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Application of Student-centered Teaching Mode in the Course of Brand Management

Zuo Wang[1 a]

[1]School of Tourism and Culture Industry, Chengdu University, Sichuan Chengdu, 616106, China

[a]Email: wwzuo@163.com

Abstract

The teaching problems encountered in the course of brand management mainly include: students' learning style preferences and abilities are quite different, students' interest and motivation for classroom participation are obviously insufficient, and students' sense of achievement need to be enhanced. In order to solve these problems, teachers have promoted student-centered teaching reforms, like participatory teaching, online and offline mixed teaching, and project-driven teaching. Rich and diverse activities are a highlight of this course. The focus of course evaluation is the performance of students in the whole learning process. This teaching mode innovation has achieved good results.

Keywords

Student-centered; Brand management; Teaching mode.

1. Introduction

Since 2015, the course of brand management has gone through 8 rounds of teaching. The teaching objectives of this course include three aspects: first, understand the basic principles of branding and master the operating rules; second, be able to apply theory to practice and obtain creativity and communication abilities; third, develop a sense of social responsibility and professionalism. In order to better achieve these goals, teachers constantly reflect on teaching practice, as well as explore new ideas and paths for teaching improvement and get some fruits.

2. Problems In Previous Teaching

In teaching practice, various teaching problems that make teachers feel challenged also provide opportunities for teaching reform and innovation. The teaching problems of the course of brand management are mainly reflected in the following three aspects:

First, students' learning style preferences and interests vary greatly. Some students prefer experiential and hands-on learning, and others are accustomed to observation and listening learning. Some students prefer to take online classes to get more autonomous time and space, while others like to take classes in the classroom to improve their concentration by being regulated in a specific teaching atmosphere. The questionnaire data of the "College Students' Life Style Survey" shows that the distribution of students' interests is quite extensive. Therefore, it becomes extremely difficult to attract students' attention during class.

Second, students' motivation for class participation are obviously insufficient. For example, when entering the classroom, students always look for seats in the back row; when the teacher give lectures, most students always keep their heads down, looking at their mobile phones or extracurricular books; when the teacher asks questions, the students are instantly nervous. There are very few students actively answering questions. These performances all reflect that,

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on the whole, students are quite passive in class. Obviously, how to stimulate students' motivation is another key point in teaching design.

Third, students' sense of achievement needs to be enhanced. The feedbacks from students reported that the sense of learning achievement is weak. They mentioned two facts. On one hand, the arrangement of theory teaching and the practical activities was out of touch. The inability to apply the theory to actual brand management projects in time resulted in a low impression of the theory and insufficient practical ability. On the other hand, the cases that teachers used were not novel enough and not closely integrated with the current reality. The brand management experience in previous cases might not be useful to today. So students felt difficult to apply what they have learned.

3. Student-centered Teaching Strategy

In order to improve the learning experience of students and enhance the teaching effect of the course of brand management, teachers put forward a student-centered teaching reform. "Student-centered" is an educational philosophy put forward by American humanistic psychologist Carl Rogers in the 1950s, which embodies the principles of humanistic psychology and the inherent laws of pedagogy. In order to realize the transformation of the educational philosophy from "teacher-centered" to "student-centered", teachers should strive to understand students, respect students, serve students, enlighten students and encourage students. Therefore, the student-centered teaching strategy of brand management course is mainly reflected in the following aspects:

First, carry out participatory teaching. Teachers actively change their teaching thinking and place the organization of activities at the center of classroom teaching design, thereby promoting the active participation of students. On the one hand, teachers combine the theoretical system and key points of knowledge with students' personalities and interests to teach. On the other hand, through the design of classroom activities, students' passive learning can be transformed into active and creative learning. The discussion and sharing of students in the classroom is an important supplement to the teaching content, which not only allows students to expand their thinking and vision, but also helps to form a learning community between teachers and students.

Second, use information technology as the support to carry out online and offline mixed teaching. Teachers try to use modern information tools and online teaching platforms to provide diverse and multi-level learning resources to meet the learning characteristics and learning needs of different types of students as much as possible. In the online teaching part, teachers continue to improve the teaching resource library of the course on the network platform, and in the offline teaching part, teachers integrate some online teaching tools so that students can always find the most suitable learning way no matter where they are. Teachers encourage students to choose their preferred learning style and provide them with necessary support and assistance in terms of learning resources.

Third, carry out project-driven teaching. Teachers combine the thematic content and learning focus of each class to create suitable practical projects, and closely link theory with practical activities. Assigning project tasks can promote students' independent learning and knowledge extension, and transform passive listening to active immersion and creativity. Driven by the project, students are more likely to adhere to the output orientation and develop their learning potential and creativity. In addition, the project requires students to complete in groups, which can cultivate students' team spirit and improve their teamwork ability. Project results can also enhance students' self-confidence and the sense of achievement.

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4. Student-centered Teaching Mode

First, decompose and refine the teaching objectives and highlight the 3H principle which refers to cognitive domains (Head), emotional domains (Heart) and motor skills domains (hand). This way of making goals specific allows students to realize the effectiveness of their classroom learning according to the completion of the goal after each class, so as to experience a sense of accomplishment. For example, the goal of the cognitive domain (Head) can be subdivided into six levels, from low to high: memory, understanding, application, analysis, evaluation, and creation. The different levels correspond to the depth of students' understanding. Combining different classroom content to formulate detailed and feasible goals will help students establish output orientation at the beginning of class and feel their growth at the end of class.

Second, pay attention to the timely application of theory to practice in the arrangement of teaching content. This course has a total of 32 class hours, including 24 for theoretical teaching and 8 for practical teaching. In terms of theoretical teaching, teachers refer to the syllabus and textbooks, organically integrate them according to the internal relevance of knowledge, and carry out teaching in the form of special topics. The advantage of topic-based teaching is that it not only covers the overall theoretical framework, but also highlights the key points and deepens the difficulties.

The course of brand management involves a large number of case studies. In the selection of cases, teachers pay special attention to several aspects such as freshness, closeness, practicality and relevance to students' points of interest. Most of the cases come from news that can not only reflect the application of the course content in the current environment, but also arouse students' curiosity, attract students' attention, and inspire students to think. This also solves a prominent problem that students find it difficult to apply the knowledge they have learned.

In terms of practical teaching, practical arrangements run through the curriculum, and mainly include two forms: one is to refer weekly thematic content to create suitable practical projects; the other is to use 8 class hours to arrange an off-campus social practice. For example, visiting the brand culture museum, conducting brand market research, and conducting in-depth exchanges with the company’s market experts. All the research projects are highly comprehensive.

Third, the teaching method of this course is based on interactive teaching. Designed rich and distinctive interactive activities are a highlight of teaching innovation. Teaching activities include live voting, group debates, brainstorming, group discussions, interactive games, special reports, etc. After constant experimentation and reflection, teachers gradually found out a set of effective teaching methods to stimulate students' classroom participation. In the teaching process, every key step is supported by activities, thereby maximizing students' involvement in the classroom and promoting students' experience, thinking, understanding and application.

Fourth, the evaluation of this course is based on learning process, supplemented by the final assessment. The proportion of students' grades is: daily performance accounts for 40%, practical performance accounts for 20%, and the final exam accounts for 40%. Daily performance is composed of seven parts: group project tasks account for 30%, offline participation accounts for 20%, online discussion accounts for 15%, online course videos watching accounts for 10%, online activities account for 10%, sign-in accounts for 10% and chapter tests account for 5%. Participation in all activities has an objective learning record, all included in the students' daily performance. Students can check their grades of daily performance on the course's network platform at any time. As a kind of supervision and reminder, the records of daily performance can promote student participation.

Additionally, the practical performance is based on the report submitted by students after participating in the 8 hours of social practice and the final assessment is conducted in the form of an open-book examination. The reason for choosing open-book examination is that this

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course pays more attention to the application ability of students, rather than the memory of knowledge. In the question design of the test paper, the last essay question has the highest score, reaching 30%. The assessment method is to provide background materials and ask students to make case analysis in combination with the theory of brand management. It comprehensively examines students' analytical ability, evaluation ability and creative ability. In the classification of teaching goals mentioned above, the three abilities correspond to the fourth, fifth and sixth levels of the cognitive domain (Head) goals respectively, belonging to the high-level goals. Therefore, the students' test paper score can reflect their actual acdemic results, with a strong degree of distinction.

5. Achievements and Reflection

The survey data of students' course feedback shows that after the implementation of student-centered curriculum innovation and reform, students' satisfaction with the courses and recommendation index are both high. Teachers guide students to participate in the "National College Student Advertising Art Competition", and 20% of the students have won awards above the provincial level. The teaching innovation model of this course has a high promotion value and has been promoted in four ways: first, teachers introduce this teaching method into other courses; second, demonstrations in teaching seminars and teaching competitions; third, sharing with peers by participating in teaching innovation workshops; fourth, publishing teaching reform papers.

Teaching innovation is an eternal challenge, a process of continuous exploration, and it is also the responsibility of every teacher. Although the student-centered teaching mode has made some achievements, it is still worth reflecting on, for example, how to use participatory teaching in multiple scenarios, and the time allocation between online and offline teaching. Therefore, teachers need to pay special attention to students' feedback, and often collect students' opinions and suggestions. Collecting feedback from students is not the end of teaching, but a new beginning. Only by deeply understanding the real experiences of students can we find clues for teaching improvement. The course of brand management conducts three times of surveys about students' expectation and satisfaction, which are at the beginning of a new semester, mid-term and at the end of a semester. Systematic analysis and full absorption of student feedback will help to form a continuous improvement teaching cycle. This is also an important manifestation of student-centered teaching strategies.

6. Conclusion

In order to solve the problems in brand management teaching, teachers proposed a student-centered teaching strategy, including participatory teaching, online and offline mixed teaching, and project-driven teaching. They have explored and practiced the student-centered teaching mode in terms of teaching objectives, contents, methods, and evaluation ways. Rich and diverse activities are a highlight of this course. Also, teachers attach great importance to students' feedback on the course, and use them to form a continuous improvement teaching cycle. How to further improve the student-centered teaching mode and enhance the teaching effect remains to be explored.

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