

# **Exploration on the Reform of “Three Combinations + Three Steps” Teaching Mode from the Perspective of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education: Based on the Course of Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance**

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**Keywords:** teaching methods; innovation and entrepreneurship; practice teaching; theory teaching.

**Abstract:** According to the characteristics of the course, Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance, the idea of innovation and entrepreneurship education should be integrated into all teaching links. Schools need to explore and construct the teaching mode of “3 (combination) + 3 (steps)” to promote the adjustment of teaching methods as well as the transformation of teaching modes in professional courses through the innovative and entrepreneurial thinking.

## **1. Introduction**

Innovation and entrepreneurship education is a new educational concept “focuses on the cultivation of innovation spirit as well as the entrepreneurship ability and consciousness.” Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance is an applied course which studies cargo transportation and relevant insurance in international trade. The traditional teaching mode of this course is dominated by teachers’ one-way lecturing. Textbooks and virtual cases are main teaching materials; teachers are the main body of education. Students are in the position of passive acceptance. This teaching model cannot effectively stimulate students’ innovative spirit, or help them to establish entrepreneurial awareness and enhance entrepreneurial ability. In the past, students majoring in international trade were often unable to skillfully apply their theoretical knowledge in practical working after graduation. Therefore, they could not build confidence and make the decision of entrepreneurship; some graduates were being eliminated from the talent market of foreign trade in the process of exploration. Practice has proved that the traditional teaching mode of the Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance cannot meet the intrinsic needs of innovation and entrepreneurship education in colleges. Therefore, educational managers and teachers need to reform the traditional teaching mode urgently.

## **2. Reform of the “Three in One” Teaching Method Guided by Innovation and Entrepreneurship**

### **2.1 Combination of theory and practice**

We should effectively integrate innovation and entrepreneurship education into daily theoretical teaching, set up multi-level and three-dimensional teaching links for the course of Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance, highlight the characteristics of this course and effectively link the theoretical teaching with the practical teaching. Theory teaching is the source and foundation of students’ innovation and entrepreneurship. Solid theory foundation is the premise of cultivating students’ innovation and entrepreneurship abilities. In theory teaching, teachers should not be limited by textbook contents. They can introduce theoretical knowledge and practical cases from the industries of foreign trade transportation and insurance. From the aspects of thinking cultivation and consciousness construction, they can cultivate students’ innovative consciousness, and encourage them to explore innovative undertakings. Afterwards, according to requirements for innovative talents in the foreign trade industry, teachers can impart knowledge and train students’ abilities on foreign trade transportation and insurance.

Practice teaching is an important way to improve students' abilities to observe, analyze and solve practical problems; it is also an important way to transform knowledge into ability. In order to transform students' theoretical knowledge on foreign trade transportation and insurance into practical application abilities, a series of practical teaching links must be implemented. Firstly, in the link of "Professional Training of International Trade", students can go into the simulated scenario and establish foreign trade companies as "importers" or "exporters". They become business operators. They need to use the initial funds allocated by the system to run foreign trade enterprises, operate the business independently and bear their own profits and losses. In that context, in the two links of foreign trade transportation and foreign trade transportation insurance, students will carefully choose the transportation route, the packing mode, and the insurance coverage, accurately calculate the freight and insurance premium, correctly respond to changes and timely claim after the goods are insured. Through this simulated training, students can not only deepen their understanding, memory and application of theoretical knowledge, but also understand the operation procedural and operational risks in foreign trade enterprises, and learn how to effectively communicate and cooperate with people in charge of trading objects, carriers, insurance companies and other institutions, and learn how to respond to dangerous situations. Secondly, in the teaching links of understanding internship, professional internship and graduation internship, students are encouraged to go to foreign trade enterprises and freight forwarding enterprises for social practice. Thirdly, through competitions like the Practice for Operational Competence in International Business (POCIB), the OCALE and the Challenge Cup, we can deepen the training of students' professional skills and enhance their entrepreneurial awareness and ability.

## **2.2 Combination of study in class and study out of class**

In order to stimulate students' innovative spirit and enhance their ability of self-learning and independent thinking in the course of Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance, teachers can adopt various teaching measures such as "the heuristic method" and "discussion". Before giving lectures on "the characteristics of a particular mode of transportation", students are inspired to think and summarize. After the discussion in the classroom, the teacher can make inductive explanations. These teaching methods aim to inspire students' innovative thinking, and to mobilize students' initiative and enthusiasm in learning. Sparks of innovation can be obtained through mutual discussion between teachers and students. These teaching methods also pay attention to the cultivation of students' independent thinking, independent learning as well as cooperative inquiry abilities. In the case analysis, the simulation training method is also used to simulate the practical situation. Students become relevant parties of the case; they can learn methods and ideas of dealing with the practical cases from the simulated role. Through simulation training, students can face difficulties, contradictions and conflicts, so as to exercise their ability to deal with real contradictions and solve real problems in entrepreneurial practices.

In order to guide students to take initiative to acquire knowledge, to explore the essence of problems and to master the method of self-absorption of knowledge, teachers need to assign pre-class homework before teaching contents about cargo, ships, shipping routes, ports, container types and labels. Students are required to read textbooks and materials to obtain the corresponding knowledge points. Daily observation is also needed in this process. After induction and summary, they can elaborate and discuss their views in the classroom. In the teaching of insurance cases, students need to collect real cases after class, analyze them in groups, and then explain and discuss the cases in the classroom. This open teaching method further mobilizes the enthusiasm of students, lets students learn lessons from practical cases, and cultivates students' innovative and entrepreneurial thinking methods through familiarizing and understanding others entrepreneurs' operation.

## **2.3 Combination of study in school and study out of school**

In order to renew the concept of education and integrate innovation and entrepreneurship education into the whole process of personnel training, we should reasonably arrange teaching links of the course, Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance. Teachers should not only combine

theoretical teaching with practical training and competitions, but also attach importance to the links between this course with other lessons like International Trade Practice, Foreign Business Correspondences and the Making of Foreign Trade Documents, International Settlement, International Commercial Law and Economic Law.

On the other hand, while encouraging students to “go out” to participate in social practice and conduct social researches, experts from foreign trade, freight forwarding and other industries should also be “brought in” to participate in the teaching of Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance. They can participate in compiling textbooks, providing real cases for theoretical teaching, and giving lectures on new technology topics. In this way, students can be provided with frontier knowledge and latest policies of foreign trade transportation and insurance. They can understand the background of entrepreneurship, learn more about the industry environment, and know the basic requirements for the survival and development of enterprises when contacting and communicating with experts. Some students can also seize feasible opportunities for entrepreneurship in that process.

### **3. Strengthening the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Practice and Realizing the Reform of the “Three Steps” Teaching Method**

The connotation of innovation and entrepreneurship education in China is the embodiment of the concept of unity of knowledge and practice. The reform of the teaching mode of Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance from the perspective of innovation and entrepreneurship education combines teaching with learning, learning with doing, and doing with creation. Through the three steps of theoretical teaching, simulation competition and practice, students can complete the study and training of this course and even learn the whole process of international trade practice.

The first step is theory teaching. The main purpose of the innovation and entrepreneurship education is the cultivation of innovation and entrepreneurship spirit and ability, rather than the training of enterprise founding skills. The imparting of knowledge and the training of innovation and entrepreneurship ability should run through all teaching links of the Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance, instead of patching the original teaching contents. Based on above analysis, we vigorously promote the innovation and entrepreneurship education reform of this course from following aspects: the curriculum outline, the formulation of teaching plans, the design of teaching process management modes, the selection and compilation of teaching materials, the selection of cases, the method of curriculum assessment, special lectures on new technology and the coordination of relevant courses. The design and reform of all links should be made based on a systematic plan for the innovation and entrepreneurship education. Many teaching measures such as “the heuristic method”, “discussion” and “simulation training” should be introduced into the theoretical teaching process. Real cases in the practice of foreign trade transportation and foreign trade transportation insurance can be introduced into the contents of theoretical teaching. Enterprise tutors can be hired to participate in compiling textbooks and giving lectures on new technologies.

The second step is simulated competition. The teaching mode reform of the Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance should take the innovation and entrepreneurship practice as an important extension of the innovation and entrepreneurship education. Through various competition activities such as the Practice for Operational Competence in International Business (POCIB), the OCALE, the Challenge Cup as well as Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competitions, students can be guided to experience experiential learning methods, enter the simulated entrepreneurial environment, register trading companies, and engage in import and export business. Through competitions, students can gradually acquire the experience of operating foreign trade enterprises and handling import and export business, thus enriching their knowledge and experience of innovation and entrepreneurship, and improving their innovative spirit as well as entrepreneurial ability.

The third step is practice. The Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance is a highly practical course. To help students truly master and apply theoretical knowledge, and integrate the innovative and entrepreneurship education in the whole process, students should be encouraged to enter

enterprises and experience the real work situation in depth. In the process of reforming the teaching mode of Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance, schools need to expand the construction of new practice bases on the basis of existed ones, so that students can enter import and export enterprises and freight forwarding enterprises for practice during the professional internship and graduation internship periods, so as to learn the ways and methods of enterprise operation, and feel the enterprise culture. At the same time, by the help of the equipment, network and platforms of the cross-border e-commerce research rooms and economic training rooms, teachers can guide students to conduct real cross-border e-commerce transactions in platforms like the DH gate and the AliExpress, and train their entrepreneurial ability in real practice.

#### **4. Reform of Teaching Process Management Modes under the Background of “3+3” Innovative and Entrepreneurial Teaching and Education**

On the basis of the traditional management mode on the teaching process, the “3+3” innovative and entrepreneurial teaching mode uses creative management methods. Firstly, in theoretical teaching, students are grouped. Pre-class homework is assigned according to the teaching plan. Students are required to collect data, cases and carry out researches in groups. During the course, the teacher randomly selects a student in the group to elaborate the collected information, or to conduct the case analysis. This not only arouses students’ interest and enthusiasm in learning, but also cultivates students’ abilities of observation, interpersonal communication and organizational coordination. The team performance is included in the final course assessment, which ensures that every student always participates in classroom teaching with high enthusiasm. Secondly, in the process of training and teaching, every student should register a trading company, and then operate it independently and take responsibility for his own profits and losses. The company’s profitability and business volume are main evaluation indicators of training performance evaluation. In this way, students can actively participate in the process of training and learning, strive for excellence in company management and business processing, actively discuss topics and problems they experienced with classmates and teachers, and become the absolute subject of training and teaching. Teachers are the assistants of education.

#### **5. Reform of Evaluation Methods under the Background of “3+3” Innovative and Entrepreneurial Teaching and Education**

The evaluation system of the “3 + 3” innovation and entrepreneurship teaching mode includes not only traditional evaluation indexes, but also records and the evaluation of students’ participation in group data collection, classroom discussion and the case analysis. In the evaluation process, specific e-mail boxes are used to store data and cases collected by students and record their scores. To some extent, this ensures that teachers can not only inspect students’ learning states on critical time points, but also monitor them continuously throughout the teaching process. After adopting the “3 + 3” innovative and entrepreneurial teaching model, the evaluation of students’ performance in the course of Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance includes four parts: classroom attendance, data collection in groups, classroom discussion and the case analysis, as well as personal assignments and final examination results.

#### **6. Conclusion**

According to the knowledge requirement of the course, Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance as well as the goal of innovation and entrepreneurship education, teachers should fully tap and enrich the teaching resources of this course, combine “theory and practice”, “study in-class and study out of class”, as well as “study in school and study out of school”, and integrate innovation and entrepreneurship education into every teaching link of the Foreign Trade Transportation and Insurance. The curriculum system with “theory teaching +”, “simulated competition +” and “practice +” should be constructed to highlight the orientation of innovation and

entrepreneurship. The reform can stimulate students' innovative spirit, cultivate their entrepreneurial consciousness and ability, and change them from job seekers to job creators.

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