

Decision of Ministry of Education Concerning the Adoption
of Reforms in the Curriculums of Institutions of
Higher Learning

(Approved at 43rd Session of Government Administration
Council, July 28, 1950. Announced August 2, 1950)

1. The purpose of institutions of higher learning in the People's Republic of China is to train high-level specialists for national reconstruction in accordance with the principles of the cultural and educational policy included in the Common Program of the People's Political Consultative Conference of China, and using a method that combines theory and practice. These specialists will have advanced standards of culture, will master modern science and technology, and will have total dedication to serving the people.

2. Since last year, there have been some preliminary reforms and improvements in the curriculums of institutions of higher learning in the nation. However, a considerable portion of these curriculums is still inconsistent with the principles of New Democracy. It is not national, and it is not scientific. It is not for the broad masses of people, and it does not meet the demands of reconstruction of a new China. Therefore, the curriculums of institutions of higher learning in the nation must be made consistent with Article 46 of the Common Program. They must be reformed gradually and systematically for the purpose of combining theory and practice. On the one hand, institutions of higher learning should make major efforts to overcome the misconception in the empty dogma of "learning for the sake of learning," in the interest of integrating higher education with the realities of national reconstruction. On the other hand, they should prevent a narrow pragmatism that neglects the study of theory or the misunderstanding of empiricism.

3. Institutions of higher learning in the nation should, in accordance with Articles 41 and 47 of the Common Program, abolish all reactionary political courses and offer revolutionary political courses in New Democracy to facilitate the

elimination of feudal, comprador, and fascist thinking and to develop the idea of wanting to work for the people.

4. Institutions of higher learning should use their various departments as units to train specialists. The curriculums of these departments should be designed to meet the current and long-term needs of the economic, political, defense, and cultural reconstruction of our country. These curriculums should become appropriately specialized on the basis of systematic theoretical knowledge. Based on the policy of having a simple curriculum with useful courses, departments should add new courses or strengthen the required or important courses and cancel all unnecessary similar courses, and improve the integration and coordination of disciplines. Only after serious deliberation and broad consultation can redundant and unnecessary courses be dropped. When offering courses, institutions should do so because of the needs of national reconstruction, not because there are teachers available.

5. To strengthen the combination of education and practical work, institutions should maintain close contacts with appropriate ministries of the government and with enterprises and organizations under their jurisdictions. Faculties of these institutions should cooperate whenever feasible with these ministries and enterprises in their production work and scientific research. They should systematically organize students for internship programs and visits, which should become an important part of their instruction. For the purpose of effectively training specialists for national reconstruction, various ministries should, through the Ministry of Education, assist institutions of higher learning in teaching, in intern programs, and in research; all this should become an integral part of their own work. Together with the Ministry of Education, ministries concerned have the responsibility to give guidance to the interning students.

6. To train specialists on a large scale to meet the demands of national reconstruction, institutions should, depending upon circumstances and under the direction of the Ministry of Education, assist the ministries to run various training classes or

correspondence courses. Institutions should consult with the ministries concerned in working out the curriculums for these programs.

7. In general, the departments of institutions of higher learning should limit the time required for the completion of their programs to from 3 to 5 years. Each semester should consist of 17 weeks of classes. Each week, students should have a standard of 44 hours, but no more than 50 hours, of study (including self-study and experiments in laboratories). In principle, time for extracurricular activities should not exceed 6 hours a week.

8. Improvement in the number and quality of teachers and in teacher training are the keys to reform in curriculums. Therefore, all teachers of institutions of higher learning in the nation should strengthen their political education, teaching subjects, and research. They should organize teaching and research guidance groups for all major subjects. Teachers should work together to improve the contents of their instruction and methods. They should systematically and gradually strengthen the research work of graduate departments of institutions of higher learning or specialized institutes, thus making them the primary place for the training of teachers for institutions of higher learning. Institutions should increase their guidance and concern for assistant professors and graduate students, and develop in them a high enthusiasm for study and research, in order to train them to be good teachers for the institutions of higher learning of a new China.

9. The preparation of teaching materials, from a scientific point of view and with a scientific method, is an important condition for a reform of curriculums. Therefore, under the direction of the Ministry of Education of the Central People's Government, a Committee on the Compilation and Review of Teaching Materials for Institutions of Higher Learning will be created. In accordance with Articles 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, and 47 of the Common Program, the committee will systematically prepare and translate teaching and reference materials on various subjects. Henceforth, with the exception of those

used in the departments of institutes of foreign languages, teaching materials of all departments of all institutions of higher learning should gradually be written in Chinese.

10. In accordance with the principles stated above, and with reference to the proposals for various subjects presented at the First National Conference on Higher Education, and also taking into consideration their own special circumstances, institutions of higher learning should draw up and submit proposed curriculums and instructional plans to the Central Ministry of Education for approval.

11. This resolution will become effective as soon as the Central Ministry of Education obtains approval from the Government Administration Council for its publication and implementation.