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Curriculum Ideology and Political Teaching Design for Finance Majors Based on the Integration of International Comparative Cases

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Abstract: The development of curriculum ideological and political education for finance majors is a crucial endeavor in achieving the primary objective of "nurturing virtue and cultivating talent. International comparison examples, with their ri ch content, vivid contrasts, and convincing argumentation, serve as high-quality carriers for professional education and value guiding. Based on the intrinsic worldwide comparative characteristics of finance as a field, this study suggests a three-part teaching system of "theoretical teaching as foundation, simulated practice for deepening, and interactive teaching for elevation." Four types of comparison instances— Chinese and international financial regulatory regimes, financial crisis scenarios, capital market models, and corporate governance structures— are systematically integrated into three types of training modules. Practice shows that this design assists students in deepening professional cognition through multidimensional comparisons, improving critical thinking, strengthening institutional confidence and patriotic sentiment, and achieving the organic integration of knowledge transmission, ability cultivation, and value guidance.

Keywords: International comparative cases, Finance majors, Curriculum ideology and politics, Teaching design, Three-link teaching.

1. Introduction

Finance is the lifeblood of the national economy, therefore financial security is an important aspect of national security. The 2023 Central Financial Work Conference specifically established the strategic aim of "accelerating the construction of a financial powerhouse," highlighting the importance of finance in delivering high-quality economic and social development services. To achieve this objective, it is essential to address the questions of ‘what kind of talent should be cultivated, how should this be done, and for whom?’. These are the key questions that higher education must answer. They also represent the inevitable core challenges in the development of professionals in the financial sector.

The Ministry of Education’s ‘Guiding Opinions on Strengthening the Development of Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Institutions’ emphasises the importance of integrating the shaping of values, the imparting of knowledge and the cultivation of competencies into all courses. Given their theoretical and practical nature, as well as their unique value characteristics, finance courses inherently contain a wealth of resources and have an urgent need for ideological and political education. Zhang (2021) points out that ‘telling the story of Chinese finance well’ is the primary pathway for the ideological and political transformation of finance education courses. Ding and Lin (2020) argue that case-based teaching is an excellent tool for achieving the integration of ideological and political education. Wang and Huang (2021) have constructed such an integrated approach through the fusion of theory and case studies. However, existing research has not yet fully explored the systematic design of international comparative cases as high-quality resources for ideological and political education. Furthermore, there remains a lack of practical and universally applicable solutions for organically integrating these cases into the three modules of theoretical, practical and interactive teaching. Finance is characterised by international comparability. This ranges from financial regulatory systems to capital market structures, and from corporate governance models to measures for responding to financial crises. The differences between China and other countries are both real and manifold. Therefore, by transforming these differences into teaching resources, students can be guided to understand the path of socialist financial development with Chinese characteristics through comparative analysis. This not only consolidates their professional foundations but also achieves an educational effect that is ‘subtle and gradual’. In order to construct a practical and universally applicable curriculum, With regard to the design of ideological and political education, this paper proposes a three-link teaching framework comprising ‘theoretical instruction as the foundation, simulated practice for deepening understanding, and interactive teaching for refinement’. This approach aims to provide a pathway for the development of ideological and political education within finance-related courses by systematically integrating four categories of international comparative case studies into three teaching modules. It serves as a reference that combines theoretical depth with practical value.

2. Design Approach: Construction of the Three-Link Teaching Framework

Integrating ideological and political education into the curriculum is not simply a matter of combining ‘curriculum’ with ‘ideological and political education’. It involves achieving a fusion of the imparting of specialist knowledge and the guidance of values. Centred on the systematic incorporation of international comparative case studies, this study has established three fundamental principles. The first is the unity of academic specialisation and ideological and political education. Case selection must be grounded in the core knowledge points of the finance discipline; the effective integration of Chinese and foreign comparisons into course-based ideological and political education requires systematic reforms in teaching philosophy and content design. Cases should serve as an organic extension of knowledge delivery, rather than arbitrarily appended content. Second is the emphasis on comparativeness and inspiration. In the practice of international finance courses, existing research guides students through three stages—pre-class orientation, classroom instruction and post-class extension—to help them understand the logic behind policy choices under different institutional conditions. The purpose of comparison is to explore 'the reasons for these differences'. The third point is the balance between systematicity and practicality. The distribution of case studies should cover the main content areas of the course, forming a complete chain of case studies. Furthermore, each case study should be accompanied by a clear teaching implementation plan.

Based on the above principles, this paper constructs a three-link teaching framework of "Theoretical Teaching— Practical Simulation—Interactive Teaching."

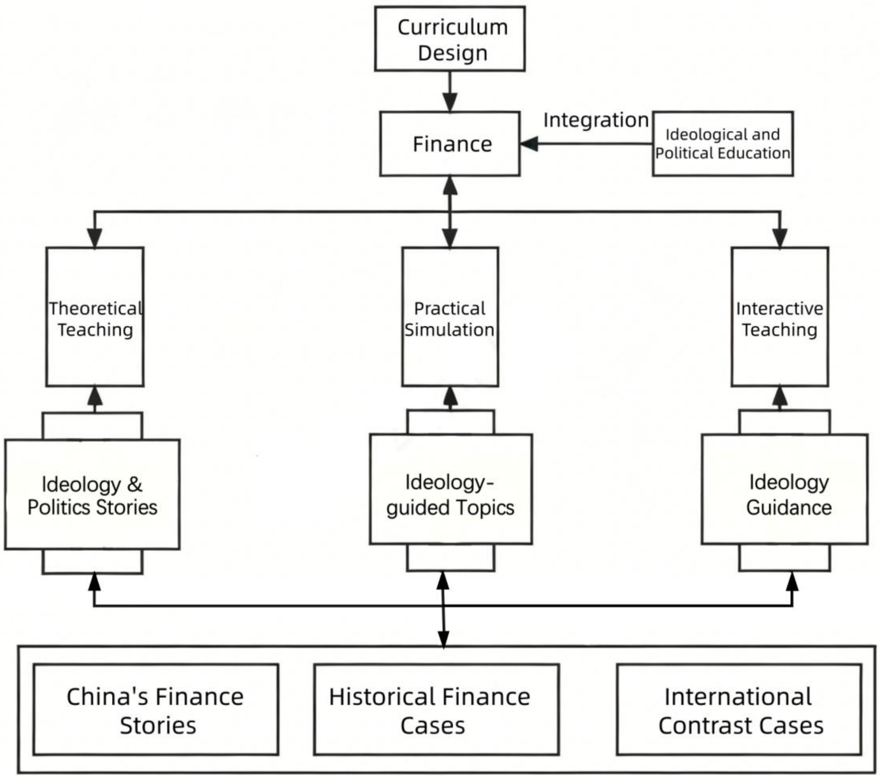

Figure 1. Three-Link Teaching Framework

By integrating the assessment of organisational behaviour in China and abroad into the theoretical teaching segment, which is primarily lecture-based and covers fundamental concapts. This approach helps students construct a cognitive framework that is 'rooted in China whilst maintaining an international perspective'. Through practical simulation sessions utilising case-based reasoning tools or financial trading simulation platforms, students are able to experience the consequences of risk and the implications of different decisions in a simulated environment, thereby transforming abstract institutional comparisons into concrete practical experience. Interactive teaching sessions, utilising tools such as case study reports, group seminars and thematic discussions, guide students to engage in comparative critical thinking, facilitating a transition from the mere reception of information to the identification of value. These three components collectively form a progressive logic of 'cognitive foundation – experiential deepening – critical refinement', creating a complete educational cycle.

In terms of case selection, this study has drawn upon four categories of comparative material from overseas. China's regulatory system comprises the Central Financial Commission, the People's Bank of China, the National Financial Supervisory Administration and the China Securities Regulatory Commission. In contrast, the United States exhibits a decentralised and multi-tiered regulatory framework. This comparison helps students understand the logic behind China's incremental reforms. With regard to the comparison of financial crises, there are significant differences between the 1997 Asian financial crisis and the 2008 US subprime mortgage crisis in terms of their underlying causes and the response strategies adopted. This helps students understand the differences in crisis response capabilities under different institutional environments. With regard to differences in capital market models, China's capital markets have undergone major institutional reforms. These include IPO reforms under the registration-based system and the establishment of the STAR Market, all of which provide rich material for teaching ideological and political theory. In terms of comparing corporate governance structures, by contrasting the external governance models of the UK and the US, the internal governance models of Germany and Japan, and China's hybrid governance model, students can be guided to understand the rationale behind the Chinese model, which is grounded in China’s national conditions. To guarantee perfect alignment, the four case types are dynamically selected based on the various course material emphases in teaching.

3. Case Design Schemes for the Three Types of Teaching Modules

3.1. Theoretical Teaching Link: Knowledge Foundation through Chinese-Foreign Comparison

Theoretical teaching is the major means of integrating international comparative instances into curricular ideology and political education. In the financial regulation chapter, the comparison between Chinese and American regulatory systems runs throughout. The regulatory architecture in the United States is "fragmented and multi-layered"—the Federal Reserve is in charge of macroprudential supervision of systemically important financial institutions, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency regulates national banks, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation ensures deposit safety, and individual states retain independent regulatory authority. In fact, this structure has shown issues such as regulatory overlap and high coordination costs, and the 2008 financial crisis developed and exploded under this framework. In contrast, China has established a regulatory structure comprising the Central Financial Commission, the People's Bank of China, the National Financial Regulatory Administration, and the China Securities Regulatory Commission. By guiding students to investigate why the United States continues to face significant obstacles despite efforts to strengthen regulation, whereas China can steadily advance financial reform and opening-up, the instructor assists students in understanding the gradual reform logic of Chinese financial regulation—"regulating in the course of development and developing in the course of regulation." Studies on the construction of curriculum ideology and politics in "International Finance" courses have pointed out that comparative teaching of Chinese and foreign financial systems can effectively guide students to establish identification with China's financial development path.

In the teaching of financial crisis theory, the comparative analysis of the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis and the 2008 U.S. Subprime Crisis holds unique value. These two crises respectively exposed the different risk types of premature financial liberalization in emerging markets and regulatory deficiencies in developed countries. In classroom teaching, students are guided to compare the crises across dimensions such as outbreak background, transmission mechanisms, and response strategies, with particular attention to China's distinct performance in the two crises—maintaining the non-depreciation of the Renminbi in 1997 and decisively launching economic stimulus plans in 2008. Scholars have pointed out that international finance courses should expand international perspectives on the foundation of national sentiment, enabling students to understand differences in crisis response capabilities under different institutional conditions through comparison. In the corporate governance chapter, the Anglo-American external governance model, the German-Japanese internal governance model, and the Chinese hybrid governance model each have their distinct characteristics. Relevant research indicates that international comparison of governance models can effectively guide students to understand the economic logic by which different governance models adapt to different institutional environments. Instructors guide students to avoid simplistically judging Chinese corporate governance practices by Western standards, but rather to understand the rationality of the Chinese model rooted in national conditions.

3.2. Simulated Practice Link: Situational Experience of International Comparison

The simulation-based practical module transforms international comparative case studies into practical learning experiences. By utilising a financial simulation trading platform and a simulation experiment on cross-border capital flows, the module constructs two regulatory environments. The first is the Chinese model, characterised by the gradual liberalisation of the capital account, supplemented by macroprudential management. The second is the Southeast Asian model, characterised by the rapid liberalisation of the capital account but a lack of effective controls. Students make cross-border investing decisions in both situations, and the system tracks risk buildup in real time. Through data analysis, students have practical experience with the sensible idea that "financial opening must be advanced in an orderly manner." Research on curricular ideological and political teaching design and practice in finance majors has demonstrated that scenario simulation may significantly improve students' perceptual awareness of institutional disparities.

Students take on the roles of decision-makers from various nations in the financial crisis sand table simulation exercise. Some adopt active intervention strategies (referring to the Chinese model), while others adopt laissez-faire strategies (referring to the approaches of certain Western countries). After formulating response plans under given crisis scenarios, each group presents its decision-making process, and the instructor guides a comparative analysis of the effectiveness of different strategies. Research on practical ideological and political teaching reform in finance based on the "three-wide education, student-centered" approach emphasizes that simulated practice enables students to achieve the transformation from theoretical knowledge to practical cognition through role immersion. Through this experience, students deepen their understanding of crisis transmission mechanisms and more tangibly perceive the institutional advantages behind the Chinese government's capacity to "act decisively and implement targeted measures."

3.3. Interactive Teaching Link: Deep Speculation through International Comparison

The interactive teaching link serves as the culminating stage for embedding international comparative cases into curriculum ideological and political education. Through seminars, debates, and reports, it guides students to form well-grounded judgments through speculation. A classroom debate is organized around the topic "Financial regulation: the stricter, the better, or the looser, the better?" The affirmative and negative sides respectively draw upon China's relatively strict regulatory model and the relatively loose models of certain Western countries as supporting evidence. The purpose of the debate is not to reach an either-or conclusion, but to help students understand the dialectical thinking of "balance between regulation and development" based on full understanding of the respective logic and limitations of both models. In the concluding remarks, the instructor guides students to recognize that Chinese financial regulation has forged a path with Chinese characteristics that "holds the bottom line, encourages innovation, and opens up in an orderly manner."

The group seminar "Can China avoid a financial crisis?" guides students to shift the comparative perspective from the past to the future and from others to themselves. Each working group must make full use of their knowledge to conduct analyses from multiple perspectives. These include the scope for macroeconomic policy, the extent of capital account controls, and the sophistication of the financial regulatory framework. At the same time, the institutional strengths of China's financial system must not be overlooked, nor should practical challenges such as local government debt be ignored. Institutional strengths can only be fully realised when they are translated into long-term governance effectiveness.

4. Teaching Effectiveness and Reflections

This three-link teaching system draws on comparative case studies from around the world. It has undergone several rounds of teaching practice in a number of core courses for students specialising in finance. Based on classroom observations, student feedback and teacher assessment data, this teaching design has had a significant impact on helping students construct a three-dimensional framework of specialist knowledge and develop a logical understanding of the path of China's financial development. In their course reflections, many students stated that the international comparative learning approach enabled them to form independent judgements based on an understanding of different institutional contexts. Describing the seminars, one student remarked: 'I used to think the American model was the standard in the financial sector, but through comparison I realised that every institutional arrangement has its own fertile ground for development.' Ongoing comparative analysis and classroom discussions naturally facilitated this shift in understanding. Furthermore, during the course of the teaching, students demonstrated a more diverse range of perspectives in their analysis of issues. They were no longer content with simple conclusions such as 'which is better or worse', but were able to conduct multi-layered analyses from dimensions such as institutional environment, stage of development and governance logic.

However, whilst acknowledging its validity, it is also necessary to recognise the shortcomings of the current teaching design. Due to the constantly evolving nature of financial regulatory policies across different countries, as well as the timeliness of updates to case databases, international comparisons in the field of finance are, by their very nature, highly time-sensitive. The relevance and persuasiveness of teaching content are influenced by the timeliness of case materials, which often lag behind actual market changes. The scenarios in current simulation exercises are relatively simple, and there remains a gap between the complexity of real markets and the immersive experience students gain in the simulated environment. Therefore, the technical support for the simulated practice component also needs to be improved. Furthermore, the finance major course cluster's worldwide comparative case resources have not yet established efficient sharing and coordination mechanisms, with many courses displaying resource fragmentation and duplicate development in case development.

In response to the aforementioned shortcomings, future work will concentrate on developing a dynamic update mechanism for the case database to incorporate the most recent institutional changes in the international financial field into teaching materials; investigating the introduction of more immersive simulation teaching tools to enhance the authenticity and participation of the practical component; and encouraging collaborative development of international comparative cases across the finance major course cluster by establishing a cross-course case resource sharing platform to prevent redundant development and promote complementary strengths, gradually forming a systematic curriculum ideological and political teaching resource system. Only through continuous iteration and ongoing reflection in teaching practice can the instructional design of embedding international comparative cases into curriculum ideology and politics truly evolve from a "usable scheme" to a "practicable paradigm."

5. Conclusion

This paper develops a three-link teaching framework of "theoretical teaching—simulated practice—interactive teaching" and systematically integrates four categories of international comparative cases into the curriculum ideological and political teaching of finance majors, resulting in a complete closed loop from cognitive construction to value internalization. Practice has shown that the systematic incorporation of international comparative case studies helps students to form value judgements through multidimensional comparisons and organic reasoning. Furthermore, this approach can deepen their professional understanding, facilitating the transfer of knowledge and providing guidance. Against the backdrop of financial security becoming a core national interest, useing international comparative case studies as a vehicle to advance the integration of ideological and political education into the curriculum and political reform holds practical significance for cultivating financial professionals who possess both a sense of patriotism and an international perspective. Future research will focus on the iterative updating of teaching materials, the deepening of cross-course coordination mechanisms, and the effectiveness of ideological and political education within the curriculum.

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