

# From "short-term Matching" to "long-term Development" : The Intrinsic Logic and Practical Path of Career Planning Courses Empowering Employment Guidance Courses

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**Abstract:** For a long time, college employment guidance courses have been limited by the "job-hunting skills" orientation, mostly in the form of last-minute training on the eve of graduation, with structural problems such as narrowed goals, fragmented content, and broken functions. To break through this predicament, the key lies in systematically integrating the long-term development perspective contained in career planning courses into career guidance work. There is an "input-feedback" two-way enabling connection between career planning and career guidance. This connection is manifested as career planning providing clear target input for career guidance, while the practical experience accumulated in the process of career guidance can continuously feed back to the dynamic optimization of career planning. This paper, on the premise of an in-depth analysis of the predicament of the traditional employment guidance paradigm, reveals the inherent logic of the complementary functions of the two, and proposes the construction ideas of an integrated curriculum system from four aspects: curriculum objective integration, content reconstruction, teaching organization innovation, and faculty collaboration, to help employment guidance gradually upgrade from emergency job training to developmental life navigation.

**Keywords:** Career planning; Career guidance; Curriculum integration; Short-term matching; Long-term development; Complementary functions

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## 1.Introduction

At present, most career guidance courses in colleges and universities still revolve around the core logic of "helping students succeed in employment upon graduation." The courses focus on practical skills such as resume writing and interview simulation, simply equating employment issues with job-seeking behavior. This short-term matching orientation can still work when the job market is relatively stable. But as the pace of industrial iteration quickens and career boundaries blur, and students' development paths become increasingly diverse, such short-term, temporary guidance has become difficult to meet the actual employment and development needs of students.

Some universities have attempted to integrate career planning into employment guidance teaching, but overall, the two types of courses are still seemingly integrated but actually disconnected. Specifically, career planning courses focus on long-term development planning, while employment guidance courses focus on the arrangement of current job-seeking affairs, and there is a lack of true content connection between the two <sup>[1]</sup>. Although the academic community is aware of this problem, there is no in-depth theoretical analysis and interpretation of how career planning empowers employment guidance and how the two can form a complementary closed loop. This paper focuses on this core issue and attempts to construct a curriculum integration framework oriented towards career development.

## 2.The Dilemma of Traditional Career Guidance Courses

### 2.1 Narrowing of curriculum objectives

Curriculum objectives are invisibly confined to a narrow scope. The core focus of this mentoring course is not

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on the students' long-term growth path over the next three decades, but rather on how to smoothly obtain job offers from companies at this stage. When the employment rate becomes the overriding core indicator, the course will consciously or unconsciously shrink its original educational function to mere job search skills training. Instrumental rationality gradually conceals value rationality, and the long-term nature of education itself gives way to the immediate needs of enterprises for employment. The result is that many students, though proficient in various interview scripts, lack the most basic understanding and cognition of their own interests and specialties as well as the development trends of the industry.

## **2.2 Fragmented teaching content**

Teaching modules such as policy interpretation, resuit-making skills, and interview simulation are mostly haphazardly pieced together around the principle of "practicality", lacking a main thread of quality cultivation that runs through the entire process. There is a significant time lag between the teaching content and the actual demands of society. Content that fits the current job market, such as emerging occupational forms and cross-border ability requirements, rarely enters the classroom teaching. What students acquire from the curriculum is often just a set of unchanging coping templates, rather than vocational general skills that can be flexibly transferred and adapted to different scenarios.

## **2.3 Unbalanced placement of class hours**

The layout of class hours is characterized by discontinuity points. Career guidance courses are mostly concentrated at the end of the junior year or the first half of the senior year, forming intensive intervention nodes. In the first three years of college, students have little access to systematic career awareness guidance and are bombarded with a vast amount of job-hunting information and skills training as they approach graduation. This loose start and tight finish goes against the laws of students' cognitive development, making it difficult for early career confusion to be resolved in a timely manner. For instance, the lower grades are confused about their own interests and career directions but lack channels to explore them. During the job-hunting season, anxiety flares up and they can only cast a wide net and send out resumes in a rush. Even if they are hired, they often fall into the dilemma of meaninglessness, not knowing whether the job is a voluntary choice or a reluctant compromise. This bad experience suggests that the course should serve complete and evolving individuals. Nowadays, diverse development options have become the norm, and the "fragmented" curriculum supply model can no longer meet the diverse needs of students.

## **2.4 Weakened educational function**

Colleges and universities have neglected the cultivation of students' career subjectivity while maintaining the bottom line of employment rate. The curriculum has fallen into an awkward situation of functional suspension. Although it is tasked with helping students achieve high-quality employment, it is restricted by the short-effect implementation path and difficult to achieve the goal. This is not a mere curriculum design error, but rather a deep-seated structural factor. The employment rate is a hard indicator in the evaluation system of colleges and universities, and the work of departments is centered around this, making it easy for curriculum construction to shift from educational logic to administrative logic. When the employment rate figures replace students' long-term development as the primary criterion for measuring the value of courses, short-term job-hunting skills training becomes an inevitable choice, while the cultivation of students' career qualities shrinks. This structural deviation suggests that the reform of the career guidance curriculum cannot merely be an internal patch of the curriculum; it must redefine the value coordinates of career guidance at the underlying logical level.

# **3.The internal logic of career planning empowering Career Guidance**

## **3.1 Shift from end-point thinking to process thinking**

Traditional career guidance courses are based on the end-point thinking, with the ultimate goal of finding a job,

and the curriculum is designed around this. Career planning courses advocate process-oriented thinking, believing that career development is a continuous construction process throughout one's life. The differences between the two mindsets, such as "placement" and "growth", are as follows: Placement aims for a one-time completion, while growth focuses on long-term adaptation and dynamic adjustment. By integrating process thinking into career guidance, the curriculum no longer promises to "ensure students' successful employment", but focuses on cultivating students' ability to think independently and make autonomous decisions in career choices. Job hunting is seen as a phased action in one's career rather than an ultimate goal. Under this framework, career guidance is no longer confined to the imparting of job-seeking skills but is an important part of the career education system that is closely linked to practice [2].

### **3.2 Positive input: Career planning marks the bullseyes for career guidance**

What career planning courses can provide for employment guidance is the personal development coordinate system formed by students through careful introspection. This coordinate system consists of three core levels. The first is self-awareness, that is, students' clear understanding of their own interests, abilities, and values. The second is direction, which is the field of career development based on self-awareness and social research. The third is the path, that is, the step-by-step capacity-building program leading to that field.

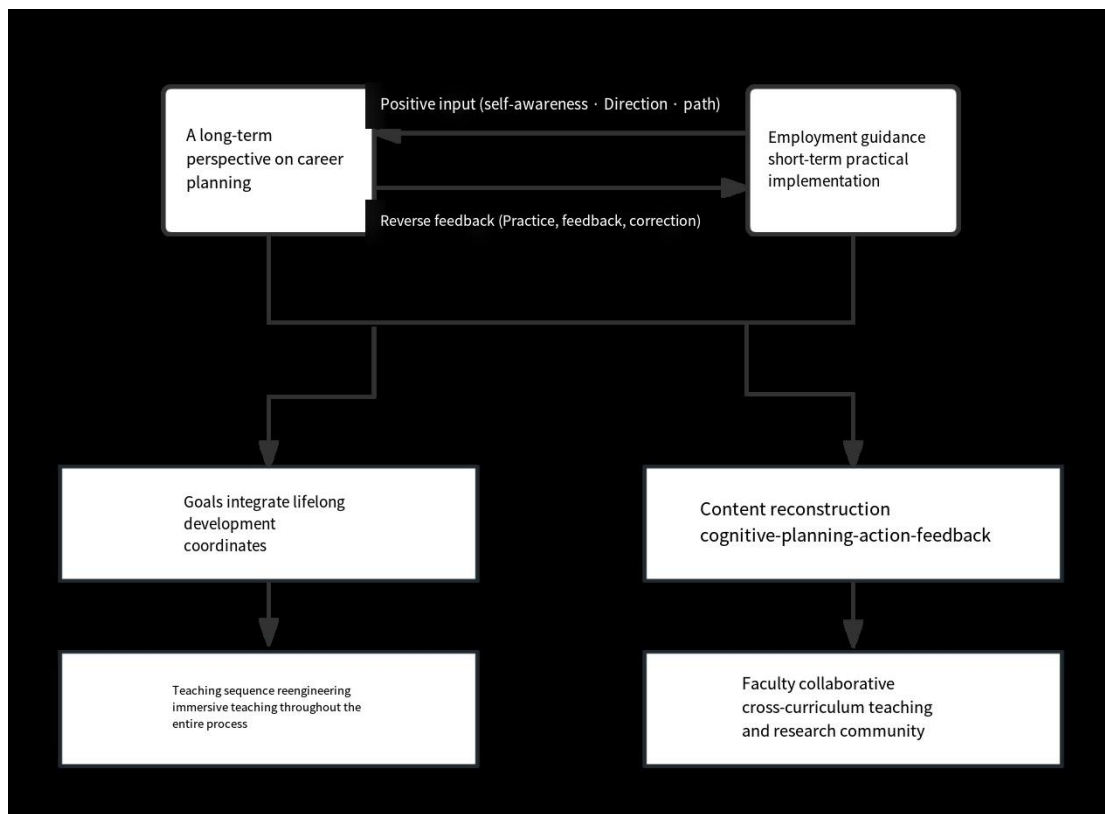
Without such prior input, students' job-hunting behavior can easily fall into the trap of blind mass application. For example, when a student is clear that they are determined to delve deeply into the field of cultural creativity and that their core strength lies in visual narrative ability, their resume submission will shift from aimless "casting the net" behavior to precise targeting of specific job groups. At the same time, the focus of career guidance will also become more precise. Instead of teaching general job-hunting skills in a general way, targeted training will be carried out around specific contents such as the logic of portfolio construction and industry communication norms required in the field. It is evident that career planning sets a clear bullseye for career guidance, and career guidance is the key vehicle to hit that bullseye.

### **3.3 Reverse feedback: Employment practice compels the revision of the planning scheme**

Counter-directional empowerment is equally crucial. The real feedback students receive in the recruitment practice is a highly valuable source of information. Whether it's the interviewer's targeted questioning or the setbacks encountered during the internship, it can expose blind spots in students' self-awareness and prompt them to re-examine the fit of their original career direction, which is equivalent to an effective stress test of the career planning scheme. If positive input is the paper deduction of career planning, then reverse feedback is the field test of employment practice. Without this practical test, career planning can easily fall into the predicament of being divorced from reality. An effective curriculum integration mechanism should collate and summarize the feedback information collected during the job search process and return it to the career planning stage, allowing students to re-recognize themselves through these practical results and then adjust and improve their career planning, forming a self-reinforcing cycle of "planning - action - feedback - adjustment", which is also the deep logic behind the interweaving of functions between the two types of courses [3].

However, the construction of this cycle faces an obvious timing problem. The job search feedback on the eve of graduation is intense and fast-paced, and students often do not have sufficient time to revise and improve their career plans. Relying solely on the feedback during the graduation season makes it difficult to achieve effective planning adjustments. This requires curriculum design to proactively move the feedback node forward, such as conducting mock recruitment and career experience activities in the lower grades. Although the impact of such proactive feedback is not as strong as that of practical feedback, it leaves sufficient time for students to plan and adjust, allowing "reverse feedback" to truly integrate into the entire course operation, rather than just remaining as a passive response on the eve of graduation.

## 4. Practical paths of Functional complementarity and content connection



### 4.1 Goal Integration: Elevating dimensions to the coordinates of lifelong development

First, break the limitations of the separate training objectives of the two courses. The career planning course is no longer just about having students complete a planning document, and the career guidance course is no longer limited to helping students obtain job offers. Both are focused on a higher core objective, that is, to cultivate students' subjective ability to manage their own career lives. Under this overall framework, the career planning course focuses on addressing the core issue of "goal direction", while the career guidance course focuses on the practical issue of "realization path", both of which are part of the continuous process of students' career development and should not be divided into two guiding systems that lack communication and connection. The design of the curriculum objectives should be progressive. In the lower grades, the focus should be on awakening career awareness and exploring career fields. In the middle grades, the focus should be on career direction and core ability reserves. In the higher grades, the focus should be on promoting the transformation of ability results and practical job search tests to form a step-by-step training system.

### 4.2 Content Reconstruction: Connect the main thread of "cognition - planning - action - feedback"

The curriculum content should break away from the jumbled modular patchwork and build a core thread, namely cognition (self and society), planning (goals and paths), action (job hunting and practice), feedback (verification and correction). These four links are a dynamic system that can form feedback loops at any time, rather than a non-linear progressive relationship. In the cognitive stage, self-assessment is associated with the exploration of career information. Students interpret their own traits in combination with the industries they are interested in, making self-awareness more targeted and practical [4]. In the planning section, career goals are broken down into quantifiable and assessable ability indicators as the core training content of the career guidance course. In the action session, employment guidance provides personalized practical guidance based on students' established career directions. In the feedback session, establish institutionalized feedback channels to adjust career planning and optimize job-hunting strategies through internship reports, interview reviews, workplace experiences, etc. Through

this core thread, career planning information flows to employment guidance, and employment guidance feedback flows back to career planning, achieving a deep connection and functional complementarity between the two.

### **4.3 Teaching Sequence Reengineering: From concentrated breakpoints to full-process immersion**

To break away from the traditional teaching model of being relatively lax in the first year and cramming in the fourth year, vocational development education should be fully integrated into the entire process of undergraduate education. In the first year of college, career initiation courses are offered, with a focus on guiding students to develop an initial sense of career and awakening their attention to their own career development. Through various forms such as workshops, career experiences, and industry research, students' self-awareness and industry awareness are deepened, allowing them to further clarify their career direction in practice. By the graduation stage, the teaching focus shifts to targeted job-hunting action guidance and decision review to help students smoothly transition from campus to the workplace. This sequence of teaching is not a simple transfer of class hours, but rather a scientific allocation of teaching tasks for each stage based on students' psychological development and cognitive patterns. The curriculum content of each stage echoes each other and progresses step by step. The personal planning files formed in the previous stage directly serve as the basis for the teaching activities in the next stage, ensuring the continuity and systematicness of vocational development education.

### **4.4 Faculty collaboration: Form cross-curriculum teaching and research communities**

The ultimate implementation of curriculum integration cannot do without the support of teaching staff. A series of measures such as goal integration, content reconstruction, and time sequence reengineering, if not supported by the corresponding teacher system, are likely to remain only on paper and be difficult to truly take effect. At present, teachers of career planning courses and career guidance courses are mostly in different teaching and research sequences, and the two types of teachers have their own professional backgrounds and teaching habits. If there is a lack of institutionalized communication channels, the integration of courses will be difficult to advance in depth.

To address this issue, a feasible solution is to establish a cross-course collective lesson preparation system, where two types of teachers will jointly discuss and determine teaching objectives, content connection points, and key and difficult points of teaching around the main thread that runs through the course. On this basis, a mechanism for sharing student growth files will be gradually established. The self-awareness reports and industry exploration records of students formed by career planning teachers can serve as the core basis for personalized guidance by employment guidance teachers, and the job-seeking feedback cases and workplace practical experience accumulated by employment guidance teachers can also be timely returned. It provides a reference for career planning teachers to update teaching materials and optimize teaching content. Forming cross-course joint teaching and research rooms is an ideal model for achieving deep collaboration among teachers, but collective lesson preparation and file sharing can be a practical and feasible first step when the actual conditions are not yet ripe. No matter what form it takes, the core principle is to break down the barriers between the two types of teachers, so that what guides students' career development is no longer two unrelated discourse systems, but a professional teaching team that can run through the entire career development process.

## **5. Conclusions**

Employment guidance courses in colleges and universities should by no means merely be emergency training for graduates during the job-hunting season, but should become a key educational link to help students acquire the ability to manage their careers. To achieve this transformation, the core lies in breaking the fixed mindset of short-term matching and reconstructing the entire curriculum based on the long-term logic of career development. This paper delves deeply into the structural dilemmas of traditional career guidance courses, such as narrowed objectives, fragmented content, unbalanced class hours, and weakened education, and reveals the "input-feedback" two-way empowerment mechanism between career planning and career guidance, and then proposes practical paths for the deep integration of the two types of courses from four dimensions: objective integration, content

reconstruction, time sequence reengineering, and faculty collaboration. The value of this integrated curriculum framework lies not only in promoting the innovation and upgrading of the career guidance curriculum itself, but also in returning to the fundamental mission of higher education of "cultivating a complete person", enabling every student not only to smoothly exit the school, but also to walk a long and steady career path.

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