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Research on Methodological Innovation and Effectiveness Evaluation of "Three Entrances" in the "15th Five-Year Plan" for the "Economics" Course

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Abstract

Promoting the integration of the Party's innovative theories and national major strategies into textbooks, classrooms, and minds is a key aspect of universities fulfilling the fundamental task of cultivating students' moral character. However, the current integration of "Economics" courses into national medium- and long term plans generally faces structural challenges such as the disconnection between teaching content and value guidance, the "two skins" phenomenon of professional knowledge and ideological and political elements, and vague effectiveness evaluation. This paper takes the integration of the spirit of the 14th Five-Year Plan into "Economics" teaching as the starting point, proposes a teaching reform logic of "theory integration-situational construction-value internalization", and explains the innovative scheme from three dimensions: content integration, methodological approach, and evaluation system. It constructs a modular embedded teaching content system, a core teaching aid of macroeconomic decision-making simulation sandbox, and a "four-dimensional integrated" comprehensive evaluation model. The study believes that the key to achieving the paradigm shift from external embedding to endogenous integration lies in transforming planning concepts into analytical perspectives for economic theory teaching rather than supplementary cases. Through immersive situational teaching, students' embodied cognition and value recognition are facilitated, and process data and qualitative evidence are used to solve the observability problem of "entering minds".

Keywords

Curriculum-based Ideological and Political Education; Economics Teaching; 14th Five-Year Plan; Effectiveness Evaluation.

Introduction

General Secretary Xi Jinping clearly stated at the National Conference on Ideological and Political Work in Colleges and Universities that "we must adhere to the central task of cultivating students' moral character, integrate ideological and political work throughout the entire process of education and teaching, and achieve comprehensive education in all aspects." The "Guidelines for the Construction of Ideological and Political Education in Higher Education Institutions" issued by the Ministry of Education in 2020 further requires that "ideological and political education should be integrated into the talent cultivation system" and "all types of courses should align with ideological and political theory courses to form a synergistic effect." As a core basic course in economics and management majors, "Economics" bears the multiple missions of knowledge impartation, ability cultivation, and value guidance. After the Fourth Plenary Session of the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China deliberated and approved the suggestions for the 14th Five-Year Plan, how to effectively integrate the spirit of the plan into the entire process of economics teaching has become an urgent requirement for implementing the fundamental task of cultivating students' moral character and responding to the propositions of the times.

In fact, integrating the spirit of the 14th Five-Year Plan into teaching and research has become a frontier concern in academia. The project team of the Economic Strategy Yin et al. (2026) systematically expounded on the strategic connotation and implementation path of high-quality development during the 14th Five-Year Plan period from multiple key areas such as the development of advanced manufacturing, high-level opening up, and promoting common prosperity. This authoritative research provides profound theoretical support and content guidance for how the "Economics" course can transform major national strategies into specific teaching topics, highlighting the urgency of realizing the integration of the planning spirit into textbooks and classrooms in teaching.

However, for a long time, the economics education in Chinese universities has been deeply influenced by mainstream Western economics, forming a textbook system, teaching content, and discourse model centered around neoclassical economics. Shu et al. (2026) pointed out that there is a fundamental difference between the capital logic implied in Western economics and the "people-centered" position, and the construction of ideological and political education in economics courses faces a pronounced tendency towards "value dilution." The phenomenon of "two skins" is prominent, and the practical component is weak. Chen and Gu (2020) research further indicates that the current ideological and political education in economics courses faces issues such as a disconnect between teaching content and value guidance, teaching methods that do not meet educational needs, and inconsistency between teaching objectives and ideological and political requirements. Zhang and Kong (2024) pointed out from the perspective of teaching mode that the integration of ideological and political education into economics majors requires relying on the "training objectives-teacher (individual)-teaching and research office integration (team).

Luan (2022) pointed out that promoting the integration of the Party's innovative theories into textbooks, classrooms, and minds is an inevitable requirement for universities to fully implement the Party's educational policy and adhere to the socialist direction of education. It is also a key link in fulfilling the fundamental task of cultivating students' moral character. It is necessary to strengthen theoretical research based on the cutting-edge of the times and enhance textbooks based on political guidance. Strengthening curriculum construction based on the primary responsibility of teach ers and enhancing ideological and political innovation based on the central role of students.

A comprehensive review of existing research reveals that scholars have pri marily focused on the aspects of "mining ideological and political elements" and "case library construction". However, there is still a lack of systematic method ological discussions on how to deeply integrate national medium- and long-term plans into the economic theory teaching system and how to achieve a cognitive leap from knowledge impartation to value internalization. This paper seeks to make a breakthrough within this academic context: rather than being satisfied

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with the ex ternal embedding of planning content as teaching cases, it is dedicated to exploring its integration path as an analytical perspective inherent in the economic theory system, and attempts to construct a comprehensive evaluation framework encom passing "knowledge understanding- theoretical application- strategic thinking value recognition"

1. The Realistic Dilemma of the "Three Integrations" in the "Economics" Course

1.1. "Integration into Textbooks": The Break from "External Supplement" to "Endogenous Integration"

Currently, mainstream "Economics" textbooks often adopt a juxtaposition model of "theoretical explanation plus Chinese cases" when dealing with the rela tionship between Chinese practice and Western theory. Chen et al. (2024) point out that the teaching content of economics courses is mainly theoretical knowledge, which leads to issues such as the disconnection be tween theoretical teaching and practice, the lack of practical operation links, and the disconnection from real economic phenomena. Teachers focus too much on the impartation of theoretical knowledge, making it difficult for students to apply the learned theories to practical economic problems. The disconnection between theory and practice makes it difficult for students to develop learning interest, and they can only passively accept knowledge.

Addressing the dilemma of "integration into textbooks", Fang (2025) revealed the universality of the issue in his research. He pointed out that the current ide ological and political construction in economics courses lacks in-depth exploration of ideological and political elements, systematic organization, and flexible integra tion methods, resulting in the superficial implementation of ideological and political education in courses and failing to achieve the organic integration of professional theory and value guidance. Zhang and Lei (2025) also noted that mi croeconomics, as a core basic course in economics and management, has a complex theoretical system and abstract concepts, posing difficulties not only for students to understand but also for them to apply theory to practice. If teaching focuses solely on the derivation of theoretical models and neglects the guidance of humanistic care and social values behind economic phenomena, it is easy for students to weaken their consideration of "morality and ethics" and "social responsibility" in the pur suit of "economic rationality". Zou (2026) also found that the theoretical system of Western economics originates from the development process of Western capitalist society and carries distinct bourgeois ideology. Its research methods are difficult to break through the limitations of the rational person hypothesis and the vulgar mathematical orientation, making it difficult to effectively explain China's economic issues. Wen (2026) pointed out from the perspective of disci pline construction that although Chinese economics research extensively adopts the paradigm of Western economics, it mostly remains at the superficial level and fails to delve into the underlying logic. He proposed that when studying China's economic issues, we should transcend the complete rationality hypothesis of western economics, view micro-subjects as social beings with multiple goals, and consider the shaping of these subjects by traditional chinese culture and socialist core values; we should use individualistic methodology to a limited extent, emphasize the character istics of collective behavior and organizational behavior, and introduce collectivist analytical methods; we should combine equilibrium

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analysis with non-equilibrium analysis, and introduce evolutionary analysis and historical analysis. These critical reflections at the methodological level provide important theoretical support for the deep integration at the level of "integration into textbooks".

The aforementioned phenomenon of "two separate skins" has caused the "three integrations" to remain at the level of mechanical accumulation of content, rather than organic integration based on logic.

1.2. "Entering the Classroom": Barriers from "Passive Listening" to "Active Construction"

The current teaching methods primarily focus on teacher lectures and static case analysis, leaving students without hands-on experience with the complexity, dynamism, and strategic nature of macro strategies. Hu (2026) research indicates that Western economics teaching faces issues such as unreasonable schedul ing of professional lectures, lack of practical experience among teachers, monotonous teaching methods, and insufficient student motivation. Due to tight class schedules, teachers find it challenging to implement diversified teaching modes like case discus sions and flipped classrooms, and are forced to devote their main efforts to explaining basic theories and deriving models. The primary teaching method is lecture-based, relying heavily on PowerPoint presentations. Although advanced teaching methods like case teaching and scenario simulation are advocated, their practical application is limited. Students study merely to pass exams, lacking initiative in thinking and research, making it difficult for them to integrate various knowledge points.

This dilemma is universal. Yang and Wang (2018) also pointed out in their discussion of the case teaching method that the traditional teaching model is teacher centered, with students passively receiving knowledge. For economics courses with strong theoretical nature and abstract models, this can easily lead students to fall into rote memorization, making it difficult to stimulate their learning enthusiasm and active thinking. Deng et al. (2025) also found in their research in the context of vocational undergraduate education that one-way indoctrination remains the main stream, and practical links are weak, making it difficult for students to apply theory to solving practical problems, resulting in the dilemma of "disconnection between learning and application".

Liu (2025) further pointed out that traditional teaching methods limit students' opportunities for active exploration and self-expression, resulting in a lack of deep identification or belonging among students towards classroom content. In terms of integrating ideological and political dimensions, due to the lack of targeted communication design, students find it difficult to effectively link the knowledge they have learned with their own positions and values. Traditional teaching methods often focus too much on cultivating students' memorization and application abilities, neglecting students' subjectivity and participation, and lacking an environment for cultivating students' critical thinking abilities, making it difficult to meet the needs of ideological and political guidance in curriculum values.

Zhou (2025) provides another perspective from the perspective of crit ical thinking cultivation. By tracing the key theoretical evolution of psychological reflection on the "homo economicus hypothesis," empirical questioning of market conditions in the supply and demand principle, and the foundational subversion of the "Coase Theorem" on the nature and boundaries of the firm, he reveals that the history of Western economic theory is essentially an intellectual evolution driven by critical thinking, constantly breaking through theoretical dogmas, and promot ing paradigm innovation. This research indicates that integrating critical thinking systematically into Western economics courses is essentially an embodiment of the "trinity" educational philosophy of knowledge impartation, ability cultivation, and value guidance. However, this work has not yet received sufficient attention in practice.

Although some universities have begun to explore teaching innovations such as case teaching and flipped classrooms, these explorations still primarily focus on knowledge transfer and rational analysis, and have not truly addressed the funda mental issue of students being passive recipients in macro strategic learning.

1.3. "Entering the Mind": The Assessment Blind Spot from "Knowledge Assessment" to "Value Internalization"

The current assessment primarily focuses on memorizing knowledge points and theoretical calculations, emphasizing the memorization and reproduction of specific planning content and economic formulas. However, it fails to effectively evaluate whether students have truly developed planning thinking and value recognition. A study by Chen and Gu (2020) found that through ideological and political education integrated into courses, students' understanding of professional knowledge and national policies has been significantly enhanced. At least 91% of the respondents indicated that this integration significantly improved their understand ing of economic professional knowledge and their cognitive ability towards national policies. However, as warned by Shu et al. (2026), the phenomenon of "two skins" in the construction of ideological and political education integrated into economics courses has reduced it to a mere technical packaging or formal embellishment, failing to touch upon the essence of education. To achieve the transition from perceptual cognition to rational recognition, and from knowl edge learning to value internalization, it is urgent to construct an observable and verifiable evaluation system.

In the practice of ideological and political education integrated into courses at Hubei University of Economics, Zou (2026) found through a questionnaire survey that some students still lacked enthusiasm for learning. 28.38% of students indicated that they needed to spend time after class to keep up with the progress, and 4.05% of students found it difficult to keep up. Meanwhile, although 74.32% of students believed that case teaching was very meaningful, 40.54% of students felt that data collection work took up a lot of their after-class time, and 32.44% of students were not highly engaged due to club activities or pressure from grading exams. These data indicate that "entering the mind" not only faces the problem of lacking assessment methods but also encounters the practical challenge of insufficient student engagement depth.

2. Path Design for Methodological Innovation

2.1. "Incorporation into Textbooks": Modular Embedding and Theoretical Bridging

The key to breaking the "two skins" lies in completing the "theoretical bridg ing", which involves theoretically elucidating the dialogical relationship between na tional planning and classical economic theories. Specifically, based on the knowledge modules of the "Economics" course, the core concepts of the "14th Five-Year Plan" can be deconstructed and reorganized into a series of teaching topics: embedding the topic of government-market relations under the dual carbon goals in the market failure section; embedding the topic of the economic connotation and measurement of new productive forces in the economic growth section; and embedding the topic of fiscal and tax policies oriented towards common prosperity in the income dis tribution section. This modular embedding is not a simple pasting together, but aims to transform planning concepts into theoretical tools for analyzing real-world economic issues, achieving a natural transition and deep integration of knowledge points.

In terms of morphological innovation, a dynamic, flexible digital teaching re source package can be designed, continuously integrating the latest policy docu ments, authoritative data, and academic interpretations, enabling teachers to flexi bly access and combine them into personalized teaching materials according to the teaching progress.

2.2. "Entering the Classroom": Development of a Simulation Sand Table for Macroeconomic Decision-Makin

The "Macroeconomic Decision-Making Simulation Sand Table" is the method ological core of this project. Its design approach is based on the core objectives of the "15th Five-Year Plan" (such as GDP growth rate, R&D investment ratio, energy con sumption per unit of GDP, and Gini coefficient of residents' income) as constraints, simulating a simplified national economic system. Students are divided into groups to play the decision-making roles of the National Development and Reform Com mission, Ministry of Finance, Central Bank, local governments, etc., utilizing fiscal, monetary, and industrial policy tools for multi-period macroeconomic management, pursuing dynamic balance among multiple objectives.

Compared to traditional case teaching, the unique value of this sandbox lies in its uncertainty—students must adjust strategies in real-time in the face of dy namically changing economic environments, experiencing firsthand the trade-offs involved in policy formulation; its systematicness—students must coordinate mul tiple objectives such as short-term growth and long-term sustainability, efficiency and fairness, and local interests and global optimality; and its reversibility—macro policies that cannot be verified beforehand in reality can be repeatedly tested and corrected in a simulated environment, greatly reducing learning costs. This immer sive experience can transform abstract strategic concepts such as "national unity" and "coordinated development" into deep, embodied cognition for students, serving as a crucial bridge towards internalization.

2.3. "Entering the Mind": Construction of a Four-Dimensional Compre hensive Assessment Model

The assessment challenges of "Entering the Mind" need to be addressed through a method that combines process and summative evaluation. This study constructs an assessment framework that covers four dimensions: "knowledge understanding theoretical application-strategic thinking-value recognition":

Knowledge comprehension dimension: Assess the mastery of core economic concepts and planning content through standardized tests;

Theory application di mension: Evaluate students' ability to apply theoretical tools to explain real-world problems by analyzing their submitted policy analysis reports;

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Strategic thinking dimension: By analyzing students' process data in the sand table, such as policy combination preferences, goal prioritization, intertemporal choices, and shock response strategies, their systematic thinking, dynamic opti mization, and strategic foresight abilities are quantitatively assessed;

Value identity dimension: Through qualitative text analysis of reflection re ports and discussion speeches, combined with the "National Strategic Identity" scale, a comprehensive judgment is made on the depth and authenticity of value internal ization.

Among them, the evaluation methods of the latter two dimensions have broken through the limitations of traditional assessments, making the vague concept of "entering the mind" observable and testable, thereby enhancing the scientificity and persuasiveness of research results.

3. Conclusion

Integrating the spirit of the 14th Five-Year Plan into the "Economics" course is not simply a matter of political propaganda, but rather a profound academic exploration and teaching practice. Its fundamental proposition lies in achieving an organic unity between the theoretical logic of economics and the practical logic of China's development.Only by bridging the gap through theory to achieve deep inte gration at the theoretical level, facilitating students' embodied cognition and value internalization through situational construction, and testing the real effectiveness of "entering the mind" through empirical evaluation, can we truly achieve a paradigm shift from external embedding to endogenous integration. This is not only an in herent requirement for deepening the reform of ideological and political education in courses, but also an important path for cultivating new-era economic and man agement talents with both theoretical literacy and national sentiment. Facing the 14th Five-Year Plan, economics education should proactively align with national strategic needs, continue to invest in talent cultivation model innovation and teach ing system reconstruction, and contribute to building an independent knowledge system of economics with Chinese characteristics and serving the Chinese path to modernization.

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