In this blended learning mode, process assessment and evaluation are emphasized, combining knowledge evaluation with behavior evaluation to increase the challenge of learning. This approach ensures that students not only acquire theoretical knowledge but also develop practical skills and abilities, promoting comprehensive development. By adhering to the OBE principles and continuously exploring and optimizing teaching modes, the "Securities Investment and Analysis" course aims to continuously improve the quality of talent cultivation and contribute to the overall development of students.

3.4 Sparking Students' Interest in Learning

Currently, there are numerous simulated securities investment analysis competitions, both national and regional, which provide a platform for universities to exchange ideas and offer practical stages for the teaching of securities investment and analysis. For example, the "2021 8th National Securities Investment Simulation Training Competition," hosted by the National Financial Vocational Education Teaching Steering Committee, targets undergraduate, vocational, and secondary vocational students majoring in finance. It is divided into regional preliminaries and finals, attracting over 65,000 participants from 589 institutions. Many schools believe that participating in such competitions enhances the cultivation of applied and skilled talents in the financial industry, advances professional development and teaching reform,

and achieves the effect of "promoting teaching, learning, and reform through competition." [11] Teachers organize and guide students in this course to participate in various securities investment simulation competitions at the school, provincial, and national levels. This can stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning the "Securities Investment and Analysis" course, exercise their teamwork and collaboration skills in competitions, and test their learning effectiveness. Of course, besides participating in competitions, students can also be actively guided to take various certificate exams, such as the Securities Practitioner Qualification Exam and the Fund Practitioner Qualification Exam. These exams not only guide students' learning towards meeting social needs, improve their professional skills and practical abilities, and increase employment opportunities, but also encourage students to better grasp the theoretical knowledge of securities investment and analysis through more systematic learning. [12]

4. Conclusion

Courses are the core element of talent cultivation, and the quality of courses directly determines the quality of talent development. The "gold" in "golden courses" lies in the integration of ideological and political education into specialized courses, adhering to the unity of explicit and implicit education. This clarifies the life direction of young students, reinforces the fundamental educational task of "cultivating talent through virtue," and achieves holistic education for all students throughout their entire learning journey. The "gold" in "golden courses" also refers to the ability to stimulate students' interest in learning and their enthusiasm for exploration and knowledge acquisition. It means that in teaching, young students can truly acquire knowledge, improve their abilities, and master skills, laying a solid foundation for their personal careers and individual development. Blended learning that incorporates ideological and political education based on the OBE (Outcome-Based Education) philosophy meets the requirements of talent cultivation goals.

Blended learning represents the direction of teaching mode reform. By organically combining "online teaching" with "offline classroom teaching," it shifts the focus from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered autonomous learning. This enhances students' interest in learning and their self-directed

learning abilities, fully improves classroom efficiency, and achieves the established training objectives. The key to teaching reform lies in unifying ideological and political education with teaching mode reform, which not only clarifies the direction of talent cultivation but also emphasizes the methods of talent cultivation. The essence of blended learning is the research on "information transmission channels", where "information transmission channels" can refer to teaching methods, approaches, or carriers. This research focuses on how to stimulate students' interest in learning and ensure teaching efficiency and effectiveness. The construction of "golden courses" should meet the criteria of "two properties and one degree," namely, advanced nature, innovation, and challenge. The construction of "golden courses" is also the unification of value shaping, ability cultivation, and knowledge impartation. As Professor Yu Xinjie from Tsinghua University has stated, the construction of ideological and political education in courses requires an accurate understanding of ideological and political education, teachers' attitudes and actions towards teaching, ideological and political education materials related to teaching content, teaching designs that stimulate students' enthusiasm for exploration, and online platform teaching tools that facilitate the mutual promotion between ideological and political education and blended learning, all integrated into one.

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