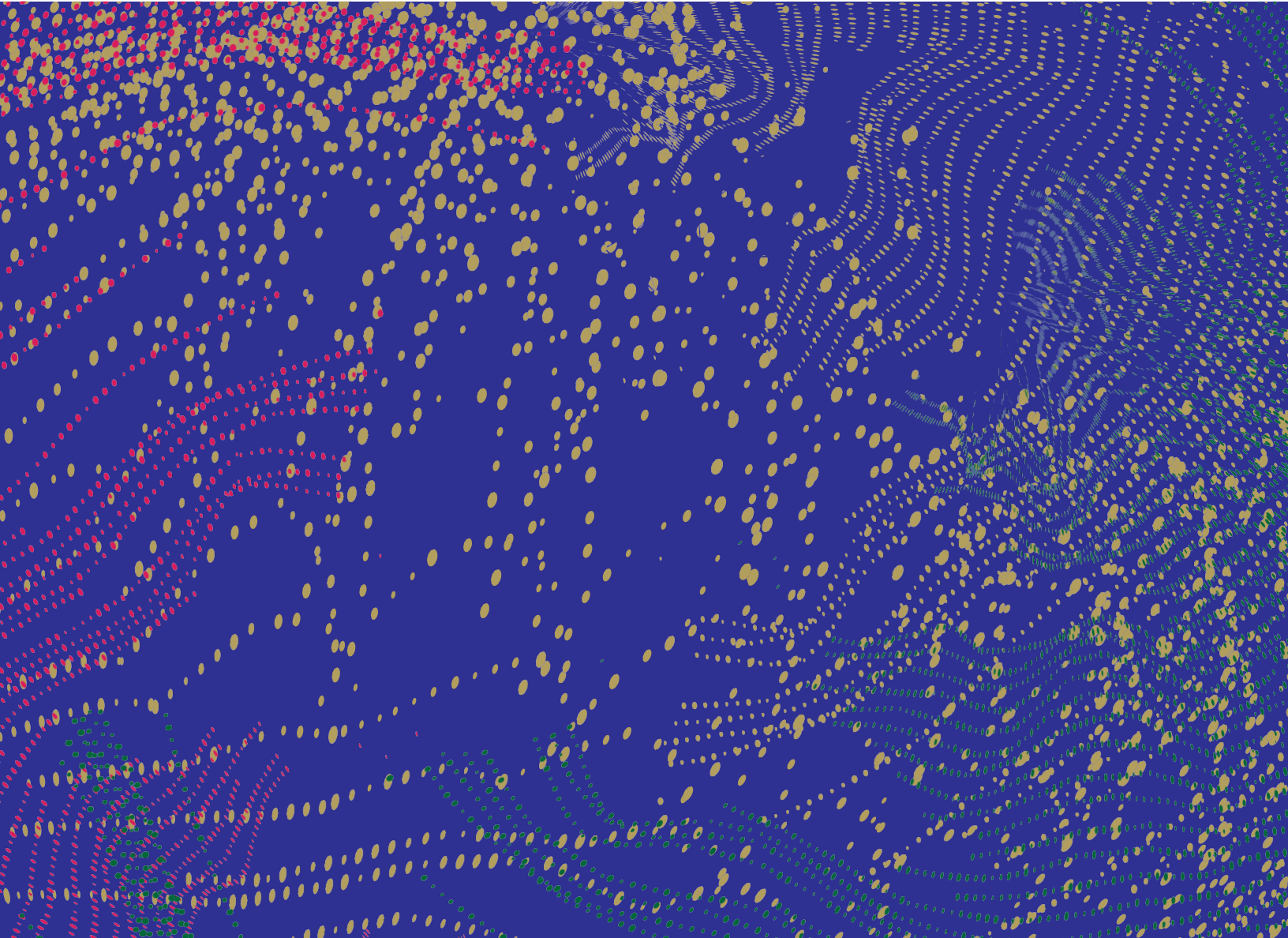


The World Humanities Report  
**The Past, Present,  
and Future of  
Humanities General  
Education in Chinese  
Universities**

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# The Past, Present, and Future of Humanities General Education in Chinese Universities

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Since the beginning of this century, Chinese universities, driven by the internal need to build world-class institutions of higher education and the external pressure of globalization, have comprehensively reviewed the existing undergraduate educational models and pedagogical system and embarked on reforms in curriculum, organizational structure, and methods of operation and teaching. One of the key aspects of the reform is the promotion and enforcement of general education, with humanities education as its core. As a result, undergraduate education, graduate education, international education, and so on have all been expanded and updated with a gradual deepening of the idea and practice of general education. The penetration of the concept of general education into university education and its interactions and tensions with humanities education and professional education are especially prominent in a number of leading universities under the umbrella of Project 985 (a state project of building up world-class universities initiated in May 1998), and the practice of general education has become an emblem of these universities' overall level of development, potential, and humanistic ecology.

General education with humanities education as the main line plays an increasingly important role in the conceptualization and practice of “value shaping, knowledge impartation, and ability training” in Chinese universities as it focuses on building common values, cultivating humanistic mind, critical thinking, and scientific literacy of all students, and emphasizes a holistic understanding of the diversity of world civilization and the depth of Chinese civilization. However, in the face of the upsurge of general education in the new era, practitioners of higher education, while maintaining optimism, are also

aware of the disadvantaged position of general education under China's inherent professional education system, and "formal achievement" does not mean "substantive effectiveness." The departure of this shore does not mean the arrival of the other. Since the reform and opening up, the development of quality education [*suzhi jiaoyu*] and general education in Chinese universities over the past thirty years or so shows that general education at Chinese universities needs to uphold the tradition of Chinese civilization on the one hand and enhance the awareness of the time with global vision on the other, so as to take advantage of the momentum at a new starting point and make China's due contribution to higher education in the world.

### General Education in Chinese Universities Past and Present

General education with the aim of "cultivating a whole person" is not unique to the West, and if one revisits ancient Chinese educational thought, it is evident that the philosophy of general education has long been rooted in China's profound cultural tradition. *The Great Learning* [*Daxue*], one of the core texts of Confucianism, begins with the following statement: "What the *Great Learning* teaches is to illuminate eminent virtue, to renovate the people, and to achieve the highest excellence." *The Book of Changes* [*Yijing*], an ancient divination text, says, "we observe astronomical phenomena in order to ascertain the changes of the season; we examine the development of humanities in order to transform the world." The ancient Chinese dictionary *Shuowen jiezi* explains that "tong [通] is that which is able to pass through all impasses under heaven." Confucius advocated "learning much and selecting what is good to adhere to." In the Southern Song dynasty, Zhu Xi put forward the five principles of learning, "extensive study [*boxue*], accurate inquiry [*shenwen*], careful reflection [*shensi*], clear discrimination [*mingbian*], and earnest practice [*duxing*]," and proposed that the goal of education is "to acquire knowledge through studying the underlying principles of all things" [*gewu zhizhi*] and "to learn for oneself" [*weiji zhixue*]. It is the core value of traditional Chinese scholars to study and disseminate classical culture, cultivate one's moral character, bring order to one's family, govern one's country, and pacify the world.

General education grew hand in hand with the earlier development of higher education in modern China. Specific notions and practices of general education were found in the mission descriptions and educational practices of Tsinghua University and Peking University, both were the leading modern Chinese universities in the first half of the twentieth century, especially when

Mei Yiqi and Cai Yuanpei were their respective presidents. With “five educations” [*wuyyu*] as his guiding ideology, Cai Yuanpei advocated the “integration of the East and the West, the inclusion of all” and believed that “the university is committed to cultivating well-informed, highly educated, and all-rounded talents.”<sup>1</sup> From the perspective of the cultural mission of the university, Mei Yiqi advocated the famous notion of “general knowledge as the foundation, specialized knowledge as the extension.”<sup>2</sup> Mei Yiqi’s education ideology can be regarded as the earliest example of modern Chinese universities advocating and promoting general education. Other educators such as Pan Guangdan, Zhang Boling, Zhu Kezhen, Zhou Gucheng, Feng Youlan, and Liang Sicheng also appealed to similar educational philosophies and formed traditions in the universities and colleges that they led.

Since the era of reform and opening up, especially from the 1990s on, with the accelerated pace of China’s modernization, the national policy of renovating China through science and education and the vision of building up a strong socialist country have pushed the task of enhancing the scientific and cultural quality of the nation to the forefront. In September 1995 the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education hosted the first working meeting of pilot institutions for strengthening cultural quality education of college students in Huazhong University of Science and Technology.<sup>3</sup> The meeting was organized to address the following issues: Chinese higher education in the 1950s and 1960s copied the Soviet model in overemphasizing professional education, there was a discontinuity of education in humanities during the Cultural Revolution, and there existed a neglect of general education and comprehensive cultivation of students’ all round ability in the earlier years of reform and opening up.

After the meeting, the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education made the decision to carry out “cultural quality education” in some

<sup>1</sup> Cai Yuanpei, “Fakan ci” [Inaugural issue address], *Beijing daxue yukan* 1, no. 1 (1918).

<sup>2</sup> Mei Yiqi, “Daxue yijie” [An explanation of the university], *Qinghua xuebao* 13, no. 1 (1941).

<sup>3</sup> “Cultural quality education” [*wenhua suzhi jiaoyu*] is a Chinese concept of general education and liberal arts education. In March 1998 the Ministry of Education issued “Recommendations on Improving the Culture Quality Education,” in which the concept is defined as follows: “The basic qualities of college students include moral quality, cultural quality, professional quality, and physical and psychological quality, among which cultural quality is the foundation. The cultural quality education we advocate mainly regards humanistic education [*renwen suzhi jiaoyu*]. By enhancing arts education for students of science and engineering and science education for students of arts respectively, we hope to raise the cultural and aesthetic taste and humanistic and scientific quality of all college students.”

of the 211 colleges and universities in China. In 1999 the Ministry of Education officially approved fifty-three universities to establish an initial group of first thirty-two national cultural quality education bases for college students (including those joint ones). In 2005 the Department of Higher Education of the Ministry of Education and the Steering Committee of Cultural Quality Education under the auspice of the Ministry of Education jointly held a conference at Tsinghua University commemorating the tenth anniversary of the 1995 working meeting. Following the conference, in June 2006, a second group of sixty-one national bases of cultural quality education for college students were added covering another 104 colleges and universities.

With the promotion of cultural quality education and the grand blueprint of building world-class universities, coupled with the internationalization of higher education, Chinese universities have started to explore and practice a new model of undergraduate education in line with the prospective development of the world and China. As part of this new model, the implementation and enforcement of general education become a new important area in the development and reform of Chinese higher education. Around the year 2000 general education and elective courses were put on the priority agenda to varying degrees in a number of key universities such as Tsinghua, Peking, and Fudan. In 2005 the First Forum on Chinese Culture was held at Xiangshan Hotel in Beijing under the auspices of Sanlian Bookstore's China Cultural Forum. The theme of this conference was "Humanities Education in Chinese Universities," and general education was discussed extensively in terms of its conditions and future development. The core topic of the discussion was education in humanities, which was essentially liberal arts education or general education as it is now popularly understood. (Theoretically, the concepts of liberal and general education have distinct origins, but they are closely related on the ideological and practical levels). In 2007 the first nationwide workshop of general education and core courses was held at Tsinghua University, and a wider consensus on general education was formed among universities and scholars. In this process, a large number of universities and colleges have undertaken experiments and pilot programs according to their own circumstances, and the actual content and operation platform of cultural quality education have gradually changed from campus extracurricular activities and general elective courses to common core courses in the undergraduate programs. The rapid establishment and growth of the core curriculum indicate a further development of cultural quality education and general education. Consequently, a trend of converging

the two emerged.<sup>4</sup>

Explorations on how to effectively carry out quality education and general education have emerged one after another.<sup>5</sup> In this process, controversies and discussions about the similarities and differences between general education and cultural quality education have begun to emerge.<sup>6</sup> The key point of the

<sup>4</sup> For example, Tsinghua University was the first in mainland China to set up a core curriculum for cultural quality education in 2006, and before that, during the twenty-first quadrennial educational working congress of the university from 2000 to 2001, the undergraduate educational goal of broad-caliber professional education based on general education was put forward for the first time. Based on the construction of the general education curriculum and high-quality courses, the basic requirement of thirteen credits of general education courses was established. Qin Shaode, then secretary of the Communist Party Committee of Fudan University, who was the first to establish an undergraduate college in post-1949 China in 2005, and Cai Dafeng, Fudan's vice president for teaching and learning, have written several articles and given interviews that explain the common goals and directions of general education and cultural quality education. See Cai Dafeng, "Tongshi jiaoyu: daxue gaige de lujing xuanze" [General education: Paths and options for university reforms], *Jiefang ribao*, February 5, 2010. Other universities, such as Peking University, Zhejiang University, Nanjing University, and Sun Yat-sen University, also advocate both cultural quality education and general education and have corresponding executive and administrative bodies, the so-called two banners, one troop. See also Hu Xianzhang, "'Tong' yu 'zhuan' de hexie fazhan" [The harmonious development of "general" and "specialized"], *Beijing luntan*, November 10, 2008; Cao Li, "Guanyu wenhua suzhi jiaoyu yu tongshi jiaoyu de bianzheng sikao" [Dialectical thoughts on cultural quality education and general education], *Qinghua daxue jiaoyu yanjiu*, no. 2 (2007): 24–33, reprinted in *Xinhua wenzhai*, no. 16 (2007).

<sup>5</sup> The most remarkable example has been the establishment of undergraduate colleges of various scales at Fudan University, Sun Yat-sen University, Peking University, and Zhejiang University.

<sup>6</sup> See Cao Li, "Guanyu wenhua suzhi jiaoyu yu tongshi jiaoyu de bianzheng sikao" [Dialectical thoughts on cultural quality education and general education], *Qinghua daxue jiaoyu yanjiu*, no. 2 (2007) 24–33; Hu Xianzhang, "Nuli yi kexue de daxue linian tuijin wenhua suzhi jiaoyu" [Striving to advance cultural quality education with a scientific idea of the university], *Xin Qinghua*, October 20, 2005; Qin Shaode, "Xuexi yu tansuo—Fudan duiyu tongshi jiaoyu de lijie yu shijian" [Learning and exploring—Fudan's understanding and practice of general education], *Zhongguo gaodeng jiaoyu*, nos. 15–16 (2006): 31–33; Qin Shaode, "Tongshi jiaoyu: Daxue gaige de lujing xuanze" [General education: Paths and options for university reform], *Jiaoshu yuren (gaojiao luntan)*, no. 6 (2009): 8–11; Wang Yiqiu, "Daxue tongshi jiaoyu yu wenhua suzhi jiaoyu" [University general education and cultural quality education], *Beijing daxue jiaoyu pinglun*, no. 3 (2006): 2–8, 188; Wang Yiqiu, "Wenhua suzhi jiaoyu yu tongshi jiaoyu guanxi de zairenshi" [Revisiting the relationship between cultural quality education and general education], *Zhongguo daxue jiaoxue*, no. 11 (2009): 14–21; Yang Shuzi and Yu Dongsheng, "Wenhua suzhi jiaoyu yu tongshi jiaoyu zhi bijiao" [A comparison of cultural quality education and general education], *Gaodeng jiaoyu yanjiu*, no. 3 (2008): 1–7; Zhang Chuting, "Suzhi jiaoyu shi tongshi jiaoyu de linghun—jianlun woguo gaoxiao suzhi jiaoyu zhi zouxiang" [Quality education is the soul of general education—a discussion on the direction of quality education in China's higher education], *Gaodeng jiaoyu yanjiu*, no. 7 (2008): 6–10.

controversy is the attribution and (dis)similarities between Chinese cultural quality education and Western liberal arts education. Those who emphasize the differences believe that cultural quality education is an educational concept with Chinese characteristics that places more emphasis on the cultivation of character and the internalization of knowledge rather than on acquiring knowledge itself as in Western liberal arts education. They also believe that cultural quality education is a concept more comprehensive and is meant to run through the whole process of education, including specialized education. It is also meant to improve the cultural character of the students and teachers and the cultural ecology of the university, while general education, as the term *tongshi* (general knowledge) implies, is often limited to the requirements of general courses for students at the earlier stage of college education before they declare their majors, emphasizing knowledge rather than character.

Those who endorse similarities believe that the actual situation and trajectory of general education in the United States show that it does not merely emphasize knowledge, nor does it stay only on the primary stage of the undergraduate level. From the perspective of both educational philosophy and practice, both general education and cultural quality education pursue the goal of character cultivation and holistic education, and although they originate from different countries, they share many similarities in terms of goals, trajectories and even methods. From this controversy, one can see that the conflict of “China versus West,” “ancient versus modern” that began in the late Qing dynasty is continues today. It suggests different understandings and critical reflections of several generations of Chinese intellectuals on the relationship between China and the West, the traditional and the modern, and modernity and modernization.

In spite of the debates and arguments, there is no doubt that cultural quality education is the theoretical crystallization and summary of Chinese educators’ long-term thinking and experience—an educational philosophy and practice with Chinese characteristics. Cultural quality education as a starting point of breakthrough in carrying out quality education as a whole needs to be sustained and expanded continuously.

Quality education is an important chapter in the narrative of higher education in China. During its thirty years of development as an educational philosophy, quality education has received positive attention and recognition by international colleagues. In 2018 *suzhi* education was included as a concept in the *Encyclopedia of Educational Philosophy and Theory*, edited by Michael A.



Peters and published by Springer, owing to the promotive efforts of the Chinese Association for Suzhi Education. General education, after nearly twenty years of exploration and practice in a number of universities in China, is moving from standard curriculum of teaching or mere knowledge dissemination to an education of values, cultural outlook, and methodology. It has become an educational philosophy and practical platform for integrating knowledge, competence, accomplishment, and value concepts into one. With further development and innovation of both quality education and general education, a number of Chinese universities have launched innovative programs and plans in order to initiate new models and ways for cultivating creative talents. We have reason to believe that in the process of progressing from a large educational country to a strong educational country, China will proceed with Chinese perspectives and ideals while trying to learn, understand, and draw on critical experience and practice of general education in world-class universities while further refining the concept, and practice example of general education with both international standards and Chinese characteristics and contribute them to the world.

In the long tradition of Chinese academies [*shuyuan*], the emphasis has been on teaching according to the ability of the student, pursuing righteousness and rationality, cultivating oneself, and forming one's character. The non-separation of literature, history, and philosophy; the integration of humanities and science; and the inclusion of all prevailed. The legacy of Chinese academies illustrates that the idea and practice of general education and personal cultivation have a long history in China and have been carried forward with a strong national identity and humanistic spirit in the reform and development of education and teaching in contemporary Chinese universities.

Presently, general education in Chinese universities mainly takes two forms. One is the establishment of independent colleges that aim to promote general education and explore the path of its integration with specialized education. Examples can be found in the creation of several undergraduate colleges: In 2005 Fudan University took the lead in establishing Fudan College, with six residential halls under it, using the idea of general education as the overall concept in promoting college education reform, which was pioneering and forward looking at the time. In 2007 Peking University established Yuanpei College, a nonspecialized college, based on the experimental class of the Yuanpei Program launched in 2001. In 2009 Sun Yat-sen University established Boya College, and in 2014 Tsinghua University established Xinya College, the

very first residential liberal arts college at the university. The other form is the implementation of a general education curriculum for all undergraduate students by providing core courses in course groups or modules. Most of the abovementioned universities combine these two forms in practice.

In 2015 Peking University, Tsinghua University, Fudan University, and Sun Yat-sen University jointly initiated the University General Education Alliance. Along with the increase of general education programs at various universities, eighty-three universities have joined the alliance by May 2024, gradually shaping an active development of general education in China. In 2016 the Thirteenth Five-Year Plan of China explicitly proposed to establish an educational system combining general education and specialized education as a whole, which marked a new institutional stage of development in Chinese universities. Today general education, increasingly understood from the perspective of higher education as a whole, has become an organic part of undergraduate education.

In recent years, universities of various types in China are making efforts in promoting general education including comprehensive and research universities such as Peking University, Tsinghua University, Fudan University, Sun Yat-sen University, Wuhan University, and Nanjing University; universities with a strong science and technology background such as Zhejiang University, University of Science and Technology of China, Shanghai Jiaotong University, and Tongji University; teacher-training universities such as Beijing Normal University, East China Normal University, and South China Normal University; universities of economics and trade such as Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, Southwest University of Finance and Economics, Zhejiang University of Finance and Economics; and universities of politics and law such as China University of Political Science and Law, East China University of Political Science and Law, and Southwest University of Political Science and Law. In addition, universities and colleges of a general nature offer a variety of general education courses in accordance with their respective characteristics.

## Problems and Challenges Facing General Education in Chinese Universities

The world is changing, and so is China. In the context of the rapid development of the world today and in the face of the great changes unprecedented in a century—digitalization, artificial intelligence, the rapid development of the post-epidemic and post-globalization science and technology, and the change

of world patterns—Chinese university undergraduate education is facing many challenges, and general education is set to meet these challenges. Nevertheless, the development of general education in Chinese universities is also facing various difficulties and problems.

The first and foremost challenge facing general education in Chinese universities is how to establish a general education system with Chinese characteristics while drawing on the American experience, through an effective combination of the “first classroom” [*diyī ketāng*] and “second classroom” [*dì'èr ketāng*],<sup>7</sup> and to promote Chinese cultural tradition and its modern transformation with the vision of world civilization and *a community with a shared future for mankind*, while achieving the overall goal of “virtue cultivation” with a foothold in China and an eye toward the world. To meet with these challenges and tasks, new objectives are set that include advancing general education by reexamining China’s cultural traditions and educational resources in the post-globalization context, continuously consolidating and innovating the knowledge system of general education, and coming up with new expressions that reflect Chinese characteristics.

Secondly, there is gap between the blueprint and the actual effect. Many universities in China now have established elaborate ideas and programs of general education with a wide variety of course modules and subject groups, based on a type of knowledge structure or a fundamental understanding of the world. The size of the general education curriculum would normally reach one hundred courses or more, with some schools having two to three hundred courses, more often in the form of distribution with a requirement of ten to fifteen credits. However, there is a still a long way to go before meeting the essential requirements and ideal standards of both quality education and general education in terms of curriculum designing, organization of courses, and the actual effects. Although the conceptualization and basic requirements of the core curriculum were put forward at the outset, departure from one shore does not guarantee the arrival of the opposite one. In the course of implementation, deviations and inadequacy would sometimes occur, institutional and mechanism loopholes, structural contradictions with concentration courses, biased evaluation and assessment systems, along with other human factors may lead, from time to time, to the displacement and deviation of general education courses in terms of

<sup>7</sup> “First classroom” refers to normal courses taught in the classroom, whereas “second classroom” means extracurricular activities conducted outside of the classroom, such as social practice or fieldwork.

specifications, quality, and standards. The embarrassing low prestige of general education affects the investment by teachers and students in these courses, and that lack of investment in turn aggravates the lack of prestige of general education. This vicious circle often inhibits the upgrading and advancement of general education courses. For some time, the so-called core courses have not become the real foundation and core in the undergraduate training program. Compared to the core in American world-class universities, there is resemblance in form rather than in essence. Since the establishment of credits and modules for general courses, innovations in the content and teaching methods have become a long-term battle. The practical problems for most universities are how to avoid the curriculum system from becoming a hodgepodge without internal logic and organic connection and how to effectively implement core values and objectives of general education through each specific course.

Thirdly, how should the value of general education be recognized profoundly by teachers and students? At present, there is a surge of enthusiasm about reforming general education, but one important reason why in-depth and detailed implementation is difficult under the existing system is that teachers and education administrators often mistakenly believe that the reform they are involved in is merely a curricular one. There is a lack of understanding of the need for profound conceptual change including how to make teachers, students, and administrators work together to transform the educational culture so that the idea of general education can be internalized as a unified and tacit belief among the members of the university. This is a real problem in the practice of general education. The digital age and information technology have provided unprecedented conditions for the idea and practice of general education to be more widely and timely recognized among teachers and students. Many universities have established their own websites, WeChat accounts, and general education WeChat groups, such as Learning at Tsinghua: Treasury of General Education, Fudan General Education, and Peking University General Education Network. It is a new task for general education to achieve greater and more effective collective consciousness in teachers and students by taking greater advantage of the mobilizing and demonstrating function of digital media.

Fourthly, what kind of relationship should be established between “teaching centered” and “learning centered”? Along with the development of general education in Chinese universities, teaching methods have begun to change from a “teaching-centered” model to a “learning-centered” model. A well-designed curriculum is ultimately ineffective if it is not effectively conducted to motivate

students to learn. Teaching methods play a key role in ensuring the “effectiveness” of general education, and students’ interest in all aspects of learning—learning content, understanding of learning methods, and self-awareness of independent learning—will be stimulated through the “teaching and learning” method. The shift from a teaching-centered to a learning-centered model poses a great challenge to teachers, who are required to pay greater attention to students’ learning process and outcomes. It also poses a major challenge to students in overcoming their lack of motivation to learn in unknown areas under the influence of “utilitarianism.” On the other hand, in the process of moving from a teaching-centered to a learning-centered approach, the teacher’s initiative and guidance are crucial. Otherwise, the emphasis on learning-centeredness can result in lively classroom activities that mask the superficiality of ideas and the lack of intellectual challenge.

### Trends in Development

The direction for the development of Chinese university and its general education is governed by how they respond to the new problems and challenges of student cultivation in light of developing new concepts and structures. Many schools have proposed “general education version 2.0,”<sup>8</sup> but the next ten years will be an important period for the construction of a general education system with Chinese characteristics. It is gratifying to see that in recent years course building in general education in colleges and universities has been implemented on a large scale on the institutional and structural level, fast-tracked by enrollment and training according to larger disciplinary categories. The next step is to further promote the construction of a common core and curricular platform in terms of overarching designing and institutional arrangement and to build a Chinese liberal arts education curriculum with universal significance and Chinese characteristics. One of the pressing issues therein remains team building and curriculum quality, and the key to team building and curriculum quality is institutional safeguards.

For future development, the innate value and extended meaning of general education need to be further discussed and clarified so as to embark on a clearer path. Tailor-made general education system is needed to be applied to different

<sup>8</sup> General education 2.0 means the new organizational and managerial development in curriculum design and teaching-learning process from 2014 to the present, whereas general education 1.0 refers to the beginning period from 2000 to 2014 when the idea and practice of general education were debated and initiated.

colleges and universities with their own characteristic goals. By further integrating the universal common core curriculum of Chinese universities (i.e., ideological and political courses) with the core curriculum of humanities bearing the imprint of the university's educational tradition, a complete and sustainable general education curriculum system is hopefully to be established, which is expected to bridge the structural gaps and resource tensions between general education as a latecomer and the original concentration-dominated system of universities, thus more effectively realizing an educational system that combines general education and professional education as a whole. Universities built and developed on the strengths of their respective industry categories will pay more attention to creating general education courses with core status and interdisciplinary nature, such as general courses in finance and economics, law and politics, and fine art. In addition, vocational colleges or private universities are also focusing on building general education courses that emphasize core competencies according to their own educational goals, and the content of the courses is more in line with the level and acceptance of students. In short, the future form of general education in Chinese universities will be richer, more diversified, and more targeted.

As Plato pointed out in the *Republic*, the most essential act of any culture and civilization is the education of its children and grandchildren. For Chinese universities, in the great journey of realizing the “Chinese dream of *the great rejuvenation of the nation*,” both professional education and general education are political and cultural undertakings that concern not only the universities themselves but also the nation and the future direction of Chinese civilization. Their due historical responsibilities need no elaboration. In the case of the United States, one of the purposes of promoting general education in the past and reintroducing and enforcing it today is to build a cultural community and a melting pot of values in the country, consolidate the cultural soft power that supports the status of the United States as a great power, and guide the younger generation to identify with and inherit the core values of the country. Today, when we look to the past, present, and future of general education in Chinese universities, we need to understand the intrinsic connection between general education and talent cultivation, value shaping, national identification, and the formation of world outlook, and to situate reform and innovation of general education to cultivate future leaders in China's political, economic, cultural, scientific, and technological fields. We should perceive clearly the historical mission of Chinese universities in the process of modernizing China from the

level of artifacts and institutions to the level of ideology and culture; the social responsibility of nurturing talent, leading society, and shaping values; and the dynamic connection and internal tension between professional and general educations, instruments making and educational nurturing, education and civilization, humanities and science, tools and values. While rooted in the fertile soil of national culture, we will reflect on the historical inheritance and modern transformation of Chinese traditional culture with an open mind, and critically borrow, absorb, and tolerate the achievements and cultural factors of other civilizations. In this way, we can gain insight into and put forward methods and principles of general education and quality education that are suitable for China's national conditions and characteristics.

Looking ahead, China will appear as a more influential and responsible country on the international stage. The vision of building an innovative country requires China's top universities to continuously develop their educational concepts and modes of operation to nurture outstanding students who can adapt to future change and the requirements of the time and lead Chinese civilization—and even the world civilization. In this sense, general education of Chinese universities may not be without breadth of mind and vigorous endurance, for there is still a long way to go.

*Translated from the Chinese*

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