

# The Basic Path of Integrating Good Family Traditions into the Education of Family and Inheritance Law

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**Abstract:** The moral education in the Family and Inheritance Law course faces issues such as fragmentation, rigidity, monotonous teaching methods, and a single evaluation model. Good family traditions, as an important carrier of traditional Chinese virtues, possess significant moral and educational value. Their connotations are closely related to the knowledge system of the Family and Inheritance Law course, making the integration of good family traditions into the course feasible. In terms of integration paths, the first step is to identify the connections between good family traditions and the knowledge of Family and Inheritance Law, and then adjust the teaching plan accordingly, using good family traditions as a guiding thread. Secondly, teaching methods should be updated by employing a variety of approaches, such as case-based teaching and topic-based teaching, while emphasizing process evaluation to promote the organic integration of good family traditions with the Family and Inheritance Law course.

**Keywords:** Good Family Traditions; Family and Inheritance Law; Moral Education; Integration Path

## 1. Introduction

The Family and Inheritance Law (also known as "Marriage, Family, and Inheritance Law") is one of the core courses in the legal profession. The knowledge points covered in this course are not only closely related to marriage and family but also contain numerous ideological and political elements that help cultivate noble moral character. However, in current teaching practices, the instruction of Family and Inheritance Law still predominantly focuses on knowledge transmission while neglecting moral education. Moreover, there is limited research on how to organically integrate moral elements into the teaching of Family and Inheritance Law. Notably, good family traditions, as an important

carrier of traditional Chinese virtues, are rich in ideological resources. They are intricately connected to the knowledge system of Family and Inheritance Law, making it possible to integrate them into the course to enhance its moral education effects. This paper explores the integration paths of good family traditions into the teaching of Family and Inheritance Law, aiming to improve the quality of moral education in legal studies.

## 2. Shortcomings of Moral Education in the Family and Inheritance Law Course

The necessity of ideological and political reform in the Family and Inheritance Law course has been widely recognized in academia. Many scholars argue that if the course neglects moral education, it may produce a large number of legally skilled but morally deficient professionals, which could destabilize marriage, family, and society [1,2]. Under this consensus, several universities have begun incorporating moral elements into the teaching of Family and Inheritance Law. For example, prestigious institutions such as China University of Political Science and Law and Southwest University of Political Science and Law have integrated moral education modules into the course to impart positive values. Although these practices have achieved some results, the following issues persist: First, the fragmentation of moral elements in courses. At present, many teachers only sporadically integrate moral elements in a certain knowledge point or in a certain teaching period. Teaching is a systematic project, which includes teaching objectives, basic knowledge structure, framework, teaching content design, teaching method design, teaching process design and teaching result evaluation. From the practical situation, the current moral elements in courses have not been organically integrated into all aspects of teaching concepts and teaching design. Second, the integration of moral education in courses is relatively rigid. At present, there is a lack of moral teaching

materials that are more suitable for the teaching of family and inheritance law. The existing textbooks on family and Inheritance Law mainly focus on the introduction of the legal system of family and inheritance law itself, lacking the integration of moral elements. Third, the teaching method is relatively single. At present, the teaching of family and inheritance law courses is mainly based on lectures. This traditional teaching method does not fit well with ideological and political education in courses, making it difficult for students to deeply understand the core values behind the knowledge points of family and inheritance law. Fourth, the research on how to optimize the evaluation mode to verify the actual effect of ideological and political education in courses needs to be further strengthened. At present, the evaluation method of family and inheritance law courses is basically based on examinations, which is relatively single and cannot verify the actual effect of moral education in courses.

In summary, to organically integrate moral elements into the Family and Inheritance Law course, superficial or perfunctory efforts are insufficient. It is essential to deeply explore the value concepts underlying the knowledge system, identify their connections with traditional Chinese virtues, and then design a systematic approach.

### **3. The Feasibility of Integrating Good Family Traditions into the Ideological and Political Education of Family and Inheritance Law**

Good family traditions are carriers of morality, encompassing loyalty to the nation, harmony between spouses, respect for elders and care for the young, personal cultivation, and upright conduct in social interactions. They align with traditional virtues such as "integrity, harmony, and patriotism." As moral education material, they share intrinsic connections with Family and Inheritance Law in terms of content and values. Therefore, good family traditions hold significant potential for advancing the moral education of Family and Inheritance Law, and their integration into the course is feasible.

(1) Both family and inheritance law and excellent family traditions have ethical characteristics

Family and Inheritance Law includes Marriage and Family Law as well as Inheritance Law. Marriage and Family Law regulates personal and property relationships within marriage and

family, while Inheritance Law governs property inheritance arising from the death of a decedent. Both areas exhibit strong ethical characteristics. Specifically, many provisions in Family and Inheritance Law originate from the ethical and moral norms of marriage and family, making them a form of moralized law. For example, they emphasize mutual loyalty, respect, and support between spouses, the obligation of parents to protect and raise their children, and the duty of children to care for their elderly parents. Similarly, good family traditions are rooted in traditional family ethics, emphasizing solidarity, mutual assistance, and intergenerational fairness within the family unit. Thus, Family and Inheritance Law and excellent family traditions share a common origin and both possess ethical features.

(2) The knowledge system of family and inheritance law corresponds to the content of excellent family traditions

The concepts, culture, and values embodied in excellent family traditions are closely linked to the professional knowledge system of Family and Inheritance Law. For instance, Article 1043(1) of the Civil Code's Marriage and Family Section explicitly states that "families should establish excellent family traditions, promote family virtues, and emphasize the construction of family civilization." This reflects the legislative intent of marriage and family laws: to inherit virtues, inspire goodness, regulate behavior, and guide social customs.

For example, the Civil Code adopts the "community of acquired property" system as the default marital property regime, meaning that post-marital income generally belongs to both spouses. The underlying logic is that one spouse's post-marital earnings often result from the joint efforts and support of both parties, aligning with the essence of marital unity and the good family tradition of spousal harmony. Restrictions on the division of marital property under the Civil Code also reflect the commitment to maintaining family stability and solidarity [3]. According to Article 1066, during marriage, spouses generally cannot request the division of marital property through litigation unless one party engages in actions severely detrimental to the shared property or refuses to pay necessary medical expenses. This rule safeguards the material foundation of marital life, preventing arbitrary divisions that could undermine marital harmony. It resonates with

the excellent family tradition of mutual respect and unity between spouses [4].

Similarly, the Inheritance Section of the Civil Code incorporates the values of excellent family traditions. For example, it steadfastly lists parents as first-order heirs and grants inheritance rights to widowed daughters-in-law and sons-in-law, reflecting the traditional culture of filial piety.

Thus, the legal rules and theoretical system of Family and Inheritance Law inherently contain elements of good family traditions, providing a solid foundation for integrating them into the course to enhance moral education.

#### **4. Paths for Integrating Good Family Traditions into the Family and Inheritance Law Course**

Although good family traditions and the Family and Inheritance Law course can be integrated, since the latter is not purely an moral course, the integration should be subtle. How, then, can the content of good family traditions be organically combined with the professional teaching of Family and Inheritance Law? This paper explores integration paths from the perspectives of professional knowledge, teaching objectives and methods, and evaluation approaches.

(1) Identifying the connections between good family traditions and family and inheritance law knowledge

In teaching Family and Inheritance Law, instructors can systematically analyze the main content of the course, examine its intrinsic connections with good family traditions, and extract moral elements. Each chapter can include a corresponding "excellent family traditions and moral education" theme.

For example, when discussing the issue of whether a spouse can reclaim property unilaterally gifted to a third party, the teacher can approach the analysis from the perspective of violating the principle of public order and good morals. While explaining this principle, the instructor can introduce the good family tradition of "loyalty and exclusivity" to educate students morally [5]. During this process, students can learn about historical examples, such as the Northern Song Dynasty's Sima Guang, who never took a concubine, and the "frugal and united" family tradition of Lady Zhang. These stories help students appreciate the value of marital fidelity and understand that violating loyalty obligations incurs negative

evaluations both morally and legally, thereby fostering correct views on marriage and values [6].

This paper identifies at least eight moral themes in Family and Inheritance Law: equality and respect, loyalty and exclusivity, sharing joys and sorrows, caring for children, filial piety toward parents, family harmony, mutual understanding, and protecting the vulnerable. These themes correspond to specific content in marriage, family, and inheritance systems. For instance: Caring for children relates to post-divorce child custody and parent-child rights and obligations. Family harmony aligns with spousal personal and property relationships [7]. Loyalty and exclusivity connects to marital fidelity, divorce litigation, and divorce damages. Sharing joys and sorrows corresponds to the marital property system and the determination of joint debts [8].

By integrating these themes with stories of good family traditions, students can better understand the values underlying legal norms.

(2) Updating teaching methods

The key to integrating good family traditions into the moral education of the Family and Inheritance Law course lies in updating teaching methods. While traditional lecture-based teaching helps students intuitively grasp the knowledge system and improve professional competence, its lack of teacher-student interaction often makes it difficult to achieve ideal results in moral education. The integration of good family traditions into the course should combine case-based and topic-based teaching methods with traditional lectures to further enhance moral education.

Specifically, instructors can employ case-based teaching to illustrate the connotations of good family traditions through real-life scenarios. By analyzing and discussing actual marriage and family cases, students can better understand the meaning and significance of these traditions. For example, when explaining the legal principles of spousal relationships, teachers can cite the famous saying from Yan Family Instructions—"Crafty deceit is inferior to simple honesty"—as ideological and political material, encouraging students to cultivate integrity. They can then highlight how legal doctrines such as mutual support and fidelity obligations between spouses align with these family values [9].

Topic-based teaching, on the other hand, guides students to engage in critical discussions on specific themes in Family and Inheritance Law,

deepening their understanding of underlying values. This method encourages students to reflect on the purpose and values behind legislation, helping them develop correct moral perspectives through debate [10]. For instance, when discussing property disputes in cohabitation cases, instructors can pose the question: What is the value of the marriage system? By reviewing relevant literature, students can conclude that marriage, compared to cohabitation, better protects legal rights and contributes to social stability.

### (3) Improving teaching evaluation methods

Assessing the effectiveness of moral education in the Family and Inheritance Law course has long been a challenge for teachers. Since excellent family traditions primarily target students' value judgments and emotional development—effects that are long-term and implicit—they cannot be directly measured through conventional exams. Therefore, it is necessary to move beyond traditional summative assessments and adopt multidimensional evaluation methods to gauge the impact of ideological and political teaching.

Given the difficulty of quantifying the effects of integrating excellent family traditions into legal education, evaluations should emphasize diverse formative assessments that focus on value cultivation and moral influence. These assessments should guide students in shaping correct worldviews, outlooks on life, and values, prioritizing qualitative evaluations of ethical development.

In practice, a "hybrid evaluation model" combining exams and portfolio assessments can be adopted. In addition to exams, this method involves "collecting evidence of students' various competencies over time to build a coherent record"[6]. These records allow instructors to track students' progress and evaluate teaching effectiveness more holistically, avoiding the biases of single-method assessments. For example, electronic portfolios can document and analyze students' performance in class discussions, after-class exchanges, assignments, and social practice, serving as a basis for evaluating their moral development. Compared to traditional exams, this approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of students' intellectual and ethical growth. Additionally, instructors can periodically assess shifts in students' attitudes and values through face-to-face discussions or questionnaires.

## 5. Conclusion

"It takes ten years to grow trees but a hundred years to cultivate people." Integrating ideological and political education ("salt") into professional teaching ("soup") is by no means an overnight task. Teachers' wholehearted dedication is the cornerstone of effective ideological and political education. If instructors treat moral education as a mere formality—mechanically inserting slogans or cases—students will perceive it as rigid preaching rather than genuine value guidance. Only when teachers systematically review and reflect on their syllabi, lesson plans, and course designs, while fully understanding students' knowledge and cognitive levels, can they truly achieve the dual goals of enhancing both professional competence and moral character.

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