



Cultivating Foreign-Related Rule of Law Talent Through Curriculum Ideological Education: A Systematic Analysis of International Law Pedagogy in Chinese Higher Education

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Abstract

The integration of ideological and political education into professional curricula represents a distinctive feature of contemporary Chinese higher education reform. This paper examines curriculum ideological-political education (*kecheng sizheng*) within international law courses, analyzing how Chinese universities navigate the complex relationship between professional legal training and values formation. Drawing on a systematic analysis of 47 scholarly articles from Chinese academic databases and situating this reform within broader international trends in legal pedagogy, this study reveals both theoretical justifications and practical challenges inherent in combining technical legal education with political socialization. The research identifies four central dimensions: disciplinary alignment between international law content and ideological objectives, methodological adaptations for effective implementation, persistent challenges related to faculty competence and curriculum integration, and evolving assessment mechanisms. The findings suggest that curriculum ideological-political education operates at the intersection of multiple tensions between nationalism and internationalism, between political socialization and critical thinking, and between Chinese particularism and universal professional standards. By examining this phenomenon through comparative lenses, this paper contributes to understanding how different national contexts generate distinctive approaches to integrating ethics and professional formation within legal education, offering insights into broader questions about the relationship between law, politics, and education in contemporary China.

Keywords: Curriculum Ideological-Political Education in China; International Law Pedagogy; Legal Education Reform; Foreign-Related Rule of Law Talent; Values Education

1. Introduction

Legal education, despite progress, still confronts questions about its purposes and methods across diverse national contexts. Fundamentally, should law schools primarily transmit doctrinal knowledge and

technical skills, or do they bear responsibility for cultivating particular dispositions, values, and forms of professional identity among future lawyers (Longan et al., 2019; Sullivan et al., 2007)? Further, how should legal educators balance competing demands for civic engagement, ethical formation, and specialized expertise? These enduring tensions have intensified in recent decades as globalization and technological transformation place new demands upon legal professionals and the institutions that prepare them (O'Sullivan & McNamara, 2015; Twining, 2001). Different nations have developed divergent responses to these challenges, reflecting distinct legal cultures, educational philosophies, and political systems (e.g., Ding, 2010; Wang, 2002). China's contemporary experiment with curriculum ideological-political education (kecheng sizheng) in international law courses provides a particularly revealing case for examining how one national context addresses these tensions through an explicit integration of political socialization into professional legal training (Ministry of Education, 2020). This phenomenon, mandated through national policy and implemented across Chinese universities since 2020, represents an ambitious attempt to systematically infuse ideological content throughout the curriculum, significantly reconceptualizing the relationship between political education and professional formation in ways that challenge conventional distinctions between neutral knowledge transmission and value-laden moral cultivation.

The emergence of curriculum ideological-political education should be understood against the backdrop of China's distinctive approach to higher education governance, which subordinates academic institutions to political leadership under the Chinese Communist Party's comprehensive control of ideological work (Xi, 2016). President Xi Jinping's emphatic call to make all courses "carry the burden of ideological and political education" crystallized into concrete policy through the 2020 Guiding Outline for Curriculum Ideological and Political Education Construction, which mandated that universities systematically embed ideological content across all disciplines (Ministry of Education, 2020). This policy framework reflects China's determination to ensure that higher education serves political objectives by cultivating socialist builders and successors who embody correct political consciousness. International law courses have become particularly important sites for implementing curriculum ideological-political education given the discipline's natural engagement with questions of sovereignty, international order, and China's role in global governance (Fan, 2025; He, 2021; Zhou, 2023). As China's international engagement deepens through initiatives such as the Belt and Road Initiative and its increasingly assertive participation in multilateral institutions (J. Wang, 2019), the cultivation of what Chinese policy documents term "foreign-related rule of law talent" (shewai fazhi rencai) has acquired strategic importance (Du, 2020; Xie, 2021). These professionals must deal with complex interactions between domestic and international legal frameworks, requiring not only technical competence in international law but also firm political commitments aligned with national interests (S. Wang, 2024). Thus, curriculum ideological-political education in international law courses operates at a crucial intersection, tasked with producing legal professionals who can effectively represent Chinese interests internationally without being seduced by what the Chinese government perceives as dangerous Western liberal values embedded in international legal discourse (Ma, 2023).

This paper undertakes a systematic examination of how Chinese universities implement curriculum ideological-political education within international law courses, analyzing both the theoretical justifications advanced for this integration and the practical challenges educators confront in execution. The analysis draws on 47 scholarly articles published in Chinese academic journals between 2020 and 2025, which constitute the primary corpus of Chinese scholarship addressing this topic. These articles, retrieved through systematic searches of China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) using keywords related to international law and curriculum ideological-political education, provide insight into how Chinese legal educators conceptualize and navigate the demands of this reform. To contextualize the Chinese approach within broader global trends, this study also engages international scholarship on legal education reform, professional identity formation, values education, and the internationalization of legal

curricula. This comparative perspective reveals both resonances and divergences between Chinese curriculum ideological-political education and approaches to integrating ethics and professional formation in other national contexts, illuminating how different institutional arrangements and political systems shape the relationship between legal knowledge and moral cultivation.

The research questions guiding this analysis address multiple dimensions of curriculum ideological-political education in international law. First, what theoretical justifications do Chinese scholars advance for integrating ideological education into international law courses, and how do these rationales relate to broader debates about legal education's purposes? Second, what specific pedagogical approaches and content adaptations have Chinese educators developed to implement curriculum ideological-political education, and what challenges emerge in practice? Third, how do faculty members navigate the tensions between their roles as transmitters of international legal knowledge and cultivators of particular political commitments? Fourth, what assessment mechanisms have institutions established to evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum ideological-political education, and what do these reveal about competing conceptions of educational success? Finally, how does the Chinese approach to integrating values formation within legal education compare with international trends in legal pedagogy, and what insights does this comparison offer for understanding diverse national models of professional formation? Addressing these questions requires attention to both the official discourse articulated in policy documents and scholarly publications, and the practical realities that emerge as educators attempt to translate abstract mandates into concrete pedagogical practices.

Accordingly, the significance of this research extends beyond understanding a particular Chinese educational reform to illuminate broader theoretical questions about how professional education mediates between competing social demands and political imperatives. Legal education operates at a complex intersection of multiple institutional logics including academic autonomy emphasizing disciplinary integrity and intellectual freedom, professional regulation emphasizing competence and ethical standards, market pressures emphasizing employment outcomes and practical skills, and political authority emphasizing ideological conformity and social control. Different national contexts weigh these competing logics differently, generating distinctive arrangements that shape what educators can accomplish and what tensions they must confront. Chinese curriculum ideological-political education represents an explicit assertion of political authority over academic autonomy, subordinating disciplinary considerations to ideological objectives in ways that challenge liberal assumptions about university independence from state control. However, examining how Chinese educators negotiate this subordination reveals that implementation proves more complex than simple top-down imposition, as faculty members exercise agency in interpreting mandates and students resist or accommodate ideological messages in ways that official discourse does not fully capture. These dynamics suggest that spaces exist for negotiation and adaptation, complicating simplistic narratives of total ideological domination.

2. Literature Review

Global Trends in Legal Education Reform and Values Formation

Legal education systems worldwide have undergone substantial transformations over recent decades, reflecting shifting understandings of what lawyers need to know and be able to do in increasingly complex professional environments. International scholarship on legal pedagogy has identified several major trends that reshape how universities conceptualize and deliver legal education. The internationalization of legal curricula has emerged as a central concern, driven by recognition that contemporary legal practice frequently transcends national boundaries (Chesterman, 2009; O'Sullivan & McNamara, 2017). Law schools in Australia, Europe, and North America have responded by

mainstreaming international and comparative perspectives throughout their programs, exposing students to diverse legal traditions and transnational regulatory frameworks (Siems, 2022). This internationalization extends beyond merely adding courses on international law to fundamentally reconceptualizing legal education as preparation for practice in a globalized world where lawyers must navigate multiple jurisdictions and cultural contexts. Research demonstrates that exposure to international perspectives can enhance critical thinking by demonstrating that particular legal problems admit of multiple solutions reflecting different values and institutional arrangements. This view is strongly supported by scholarship documenting how internationalization requires deep curricular redesign to prepare lawyers for transnational practice rather than merely adding comparative content (Jamin & van Caenegem, 2016). However, critics have raised concerns about whether internationalization initiatives adequately attend to power dynamics, particularly the continued dominance of Anglo-American legal models and the marginalization of non-Western legal traditions within ostensibly global curricula. These concerns are echoed in empirical and theoretical analyses noting that internationalized curricula often reproduce Western, especially Anglo-American, epistemic frameworks while limiting meaningful engagement with Global South legal traditions (Guth & Hervey, 2018; Islam, 2024).

Alongside internationalization, legal education reform has increasingly emphasized the cultivation of professional identity and ethical awareness beyond traditional doctrinal instruction. The Carnegie Foundation's influential critique of American legal education argued that law schools had become excessively focused on analytical thinking at the expense of practical wisdom and moral formation (Sullivan et al., 2007). This sparked renewed attention to what some scholars term "professional identity formation", understood as a developmental process through which students progressively internalize the values, commitments, and dispositions characteristic of excellent lawyers (N. W. Hamilton et al., 2012; N. W. Hamilton & Bilonis, 2022; Longan et al., 2019). Professional identity formation encompasses more than simply learning rules of professional conduct or passing ethics examinations. It involves cultivating what Aristotle termed practical wisdom (*phronesis*), the capacity to make sound judgments in complex situations that resist reduction to algorithmic application of rules. Empirical research has demonstrated that explicit attention to professional identity formation throughout the curriculum can positively influence students' ethical sensibilities and career trajectories, although the mechanisms through which such influence operates remain debated (N. W. Hamilton et al., 2012). Some scholars advocate experiential learning through clinical programs and externships as particularly effective means of fostering professional identity, as students confront the ethical complexities of actual legal practice rather than abstract hypotheticals (Hartwell, 1990; Nicolson, 2010; Sullivan et al., 2007). Others emphasize the importance of faculty modeling ethical behavior and cultivating classroom environments that encourage reflective discussion of values and professional responsibilities (N. Hamilton & Monson, 2011; Lerman, 1998).

Decolonization and critical approaches to legal pedagogy have gained prominence, particularly regarding international law teaching. Scholars have argued that conventional international law curricula reproduce Eurocentric narratives that naturalize colonial hierarchies and obscure the violent foundations of the contemporary international legal order (Anghie, 2007; Eslava & Pahuja, 2012). For example, recent analyses show that mainstream international law textbooks continue to center European historiographies and marginalize Global South perspectives (Al Attar, 2021; Mbengue & Akinkugbe, 2023). This critique extends beyond content to encompass pedagogical methods, as traditional approaches that emphasize doctrinal mastery and system-building may inadvertently discourage the critical interrogation necessary for students to apprehend international law's complicity in perpetuating global inequalities. Critical pedagogues, therefore, call for curriculum redesign that decouples international law teaching from Eurocentric epistemic frameworks and incorporates colonial history, Global South voices, and structural critique (Burgis-Kasthala & Schwobel-Patel, 2022). Proposed reforms include centering perspectives from the Global South, attending seriously to Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL)

scholarship, incorporating historical analysis that excavates international law's colonial origins, and creating space for students to critically examine how international legal doctrines have operated to facilitate or constrain various emancipatory projects. Empirical studies of TWAIL-based curriculum implementations suggest that such pedagogies foster critical consciousness among students, challenging hegemonic assumptions about international law's neutrality (Ezirigwe, 2024). However, some scholars have cautioned that decolonization discourse can itself become a form of academic fashion that ultimately reinforces rather than challenges existing power structures, particularly when implemented through superficial curricular adjustments that leave deeper institutional arrangements unchanged (Al Attar & Abdelkarim, 2023). The relationship between critical pedagogy and professional training also generates tensions, as some worry that excessive emphasis on critique may leave students insufficiently equipped with the technical competencies required for effective practice — a concern that assumes particular salience in international law where lawyers must often work within existing institutional frameworks even as they may harbor critical perspectives regarding those frameworks' legitimacy or justice.

Values Education and Moral Formation in Professional Training

Debates about values education intersect with but extend beyond specifically legal contexts, as educational institutions across disciplines grapple with questions about their responsibilities for moral formation. Three theoretical traditions dominate contemporary scholarship on values education in professional training. The cognitive-developmental approach, rooted in Kohlberg's stage theory and operationalized through Rest's Four Component Model, conceptualizes moral development as progression through increasingly sophisticated reasoning schemas—from self-interest through social convention toward principled ethical thinking (Rest et al., 1999). This framework undergirds the Defining Issues Test, the most widely used empirical measure in the field, with over 172 studies documenting its application to professional students (King & Mayhew, 2002). A second tradition draws on virtue ethics and MacIntyre's concept of professional practices as communities pursuing "internal goods" through excellence rather than merely external rewards of money and status (MacIntyre, 1981). This approach emphasizes character formation and practical wisdom over rule-following, arguing that professionals must develop stable dispositions, namely courage, integrity, and compassion, to navigate ethical complexity (Gentry & Fleshman, 2020). Medical education scholars Pellegrino and Thomasma (1993) influentially applied this framework, distinguishing between physicians who merely "do good" and those who cultivate the character to "be good". The third and increasingly prominent framework centers on professional identity formation—the developmental process through which students internalize professional values, coming to "think, act, and feel" as members of their profession (R. L. Cruess et al., 2014). This approach, grounded in communities of practice theory (S. R. Cruess et al., 2019), treats ethics not as external constraints but as constitutive of professional selfhood. The 2022 revision of ABA Standard 303 mandating "substantial opportunities" for professional identity development signals professional identity formation's growing institutional recognition (Weyenberg, 2022).

Besides, meta-analyses consistently find that ethics education produces small to moderate effects on moral reasoning, with important moderators shaping outcomes (Antes et al., 2009). Watts et al.'s (2017) comprehensive review of 66 studies encompassing over 10,000 participants found ethics instruction generates "sizable benefits", with effectiveness improving markedly over the past decade. Case-based, interactive pedagogies outperform passive approaches; stand-alone courses prove more effective than embedded ethics content (Antes et al., 2009); and interventions of 3-12 weeks duration optimize outcomes (Schlaefli et al., 1985). However, professional education's effects on moral development are not uniformly positive. Longitudinal research by Sheldon and Krieger (2004, 2007) documented that law students entered school with well-being levels higher than comparison groups, only to see their psychological health "plummet" by first year's end. Medical education research similarly finds moral competence may stagnate or decline during clinical training (Martins et al., 2021), attributed

partly to the “hidden curriculum”, that is, implicit messages conveyed through institutional culture, role modeling, and resource allocation (Lawrence et al., 2018) that may contradict formal ethics teaching (Hafferty & Franks, 1994).

The literature thus reveals a field in transition: from debates about whether ethics can be taught toward questions of how to cultivate professional character most effectively; from isolated ethics courses toward integrated, longitudinal approaches; and from measuring moral reasoning toward assessing identity formation. These scholarly developments provide essential context for understanding how different national systems, shaped by distinct philosophical traditions and institutional structures, approach the fundamental challenge of forming ethical professionals.

Chinese Scholarship on Curriculum Ideological-Political Education in International Law

Chinese scholarly discourse on curriculum ideological-political education in international law courses reveals a distinctive conceptual framework that differs substantially from international debates on legal education reform, though with some unexpected resonances. The theoretical justifications advanced by Chinese scholars for integrating ideological content into international law teaching typically begin from the discipline’s inherent characteristics rather than from external political mandates, suggesting efforts to ground the reform in pedagogical logic rather than simply political necessity. Fan (2025) argues that international law’s subject matter naturally aligns with ideological education objectives, as the discipline necessarily engages with questions of national sovereignty, territorial integrity, international justice, and China’s role in global governance. This argument frames curriculum ideological-political education not as an artificial imposition of political content upon neutral technical subject matter, but rather as making explicit the values and commitments already implicit in international legal discourse. Such reasoning parallels arguments in Western legal scholarship about international law’s inescapably political character, albeit Chinese scholars draw different normative conclusions from this recognition, emphasizing national interests rather than cosmopolitan values or critical deconstruction. He (2021) develops this line of argument by examining specific substantive areas within international law, identifying how different topics naturally connect to ideological themes such as sovereignty (in discussions of state recognition and succession), human rights (in navigating tensions between universal standards and cultural particularity), and global governance (in analyzing international organizations and multilateral cooperation). These substantive connections provide touchpoints through which educators can weave ideological content into otherwise technical legal analysis.

Beyond disciplinary characteristics, Chinese scholars emphasize the strategic importance of international law education for cultivating what policy documents term “foreign-related rule of law talent” capable of effectively representing Chinese interests in international legal forums. Xie (2021) situates curriculum ideological-political education within broader initiatives to strengthen China’s foreign-related rule of law capacity, arguing that as China’s international engagement deepens, the nation requires legal professionals who combine technical expertise in international law with firm political commitments to socialist values and national development objectives. This framing positions curriculum ideological-political education as serving pragmatic strategic goals rather than merely ideological conformity, suggesting that effective international legal representation requires not only mastering international legal doctrine but also developing capacity to articulate Chinese positions in ways that resonate within international discourse without compromising core principles. The emphasis on cultivating both professional competence and correct political consciousness reflects a persistent tension in Chinese legal education between technical training and political socialization, a tension that curriculum ideological-political education seeks to resolve through integrated rather than separate approaches. Wang (2024) explicates this integration through the concept of “moral and legal cultivation” (*de fa jianxiu*), arguing that excellent lawyers must embody both professional expertise and moral virtue, with the latter

understood to encompass political loyalty, social responsibility, and commitment to serving people rather than merely pursuing personal gain. This framework draws upon Confucian traditions emphasizing moral cultivation alongside technical learning, though inflected through Marxist-Leninist concepts of serving the party and people.

Chinese scholarship also reveals considerable attention to practical challenges that emerge in implementing curriculum ideological-political education within international law courses. Multiple studies document difficulties related to content integration, as educators struggle to organically incorporate ideological elements without creating artificial separation between professional and political dimensions of the curriculum (Zhou, 2023). This challenge appears particularly acute in international law given the discipline's reliance on multilateral treaties and customary international law developed largely without Chinese participation, creating potential tensions between international legal doctrine and Chinese political positions. Scholars identify the risk of "two skins" (liang zhang pi) phenomenon, wherein ideological content and professional knowledge appear as separate, poorly integrated layers rather than organic unity. Ma (2023) suggests that avoiding this requires educators to deeply understand both international law and ideological theory, enabling them to identify genuine connections rather than forcing superficial juxtapositions. However, this expectation places substantial demands upon faculty members, many of whom lack formal training in Marxist theory or experience with ideological work beyond their technical legal specializations. Multiple studies document faculty members' limited enthusiasm for curriculum ideological-political education, with some viewing it as a political burden imposed from above rather than a genuine pedagogical improvement (Zhu, 2020). This resistance or ambivalence appears related to several factors including generational differences, disciplinary socialization emphasizing technical expertise over political engagement, and concerns that excessive emphasis on ideology may compromise rigorous legal analysis.

3. Methodology

This research employs systematic literature analysis as its primary methodological approach, examining how Chinese legal educators conceptualize and implement curriculum ideological-political education through analysis of published scholarly articles (Table 1). The corpus consists of 47 articles retrieved through systematic searches of the CNKI, the most comprehensive Chinese academic database, using multiple keyword combinations including "international law and curriculum ideological-political education", "international public law and curriculum ideology", "international economic law and ideological education", "international private law and moral and political education", "foreign-related rule of law and curriculum ideology", and related terms. This search strategy, conducted in multiple rounds between August 2025 and October 2025, initially identified 65 potentially relevant articles. Subsequent screening excluded articles that mentioned curriculum ideological-political education only tangentially without substantive analysis, resulting in the final corpus of 47 articles published between 2020 and 2025. These articles represent the primary body of Chinese scholarship explicitly addressing curriculum ideological-political education in international law contexts, as the phenomenon itself only emerged as a distinct policy priority following the 2020 Guiding Outline. The concentration of publications from 2020 onward reflects how policy mandates generate scholarly attention, as Chinese academics respond to state directives by producing research that both supports implementation and explores challenges.

Table 1 Methodological Characteristics

Article Characteristics	Description
Data Source	CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure)
Search Keywords	“国际法 课程思政”, “国际法 思政”, “国际公法 课程思政”, “国际公法 思政”, “国际经济法 课程思政”, “国际经济法 思政”, “国际私法 课程思政”, “国际私法 思政”, “涉外法治 课程思政”, “涉外法治 思政”
Initial Results	65 articles
Screening Criteria	Articles with curriculum ideological-political education as core research content (not merely mentioned)
Final Sample	47 articles
Exclusion Reason	18 articles excluded for only mentioning curriculum ideological-political education tangentially rather than as primary focus
Article Types	Journal articles, conference papers
Language	Chinese
Analysis Unit	Individual article

Analysis of these articles employed qualitative thematic coding techniques to identify recurring patterns, arguments, and concerns across the corpus (Table 2). Initial open coding generated numerous preliminary themes, which were subsequently organized into higher-order categories through iterative comparison and refinement. This process identified four major thematic clusters that structure the analysis presented in subsequent sections: theoretical justifications for curriculum ideological-political education in international law, pedagogical approaches and content adaptations, challenges and difficulties encountered in implementation, and assessment mechanisms and effectiveness evaluation. Within each thematic cluster, attention focused on both explicit arguments and implicit assumptions, recognizing that scholarly discourse reveals as much through what it takes for granted as through what it explicitly debates. Particular attention was paid to tensions and contradictions within the corpus, as disagreements or conflicting prescriptions often illuminate underlying dilemmas that unified policy mandates obscure. The analysis also attended to absences and silences, noting topics that international scholarship on legal education addresses extensively but that appear rarely or not at all in Chinese discussions of curriculum ideological-political education, as these lacunae illuminate distinctive features of the Chinese approach.

Table 2: Descriptive Information about the Literature Dataset (n=47)

Characteristic	Category/Details	Number	Percentage
Total Articles		47	100%
By Course Focus			
	General International Law	15	31.9%
	International Public Law	8	17.0%
	International Economic Law	10	21.3%
	International Private Law	5	10.6%
	Specialized courses (Maritime, Space, etc.)	4	8.5%
	Foreign-related rule of law talent cultivation	5	10.6%
By Main Theme			
	Teaching methodology and reform	18	38.3%
	Theoretical rationale and principles	12	25.5%
	Implementation pathways and strategies	11	23.4%
	Challenges and obstacles	6	12.8%
By Research Approach			
	Conceptual/theoretical analysis	25	53.2%
	Case study/practical exploration	15	31.9%
	Mixed approach	7	14.9%

To contextualize Chinese scholarship within broader international debates, this research engaged relevant English-language literature on legal education reform, professional identity formation, values education, and international law pedagogy through systematic searches of academic databases including Google Scholar, JSTOR, Westlaw, and university library catalogs. This comparative literature review sought to identify both resonances and divergences between Chinese approaches and international trends, enabling analysis of how different national contexts generate distinctive responses to similar underlying challenges regarding law's relationship to values and legal education's responsibilities for moral formation. The comparative perspective adopted here does not assume that any particular national model represents a universal standard against which others should be measured. Rather, comparison serves to denaturalize taken-for-granted assumptions and illuminate how institutional arrangements, political systems, and cultural traditions shape educational practices in ways that participants may not fully recognize. This methodological stance reflects recognition that evaluating curriculum ideological-political education requires understanding it on its own terms as a coherent response to particular circumstances, rather than simply applauding or condemning it according to criteria drawn from different contexts. At the same time, comparison can reveal tensions and tradeoffs that educators confront regardless of context, even as specific manifestations and resolutions differ.

4. Findings

Theoretical Foundations: Disciplinary Characteristics and Policy Imperatives

Analysis of the Chinese literature reveals that scholars construct theoretical justifications for curriculum ideological-political education in international law through a dual logic that combines disciplinary characteristics with policy imperatives, attempting to demonstrate both internal pedagogical necessity and external political demands (Fan, 2025; He, 2021; S. Wang, 2024; Zhou, 2023). This dual justification strategy suggests scholarly efforts to legitimize the reform not merely as compliance with political mandates but as coherent educational practice rooted in international law's distinctive features. The disciplinary justification centers on international law's subject matter, which unavoidably engages with sovereignty, territorial integrity, international cooperation, and global governance arrangements that directly implicate state interests and ideological commitments (Chen, 2020; Cui, 2021; L. Zhang, 2020). Fan (2025) exemplifies this reasoning by arguing that international law inherently involves tensions between sovereignty and interdependence, national interests and international cooperation, legal principles and power politics. These tensions render international law particularly suitable for ideological education because students must develop frameworks for navigating competing values and interests, frameworks that inevitably reflect particular political and ethical commitments rather than neutral technical analysis (Hai & Meng, 2021). The content of international law naturally raises questions about legitimate authority, the appropriate use of force, obligations toward non-citizens, and the relative weight of different values, such as stability, justice, and self-determination. Chinese scholars argue that ignoring these normative dimensions would provide an incomplete and potentially misleading education in international law, suggesting that some form of values education necessarily accompanies competent international legal training, regardless of whether educators explicitly acknowledge this dimension (Su, 2021).

The specific ideological content that Chinese curriculum reform seeks to integrate reflects distinctive political commitments rooted in Marxism-Leninism as adapted to Chinese circumstances, emphasizing socialist values, national sovereignty, and the Chinese Communist Party's leadership. He (2021) systematically catalogues how different substantive areas within international law connect to particular ideological themes. Discussions of state sovereignty and territorial integrity naturally raise issues of national dignity and historical injustices during the "century of humiliation" when imperialist

powers imposed unequal treaties upon China. International human rights law provides opportunities to contrast Western individualism with Chinese emphasis on collective welfare and social stability. International environmental law can illustrate tensions between developed and developing nations' responsibilities for addressing climate change, connecting to the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" that China champions. The law of the sea offers occasions to discuss maritime territorial disputes and China's position on freedom of navigation operations conducted by foreign naval forces in waters China claims. Throughout these substantive connections, the ideological framework emphasizes China's historical experiences, contemporary development challenges, and aspirations for national rejuvenation. This framework positions China simultaneously as victim of historical injustices perpetuated through international legal instruments serving imperialist interests, as responsible rising power committed to multilateralism and peaceful development, and as civilization-state offering alternative models of governance and development that challenge Western hegemony in international discourse.

Beyond disciplinary characteristics, Chinese scholars ground curriculum ideological-political education in strategic imperatives related to cultivating foreign-related rule of law talent (Fang & Shi, 2025; Pan & Xu, 2024; Q. Zhang & Gao, 2023). This justification reflects recognition that China's expanding international engagement generates increasing demand for legal professionals capable of effectively operating in international legal forums, negotiating treaties, representing state interests in disputes, and advising on cross-border transactions. However, mere technical competence in international law proves insufficient from the perspective articulated in Chinese scholarship (Hua, 2024). Effective representation of Chinese interests internationally requires legal professionals who combine procedural knowledge of international legal frameworks with substantive commitment to national objectives as defined by the party-state (Xie, 2021). This conception reflects concerns that exposure to international legal education, particularly if obtained through overseas study, might lead Chinese lawyers to internalize Western liberal values that conflict with socialist principles and party leadership. Curriculum ideological-political education thus functions as a prophylactic against ideological contamination, ensuring that, even as students master international legal doctrine developed largely in Western contexts, they maintain a critical distance rooted in firm political commitments. The emphasis on cultivating both professional expertise and correct political consciousness reveals underlying tensions about whether these objectives can be genuinely harmonized or whether inevitable tradeoffs exist between rigorous engagement with international legal reasoning and maintenance of predetermined ideological positions.

The specific pedagogical mechanisms through which curriculum ideological-political education operates reveal sophisticated attempts to integrate ideological content organically rather than through crude indoctrination (Su, 2021; Zhou, 2023). Chinese scholarship distinguishes between explicit and implicit approaches to ideological education, recognizing that heavy-handed political messaging risks alienating students and undermining pedagogical effectiveness. Explicit approaches involve directly discussing political principles, party policies, and ideological frameworks within course content, making clear connections between international legal topics and ideological themes. For instance, when teaching about the United Nations Charter's principles of sovereign equality and non-interference in internal affairs, educators might explicitly discuss how these principles reflect Chinese diplomatic positions and contrast with Western interventionist practices justified through humanitarian or democratic promotion rationales. Implicit approaches involve carefully selecting cases, examples, and analytical frameworks that subtly reinforce desired political messages without explicitly articulating ideological content. This might include emphasizing cases where international legal principles supported Chinese interests, choosing readings that highlight Western hypocrisy or double standards, or structuring discussions to guide students toward particular conclusions about international law's relationship to power and justice (L. Zhang, 2020). The balance between explicit and implicit approaches generates ongoing debate among Chinese educators, with some arguing that explicit political content provides necessary clarity about

educational objectives and others concerned that excessive explicitness produces student resistance or cynicism that undermines genuine value internalization.

Pedagogical Approaches: Content Integration and Methodological Adaptations

The Chinese literature documents diverse pedagogical approaches that educators have developed for implementing curriculum ideological-political education within international law courses (Ma, 2023; Y. Song, 2023; S. Wang, 2024; Zhou, 2023). These approaches generally emphasize organic integration of ideological content with substantive legal analysis rather than treating moral and political education as separate curricular component (Yi et al., 2024). The concept of “organic integration” appears repeatedly throughout the literature, suggesting scholarly consensus that effective curriculum ideological-political education requires seamless weaving of ideological themes into legal discussions rather than artificial juxtaposition (Zhu, 2020). However, achieving this integration proves challenging in practice, as evidenced by persistent concerns about the “two skins” phenomenon wherein ideological and professional content appear as disconnected layers (Feng, 2023). Ma (2023) proposes a systematic framework for content integration organized around specific learning objectives within each major substantive area of international law. For example, when teaching the sources of international law, educators should help students understand that treaties and customary international law reflect particular power configurations and historical circumstances, developing capacity to critically examine how international legal rules privilege certain states’ interests (Chen, 2020; Cui, 2021). This critical perspective, however, operates quite differently from critical approaches developed in Western legal scholarship, as Chinese curriculum ideological-political education seeks to cultivate nationalist commitments rather than cosmopolitan solidarity or Third World internationalism (Fang & Shi, 2025). The pedagogical challenge involves helping students recognize international law’s political dimensions without simply reducing legal analysis to naked power calculations that would undermine international law’s legitimacy and utility (Jiang, 2022).

Case-based teaching emerges as the pedagogical method most frequently endorsed in Chinese literature for implementing curriculum ideological-political education (Y. Song, 2023). Multiple scholars advocate selecting cases that simultaneously illustrate international legal principles and demonstrate Chinese positions on contentious issues. Zhou (2023) provides detailed guidance on case selection criteria, arguing that effective cases should present genuine legal complexity requiring careful analysis rather than obvious applications of clear rules, should implicate Chinese interests in ways that permit meaningful discussion of how to effectively represent those interests, and should offer opportunities for students to appreciate tensions between different legitimate values rather than simplistic morality tales (Hai & Meng, 2021; Jiang, 2022). The 2021 Meng Wanzhou extradition case receives particular attention in the literature as exemplifying these characteristics. This case involved complex questions about the principles and procedures of extradition law, raised issues of extraterritorial jurisdiction and political interference in ostensibly legal proceedings, and generated widespread public attention in China. Educators can use this case to teach technical aspects of extradition law regarding dual criminality requirements, political offense exceptions, and specialty principles, simultaneously fostering critical examination of how legal procedures can be instrumentalized for political purposes and appreciation for legal protections that constrain arbitrary state action (Fan, 2025; He, 2021; Hua, 2024). Nevertheless, the pedagogical deployment of such cases risks reducing them to vehicles for predetermined political lessons rather than genuinely open-ended inquiries, a tension that Chinese scholarship acknowledges but does not fully resolve (Su, 2021). The literature suggests varying approaches to managing this tension, with some scholars emphasizing structured discussion frameworks that guide students toward desired conclusions and others advocating more open-ended exploration that trusts students’ capacity to draw appropriate lessons from careful case analysis (Cui, 2021; Ma, 2023).

Beyond the case method, Chinese scholars advocate for simulation exercises, including moot courts, mock negotiations, and model United Nations activities, as particularly effective pedagogical approaches for curriculum ideological-political education. Li and Deng (2024) argues that experiential learning through simulations provides opportunities for students to internalize professional norms and ethical commitments through practice rather than abstract instruction. Moot court competitions focusing on international law topics allow students to research legal arguments, develop advocacy strategies, and experience the dynamics of adversarial proceedings in ways that classroom lectures cannot replicate. Model United Nations exercises enable students to understand how international organizations function, appreciate perspectives of different states, and practice diplomatic communication skills. From a curriculum ideological-political education perspective, these simulations offer particular advantages by requiring students to represent Chinese positions and develop arguments grounded in Chinese interests, thereby cultivating the capacity for effective representation rather than merely theoretical understanding. However, questions arise about whether simulations that require students to adopt particular positions genuinely develop critical thinking or instead reinforce conformity through constrained role-playing. The literature suggests that educators view simulations as opportunities for students to understand the practical challenges of advancing Chinese interests within existing international legal frameworks, developing pragmatic skills rather than encouraging fundamental critique of those frameworks' legitimacy or justice.

The role of practical training components within curriculum ideological-political education merits particular attention, as experiential learning provides distinctive opportunities for value formation that classroom instruction alone cannot replicate (Gao, 2024). Chinese scholars emphasize the importance of externship programs, legal clinics, and internships as sites where students encounter real-world applications of international law that illuminate connections between legal principles and practical consequences. When students participate in moot court competitions focused on international law disputes, they must research how states actually argue international legal questions, developing an appreciation for the strategic dimensions of legal reasoning that transcends abstract doctrinal analysis. Model United Nations simulations require students to represent particular states' positions in multilateral negotiations, experiencing firsthand the tensions between principled legal arguments and pragmatic political considerations that characterize actual international relations. Legal clinics focusing on foreign-related matters, such as cross-border investment disputes or international commercial arbitration, provide exposure to how international legal frameworks operate in commercial contexts where clients' interests drive legal strategy rather than aspirations for international justice. These experiential components potentially reinforce ideological messages more effectively than classroom lectures precisely because students discover political dimensions of international law through their own practice rather than simply being told about such dimensions, a pedagogical dynamic that aligns with constructivist learning theories emphasizing active knowledge construction over passive information reception.

Implementation Challenges: Faculty Capacity and Institutional Constraints

Chinese scholarship documents substantial challenges that educators confront in implementing curriculum ideological-political education within international law courses, challenges that reveal tensions between policy aspirations and practical realities (Fan, 2025; S. Wang, 2024). Faculty capacity emerges as the most frequently cited obstacle, as international law professors typically possess specialized technical expertise but limited training in ideological theory or moral pedagogy (Feng, 2023; Y. Song, 2023; S. Wang, 2024). The Chinese legal education system has historically emphasized disciplinary knowledge over pedagogical preparation, with most law professors having completed research-focused doctoral programs that provided minimal instruction in teaching methods or educational theory (He, 2021; Su, 2021; Zhou, 2023). This disciplinary socialization leaves many faculty members feeling inadequately equipped to effectively integrate ideological content into their courses, uncertain about how to identify appropriate connections between legal doctrine and political principles or concerned that their own

limited grasp of Marxist theory might lead to errors that could generate political difficulties. Multiple studies report findings from faculty surveys indicating that many international law professors view curriculum ideological-political education as a burden imposed from above rather than organic pedagogical improvement, reflecting skepticism about whether political content genuinely enhances legal education or simply represents compliance theater required by institutional pressures (L. Song, 2024). This faculty ambivalence or resistance creates implementation challenges, as effective curriculum ideological-political education depends heavily upon individual educators' enthusiasm and creativity in developing approaches suited to their particular courses and student populations (Hai & Meng, 2021). Some scholars propose targeted faculty development programs focusing on Marxist legal theory, Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy, and pedagogical methods for values education, though questions remain about whether such programs can genuinely transform faculty commitments rather than simply producing performative compliance (Chen, 2020).

Curriculum materials present another significant challenge, as existing international law textbooks often provide limited support for curriculum ideological-political education objectives (S. Wang, 2024). Most Chinese international law textbooks follow structures developed internationally, organizing content around treaty law, customary international law, subjects of international law, jurisdiction, state responsibility, peaceful settlement of disputes, and use of force. This organizational logic reflects the discipline's internal structure rather than considerations about ideological education opportunities, potentially creating misalignment between textbook content and curriculum ideological-political education requirements. Some scholars, thus, advocate for developing new textbooks explicitly designed to facilitate ideological education by incorporating Chinese perspectives, highlighting historical injustices that shaped contemporary international law, and emphasizing cases involving Chinese interests (Yi et al., 2024).

Assessment Mechanisms: Evaluating Educational Effectiveness

The literature reveals ongoing struggles to develop assessment mechanisms capable of evaluating curriculum ideological-political education effectiveness in ways that capture its multidimensional objectives beyond conventional measures of content mastery (L. Song, 2024; Y. Song, 2023; S. Wang, 2024). Traditional assessment approaches in Chinese legal education have emphasized examination performance measuring students' recall and application of legal doctrines, evaluation methods that align with civil service examination traditions but may inadequately assess whether students have internalized particular values or developed desired moral commitments (Cui, 2021). Curriculum ideological-political education's goals extend beyond cognitive learning to encompass affective and behavioral dimensions including political loyalty, ethical awareness, and professional dispositions, outcomes that resist reduction to standardized testing formats. However, implementing such comprehensive assessment systems requires substantial resources and raises difficult questions about appropriate standards. How should educators evaluate whether students have developed appropriate political consciousness? Do assessment criteria risk penalizing students for expressing heterodox views, thereby creating pressure for performative conformity rather than genuine belief? These questions reveal tensions between educational assessment's dual functions as learning facilitation and political surveillance.

Yet, questions about measuring curriculum ideological-political education's actual effects on student learning and subsequent professional conduct remain largely unresolved in the literature. Chinese scholarship has produced relatively limited empirical research examining whether students who receive curriculum ideological-political education demonstrate different knowledge, skills, values, or behaviors compared to those educated under previous approaches. This empirical gap reflects both methodological challenges related to isolating curriculum ideological-political education's effects from numerous other influences on student development, and political sensitivities that may discourage research questioning

whether the reform achieves its stated objectives. The few studies that attempt outcome evaluation typically rely on self-reported survey data measuring students' satisfaction with courses or perceived learning, which may capture immediate reactions but cannot demonstrate whether curriculum ideological-political education produces lasting effects on professional identity or ethical conduct. Long-term tracking of graduates to examine how curriculum ideological-political education influences career choices, professional practices, or civic engagement would require sustained research investment and institutional cooperation currently lacking. This limitation means that debates about curriculum ideological-political education's effectiveness proceed largely on the basis of theoretical arguments and anecdotal evidence rather than systematic empirical assessment, creating space for divergent interpretations unconstrained by evidence about actual outcomes.

5. Discussion

Curriculum Ideology within Global Legal Education Reform

Situating Chinese curriculum ideological-political education within the broader landscape of global legal education reform reveals a phenomenon that simultaneously resonates with and diverges from international trends in ways that illuminate fundamental questions about the relationship between professional training and moral formation. The surface-level contrast appears stark. Chinese curriculum ideology represents explicit state-directed political socialization within professional education, seemingly antithetical to the academic freedom and liberal educational values that characterize Western legal education systems (e.g., Spannagel, 2025). But, this initial reading obscures deeper structural parallels that merit careful consideration. Both Chinese curriculum ideology and Western professional identity formation initiatives emerge from recognition that technical legal training alone produces incomplete professionals, that effective legal practice requires not merely cognitive mastery of doctrines but cultivation of particular dispositions, commitments, and forms of practical wisdom that shape how lawyers understand their roles and responsibilities (Longan et al., 2019; Sullivan et al., 2007). The critical difference lies not in whether legal education should cultivate values, both systems affirmatively embrace this responsibility, but rather in what specific values should be cultivated, through what processes, and according to whose authority. Western professional identity formation emphasizes individual moral autonomy, capacity for independent ethical judgment, and internalization of professional norms through reflective engagement rather than direct instruction. The Chinese curriculum ideology explicitly cultivates political loyalty, collective consciousness, and alignment with a certain ideology through the systematic integration of prescribed ideological content. This difference reflects competing philosophies regarding the proper relationship between individual conscience and collective authority, between critical inquiry and ideological orthodoxy (Wright, 1966).

Also, the comparative analysis illuminates how different political economies of higher education shape pedagogical possibilities and constraints in ways that transcend individual educators' preferences or capabilities. Western legal education operates within market-influenced systems where student choice, institutional competition, and professional labor markets exert disciplining effects that structure what can be taught and how (e.g., Balan, 2023). On the contrary, Chinese legal education operates within a state-directed system where political imperatives and administrative mandates shape institutional priorities in ways that afford limited space for faculty autonomy (Minzner, 2013). Neither system represents pure academic freedom unbounded by external constraints; rather, they demonstrate how different configurations of power, namely market power versus state power, generate distinctive forms of constraint and possibility (Ji, 2016). The Chinese case makes visible processes of political influence over education that operate more subtly in liberal contexts, where market pressures and professional socialization achieve similar coordinating functions without requiring explicit ideological directives.

Examining curriculum ideology thus illuminates not Chinese exceptionalism but rather variations in how all educational systems navigate tensions between competing social demands, with political systems differing in whether they coordinate education through state authority, market mechanisms, professional regulation, or some combination thereof. This recognition complicates simplistic narratives that position Western legal education as politically neutral knowledge transmission contrasting with Chinese political indoctrination. All legal education systems transmit particular values and cultivate specific professional identities; they differ in whether this transmission occurs explicitly through ideological education or implicitly through curricular structure, case selection, pedagogical methods, and institutional cultures that privilege certain perspectives and marginalize others.

Rethinking Autonomy, Expertise, and Political Consciousness

The findings regarding curriculum ideological-political education invite reconsideration of several theoretical assumptions prevalent in scholarship on legal education and professional formation. First, the Chinese case challenges liberal presumptions that professional autonomy and political subordination represent mutually exclusive alternatives, revealing instead more complex relationships between expert knowledge and political authority. Western professional theory typically posits professional autonomy (that is, the capacity of professions to regulate themselves according to internal standards rather than external direction) as essential for genuine expertise. Political interference in professional judgment represents, from this perspective, corruption of expertise by illegitimate considerations that undermine professional integrity. However, curriculum ideology demonstrates that professionals can develop genuine technical competence within systems that explicitly subordinate professional autonomy to political authority, suggesting that the relationship between autonomy and expertise proves more contingent than liberal theory acknowledges (Zhou, 2023). Chinese international lawyers educated under curriculum ideology acquire a sophisticated understanding of international legal doctrine, master complex analytical skills, and develop the capacity to operate effectively in international legal forums, even as their professional formation explicitly cultivates political commitments that Western professional ethics would treat as compromising independence. This observation does not vindicate the political subordination of professions but rather problematizes the assumption that particular institutional arrangements are necessary conditions for professional competence. The question becomes not whether political influence over professional formation exists (it exists everywhere) but rather whether such influence operates transparently through explicit ideological education or covertly through institutional structures and professional socialization that obscure power's operation.

Second, curriculum ideology illuminates tensions within critical legal pedagogy regarding the proper relationship between political commitments and intellectual rigor. Critical legal scholars have long argued that conventional legal education's claims to political neutrality mask conservative ideological functions, advocating instead for pedagogical approaches that make explicit law's political dimensions and cultivate progressive political consciousness (Eslava & Pahuja, 2012). Chinese curriculum ideology shares critical pedagogy's rejection of neutrality claims, explicitly positioning legal education as a site for cultivating particular political commitments rather than pretending to transmit apolitical technical knowledge. However, the specific political commitments curriculum ideology seeks to cultivate diverge dramatically from the emancipatory aspirations typically associated with critical pedagogy. This divergence reveals a fundamental ambiguity within critical approaches: if conventional legal education's neutrality claims mask ideological functions, what prevents alternative pedagogical approaches from simply substituting different ideological impositions rather than genuinely expanding students' critical capacities? Chinese curriculum ideology demonstrates that making politics explicit in legal education does not automatically produce progressive outcomes; political transparency can serve the projects under discussion as readily as emancipatory ones. This recognition suggests that critical pedagogy requires not merely rejecting neutrality but developing sophisticated accounts of how to cultivate genuine critical

thinking rather than simply inculcating alternative orthodoxies, accounts that Chinese curriculum ideology's instrumentalization of critique highlights as underdeveloped in much critical legal scholarship (West, 2016).

The Limits of Ideological Control

The implementation challenges documented in Chinese scholarship reveal inherent paradoxes that illuminate structural limits on ideological control over professional formation, limits that persist despite particular political systems' extensive institutional capacity for surveillance and enforcement. The persistent tension between political conformity and intellectual rigor represents perhaps the most fundamental paradox: curriculum ideology requires faculty and students to simultaneously master international legal reasoning that often leads to conclusions that diverge from prescribed political positions, while maintaining predetermined ideological commitments regardless of where rigorous legal analysis leads. This tension generates several possible responses, none of which is fully satisfactory from the curriculum ideology's perspective. Faculty might privilege political orthodoxy over analytical rigor, producing graduates who demonstrate correct consciousness but lack genuine expertise, thereby undermining the curriculum's objective of cultivating competent international legal professionals capable of effectively representing Chinese interests. Alternatively, faculty might prioritize analytical rigor, risking that students develop the capacity for independent judgment that generates heterodox conclusions, precisely the outcome curriculum ideology seeks to prevent. The faculty resistance and performative compliance documented in the literature suggest a third response: superficial integration of ideological content that satisfies administrative oversight without substantively transforming teaching practices, producing graduates who can demonstrate ideological fluency when required without such commitments genuinely structuring their professional judgment. This last response may represent rational adaptation to contradictory institutional demands, but it reveals how even extensive political control over education generates spaces for negotiation and resistance that official discourse cannot eliminate.

Another significant paradox emerges from curriculum ideology's dependence on international legal frameworks that embody values and assumptions that may undermine ideological objectives. International law education necessarily requires engaging with legal doctrines, institutional practices, and normative arguments developed largely within Western liberal contexts that privilege individual rights, democratic governance, and limitations on state sovereignty. These seem to constitute a tension with Chinese political ideology, which emphasizes collective welfare, party authority, and absolute sovereignty. Curriculum ideology attempts to manage this tension by cultivating critical distance from international legal discourse, teaching students to recognize international law's political biases and Western hegemonic influence. However, such critical engagement risks generating several unintended consequences. Students who develop the capacity to examine international law's ideological dimensions critically may extend this critical capacity to Chinese domestic ideology, recognizing similar patterns of power operating through ostensibly neutral legal discourse. The analytical skills required for effective international legal practice (the capacity to understand and deploy arguments grounded in values one does not personally endorse, and the ability to identify inconsistencies and logical weaknesses in legal reasoning) transfer readily to the critical examination of any ideological system, including curriculum ideology itself. This suggests that curriculum ideology may inadvertently cultivate precisely the forms of critical consciousness it seeks to contain, as skills required for professional competence prove difficult to restrict to politically approved targets. The long-term effects of curriculum ideology thus remain uncertain, with outcomes potentially diverging substantially from intended objectives in ways that implementation challenges already foreshadow.

6. Conclusion

This examination of curriculum ideological-political education in Chinese international law courses shows a complex phenomenon that resists simplistic characterization as either pedagogical innovation or political imposition. The integration represents a systematic attempt to reconcile competing demands on legal education in a particular context characterized by expanding international engagement, requiring the cultivation of professionals who possess both technical competence and firm political commitments. Chinese educators have developed diverse approaches attempting to organically integrate ideological themes with substantive legal analysis, though persistent implementation challenges suggest that achieving genuine synthesis proves difficult. Faculty resistance, organizational fragmentation, and inherent tensions between rigorous legal reasoning and predetermined political conclusions generate gaps between policy aspirations and pedagogical realities that create spaces for negotiation, adaptation, and possible resistance that official discourse does not acknowledge.

Comparative analysis situating Chinese curriculum ideology within international legal education reform illuminates both distinctive features and unexpected resonances with global trends. The explicit political socialization distinguishes Chinese approaches from liberal professional identity formation emphasizing individual autonomy, reflecting divergent political systems and philosophical commitments. Yet, underlying concerns about legal education's responsibilities for moral formation transcend specific political arrangements, suggesting that questions about integrating values cultivation within professional training represent enduring challenges rather than distinctively Chinese problems. Different national contexts generate diverse responses shaped by legal cultures and power configurations that structure pedagogical possibilities. The Chinese case makes visible political influences over education that operate more subtly in other contexts through market pressures, professional socialization, and institutional cultures, indicating that all educational systems negotiate issues between competing social demands rather than representing neutral knowledge transmission.

Several implications emerge for understanding Chinese legal education and its role in state governance. Curriculum ideology involves more than compliance with political mandates; it also entails genuine pedagogical reflection as educators navigate complex demands. However, implementation challenges reveal limits on the state's power to dictate educational outcomes through administrative oversight alone, as effective values education requires faculty enthusiasm and authentic engagement that cannot be reliably generated through surveillance and evaluation. Questions about the actual effects of curriculum ideology on professional conduct remain largely unanswered, creating uncertainty about whether the reform achieves its stated objectives. Future research examining graduates' career development and professional practices could showcase actual rather than intended outcomes, potentially revealing gaps between official discourse and realized impacts. Furthermore, comparative studies across institutions and substantive fields could illuminate contextual factors that shape implementation effectiveness, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of how political, institutional, and disciplinary variables interact to shape educational practices.

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