

# Research on the Integrated, Diversified, and Collaborative Model of “Student-Centered” Education

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**Abstract:** This study explores the concept, paradigm, and relevant experiences of “student-centered” education systems both in China and internationally. It further analyzes the practical exploration, challenges, and issues faced by TJJY College under this philosophy. Based on these insights, it proposes strategies to establish an “Integrated, Diversified, Collaborative Educational Community” within the institution. By clearly defining the student-centered teaching philosophy, redefining departmental roles and responsibilities, constructing a flat, flexible organizational structure, and establishing a “Student-Centered Affairs Coordination Committee”, the goal is to enhance the high-quality development of police education and foster the comprehensive growth of students.

**Keywords:** Student-Centered; Collaborative Education; Community; Police Education

## 1. The Concept of “Student-Centered” Education

### 1.1 Origins and Development

The concept of “Student-Centered” education emerged in the 1980s and has continued to evolve to this day [1]. In English literature, this model is referred to by various terms such as “learning paradigm” or “student-centered learning”, reflecting the different emphases of scholars. However, regardless of the terminology, the core principle remains consistent: placing the student at the center of the educational process.

### 1.2 Understanding and Discourse in China and Internationally

Since its introduction to China in the late 1980s, the concept of student-centered education has

sparked extensive academic discussions. Some scholars have proposed the “dual-subject theory”, suggesting that both students and teachers are subjects of equal importance. Others have gone further to advocate the “subject/leader theory”, positing that students are the subjects while teachers play a guiding role [2]. In the early stages of student-centered teaching reform, there was a lack of unified consensus on the teaching model and related terminology in both Chinese and English literature. This diversity is evident in the varied definitions presented. For instance, the traditional teaching model, known as the “transmission paradigm” in foreign contexts, is referred to as the “Three-Centered Model” (where teachers teach materials in the classroom) in China, commonly known as the “old three-centered” [3]. Professor Zhao Juming from Huazhong University of Science and Technology, based on the “old three centers” theory, introduced the “Student-Centered” (SC) model, emphasizing student development, learning, and learning outcomes, thus forming the “New Three-centered Theory”.

### 1.3 The Specific Meaning of the “New Three-centered Theory”

“Centered on Student Development”: This entails basing student development on their current state, facilitating their growth, accomplishing specific tasks during adolescence, uncovering potential, and achieving comprehensive development. It emphasizes individual holistic development over a uniform model.

“Centered on Student Learning”: Placing learning at the core of education, students take responsibility for the learning process, fostering proactive and autonomous learning abilities. Teachers act as designers of learning activities, creators of environments, and guides through the learning process.

“Centered on Learning Outcomes”: Emphasizing the assessment of learning outcomes, establishing immediate feedback mechanisms to assist students, teachers, and schools in collaborative improvement.

## 2. The Paradigm of “Student-Centered” Education

### 2.1 Introduction and Application of the “Paradigm” Concept

The concept and theory of paradigms were first proposed by the American philosopher of science, Thomas Kuhn. In 1995, Robert Barr and John Tagg published an article titled *From Teaching to Learning: A New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education* in the American journal *Change*, marking the first application of the paradigm concept to educational reform [4]. They employed a binary analysis method, comparing and contrasting the differences between traditional and modern educational paradigms across six dimensions: “mission and goals”, “criteria for success”, “structure of teaching and learning”, “learning theories”, “productivity”, and “nature of roles”. Based on this analysis, they developed thirty-eight evaluation indicators centered on student-centeredness. The authors highlighted in their article that the existence and implementation of any teaching model rely on specific support systems [5]. The SC reform is not limited to the reform of “teaching” alone; it must extend deeply into all aspects of the entire school system [6]. Therefore, the SC paradigm also necessitates the establishment of corresponding support systems around its teaching model. It is evident that the shift from teaching to learning represents a paradigm revolution.

### 2.2 The Content of SC Teaching Reform as a Paradigm

Scholar Alexander W. Astin from the University of California, Los Angeles, introduced the “Input-Environment-Output” model [7]. This model emphasizes the effectiveness of higher education, where the “output” is the result of the interaction between students’ personal traits and experiences (the “input”) and university environmental factors, including academic atmosphere and social interactions (the “environment”). By isolating environmental factors from students’ background

characteristics, we can gain a clearer understanding of how campus environments impact the development of students’ abilities.

Building upon this, Professor Zhao Juming from Huazhong University of Science and Technology, after a thorough summary of teaching reforms in the United States, distilled the content of the SC model into ten closely interconnected aspects: students, teachers, teaching, assessment, learning environment, physical environment, management systems, campus environment, culture, and social environment [8]. This provides a more comprehensive and detailed practical path for the student-centered teaching paradigm. The “Input-Environment-Output” model by Alexander W. Astin and the reform content of the SC model by Professor Zhao Juming together construct a student-centered educational ecosystem.

## 3. Chinese and International Practices of the “Student-Centered” Education System

### 3.1 International Models

**Stanford University:** Embracing a “learning-centered” teaching philosophy, Stanford has long been committed to the comprehensive development of students and the enhancement of educational quality. The *Stanford 2025 Plan* is a bold reinvention of the future educational model under the “new era of education”, offering a visionary “design” for the university of the future. This educational reform has shifted from the traditional top-down approach to a teacher-student-led model. The Stanford 2025 Plan encompasses four core principles: the open-loop university breaks the constraints of traditional educational systems; personalized pacing education offers tailored solutions; the “axis reversal” model reconstructs organizational structures; and “mission-driven” learning nurtures global career competencies [7].

**University of Arizona:** The University of Arizona is dedicated to constructing an increasingly specialized “student-centered” support system, fostering a learning environment that encourages students to actively engage in exploration and discovery. A culture of mutual support and collaboration permeates both in and out of the classroom. The customer service model spans the entire learning process, offering multi-faceted support

including course design, mentorship allocation, and resource provision. This model emphasizes the holistic development of students from enrollment to graduation.

### 3.2 Chinese Models

**Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University:** Adhering to the “student-centered” educational philosophy, the university is governed through collaborative participation from the board of directors, investors, and society. The senior management team is responsible for formulating strategies and overseeing daily operations, while various functional departments work on the periphery, ensuring that students’ academic and extracurricular activities proceed smoothly.

**Nanfang College Guangzhou:** The college has established a management framework based on the principles of faculty governance and a two-tiered departmental management system. The institution is distinguished by its emphasis on student self-governance, with students playing an active role in, and often leading, daily services across offices, libraries, and the online resource center. Many routine operations, such as the running of campus cafés, are also led by students.

### 3.3 Insights and Implications

Reforms in the “student-centered” education system in both Chinese and international universities typically take two approaches. The first, known as the “gradual-progressive approach”, involves responding to changes in the external environment by establishing temporary coordination roles, committees, or working teams. This approach promotes the flattening and flexibilization of organizational structures, maximizes the role of informal organizations, and strengthens horizontal communication between departments. The second approach, called the “overwhelming” or “tsunami-style” approach, is more radical, involving the reconstruction or reorganization of the entire organizational structure.

Faced with the constantly changing external environment and evolving development needs, many universities find that their original management models and organizational structures can no longer adapt to these changes, the demands of students, or the growth of the institution. Therefore, universities must undergo organizational transformation, drawing on successful experiences, and build a

student-centered education system to enhance their competitiveness and meet the demands of the times.

## 4. Envisioning Student-Centered Educational Reform at TJY

### 4.1 Current Organizational Structure at TJY

The current organizational structure at TJY follows a linear functional system. Built on a linear foundation, it establishes corresponding functional departments under various levels of administrative leadership to engage in specialized management. The characteristics of the linear functional system include speed, flexibility, cost efficiency, and clear responsibilities. It maintains the advantages of centralized unified command in a linear structure while incorporating the benefits of detailed division of labor and emphasis on specialized management from a functional structure. Overall, it is relatively efficient and stable.

However, this structure falls under the typical “centralized” model, where power is concentrated at the top management level, leading to a lack of necessary autonomy at lower levels. Additionally, there is poor lateral communication between functional departments, which can result in disconnects and conflicts. The information transmission routes are lengthy, feedback is slow, and it struggles to adapt to rapid environmental changes. Most significantly, the linear-functional organizational structure is built on a high degree of “authority split”, where if the goals between functional departments and linear departments are not aligned, conflicts easily arise. Particularly for matters requiring collaboration across multiple departments, it is often challenging to determine accountability.

### 4.2 Challenges and Issues

#### 4.2.1 Inadequacies in collaborative education mechanisms

On one hand, the lack of close collaboration among internal departments at the school results in unclear delineation of responsibilities, leading to overlaps, intersections, and vacuums in duties. This situation hinders the effective integration and utilization of educational resources, reducing work efficiency and potentially sparking conflicts between departments. On the other hand, the depth and

breadth of collaborative educational partnerships with external entities are also lacking. This inadequacy not only impacts the optimal allocation of educational resources but also restricts the comprehensive enhancement of students' overall qualities.

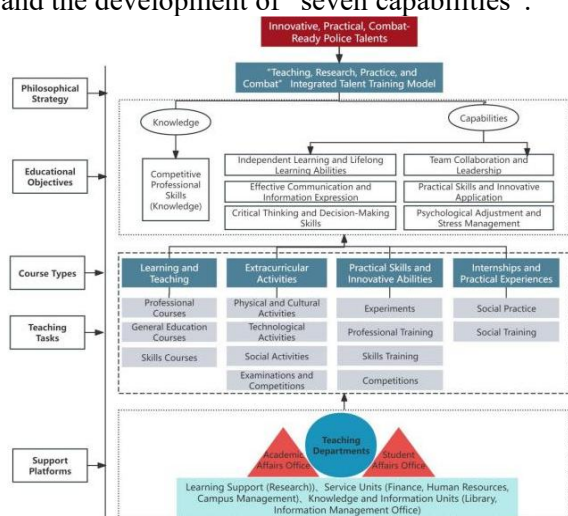
#### 4.2.2 Insufficient empowerment of student agency

Some teachers still employ traditional didactic teaching methods, neglecting the students' agency and individual needs during the teaching process. Furthermore, the school lacks in providing personalized learning guidance, psychological counseling, and other services for student management. This lack of empowerment of student agency significantly dampens students' interest and enthusiasm for learning.

### 4.3 New Exploration of the "Integrated and Diversified Collaborative Education Community"

#### 4.3.1. Strategic planning and design

At its core, the college's educational mission is to serve the people, society, and the nation by cultivating service-oriented talents. Therefore, the college's philosophy, core values, and talent development goals consistently emphasize the cultivation of innovative, practical, and combat-ready professionals—aimed at serving the people, society, and the nation. In line with the college's campus culture, talent development goals, and academic practices, the "4+7" education system is designed, which includes the establishment of "four classrooms" and the development of "seven capabilities".



**Figure 1. Construction of TJJY's "4+7" Education System**

As shown in Figure 1, this system reflects TJJY's emphasis on cultivating both knowledge

and abilities in students. It is primarily expressed through the four-classroom model, which includes the teaching classroom, quality education classroom, skills classroom, and practical classroom. This forms a comprehensive teaching system that spans from theory to practice, focusing on the development of students' competitive professional skills, independent learning and lifelong learning abilities, effective communication and information dissemination skills, critical thinking and decision-making capabilities, teamwork and leadership qualities, practical skills and innovative applications, as well as psychological resilience and stress management. The supporting platform is made up of the "integrated" teaching departments, the "two wings" of the Academic Affairs Office and Student Affairs Office, and the "driving force" of the Research Office, among other departments, ensuring the smooth operation of the educational system.

#### 4.3.2 Organizational structure optimization

Firstly, it is essential to clarify the processes at each stage and the departments responsible, redefine departmental job responsibilities, reduce management layers, and eliminate unnecessary overlaps.

Secondly, the establishment of an integrated coordination management system is crucial. This system should standardize the content, format, and channels of information transmission, ensuring real-time and accurate information aggregation, timely processing, and appropriate feedback. Building a flat and flexible organizational structure involves establishing the Academic Affairs and Student Support Center, Student Affairs Center, and Administrative Services Center under the aspects of teaching, learning, and administration.

(1) Academic Affairs and Student Support Center: This center primarily provides administrative support and coordination for various teaching developments at the school. It is responsible for course management, case studies, applied research, curriculum design, teaching support, and online education training.

(2) Student Affairs Center: This center is tasked with coordinating the decisions and directives of the Party Committee regarding student management work. It oversees the overall coordination of student enrollment, employment, daily management, ideological and political

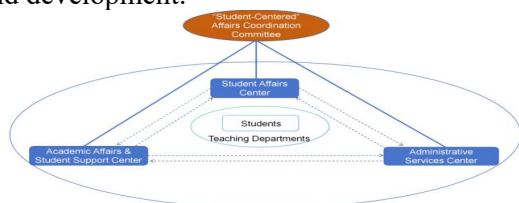
education, student Party building work, and counselor ideological and political education.

(3) Administrative Services Center: This center is responsible for comprehensive office operations, political research and publicity, human resources management, financial management, procurement management, compliance and legal affairs, administrative logistics, asset management and operations, campus management, planning and implementation of information technology construction, information technology support, and network security management.

#### 4.3.3 Establishment of the “student-centered” affairs coordination committee

The establishment of the “Student-Centered” Affairs Coordination Committee is led by the Dean as the Chairman, with the leaders of the three centers (Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Administrative Services) serving as Vice-Chairpersons. Members include teaching faculty, studio instructors, lab technicians, academic secretaries, student affairs office staff, librarians, and others. This committee is responsible for coordinating the overall student affairs at the school, negotiating and promoting major plans, special projects, and important work arrangements related to student affairs. It strengthens the strategic planning of student affairs, coordinates important student work across schools and departments, guides student organizations in conducting various beneficial activities for physical and mental well-being, and promotes students' comprehensive development.

As depicted in Figure 2, within this organizational structure, there are no hierarchical divisions among individuals, only clear delineations of responsibilities. The core approach for the school to fulfill its mission is through the academic activities engaged in by teachers and students. Administrative and functional staff are woven into a friendly network-style service platform, effectively supporting and serving students in their learning and development.



**Figure 2. “Integrated and Diversified Collaborative Education Community”**

## 5. Conclusion

Students are the most vital members of any university; without them, there is no university. The growth and development of students, along with their academic achievements, are the lifeblood of an institution's long-term sustainability. Therefore, a university's actions must be fundamentally aligned with the goal of fostering student growth and success. Throughout their academic journey, students actively pursue personal and intellectual growth, developing a wide range of skills and capabilities. This not only prepares them with the foundational knowledge in their chosen fields but also equips them with the personal, social, and interpersonal skills essential for success in their future careers. For a university to truly fulfill its mission, it must establish a unified commitment to a student-centered approach among its faculty and administration. This can be achieved by refining its administrative structures and management systems, ensuring that student-centered educational practices are effectively implemented. In doing so, the institution can better support students' development, monitor their academic progress, and provide meaningful assessments of their learning outcomes.

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