



The New Progress on Lifelong Education Policies in China

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The Outline of China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020)

- The Outline puts forward the strategic goals “to basically modernize education, bring a learning society into shape, and turn China into a country rich in human resources”.
- It is the first time that the goals for the development and framework for the system are stated in a clear, systematic manner.
- The Outline identifies the concept and policy framework for comprehensive lifelong learning (e.g., academic continuing education, professional training, and community-based education as three areas of continuing education) and the goals and missions for the reform and development of continuing education.



Progress of Continuing Education Policies since 2010

- Laid special plans on the development of continuing education
- Launched the pilots on the reform of the system and mechanism of continuing education
- The programs on the construction and demonstration of the lifelong learning service system
- Launched relevant policy studies such as the running and administration of open learning institutions, the system of indicators for constructing a learning society, the system of accreditation and transfer of learning outcomes, the legislation of continuing education, etc.



The Pilot Projects of the National Education System Reform

- Exploring different patterns for constructing open universities construction (Beijing/Shanghai/Jiangsu/Yunnan/Guangdong/Central TV University)
- Building the learning outcomes accreditation system and the “academic credit bank” system
- Improving the system of higher education self-study examination and the system of adult higher education admissions, exploring the building of “overpasses” for talent development
- Advancing the building of learning cities (Beijing, Shanghai, Jinan in Shandong Province, and Guangzhou in Guangdong Province)



The Primary Content for the Building of Beijing Open University

- Establishing a partnership with higher education institutions, industries and enterprises to promote the sharing of learning resources, the recognition of credits and courses , and the joint development of courses and programs.
- Setting up a distance self-learning support platform with multiple functions such as learning resources provision, exchange and cooperation, administration, instructional evaluation, learning support, quality assurance, etc.
- Conducting international collaboration and introducing quality education resources, including developing an internet-based learning platform with University of Hong Kong, introducing part of its courses through a partnership with the Open University in UK, bringing in the web-based training program for international faculty through the partnership with the School of Education at Harvard University, and actively participating in the Open Education Resources Movement and making its course resources available to the world.
- Expanding the service function and building the lifelong learning platform for the Capital citizens. Making digital learning resources open to the citizens and forming web-based allies with the platforms of community-based education
- Reinforcing the capacity-building of its faculty through introducing outstanding instructors from outside and providing overseas visiting and study opportunities for its current faculty.



Explore the Establishment of the Academic Credit Bank System

- Shanghai worked out the implementation plan for the construction of an Academic Credit Bank.
- Shanghai TV University identified: (1) the criteria for the recognition of the credits in six selected programs with other education institutions; (2) the criteria for the accreditation and recognition of credits between adult higher education courses and more than 200 vocational certificates; (3) a catalog of 420 vocational certificates and a catalog of 927 courses of cultural and recreational education.
- Launched the construction of the database for the academic credits, made available the informationalized service platform for the academic credit bank, accepted the residents' application for registration, and established learning files for individuals.



The Pattern of Cultivating Innovative Talents and The System of Quality Assurance (Shanghai Open University)

- Building and constantly improving an open learning system that is liberal on admissions but strict with graduation standards; achieving flexible learning and learning across institutions and majors, with the accumulation and transfer of academic credits as the linkage and modularized courses as the basis.
- Setting in place a quality assurance framework for open universities that is characterized with a unique specialty, multiple skills, a solid foundation, and a focus on application.
- Exploring a quality evaluation scheme that integrates school—society and school—teacher—learner.



Advancing the Building of Learning Cities

- Selected the national exemplary learning communities: a total of 68 learning cities/districts/counties as a result of the evaluation process in 2008 and 2011, respectively.
- Launched the study on the system of indicators for learning cities.
- Identified a number of big cities as the pilot cities for the building of learning cities. Take Shanghai as an example:
 - Urging the legislation of lifelong learning at the provincial level: In February 2011, Shanghai issued the Lifelong learning Promotion Act.
 - Establishing the cross-unit leading and coordinating agency: The Shanghai Commission for the Construction of a Learning Society and the Promotion of Lifelong Learning.
 - Formulating the strategic plan: The Three-year Plan of Action for the Building of a Learning Society and Lifelong Learning in Shanghai.



The Programs on the Construction and Demonstration of the Lifelong Learning Service System

- The program on the construction of exemplary bases on continuing education in higher education institutions
 - Studying and implementing the patterns and scheme, talent cultivation patterns, and service patterns for distance and open learning of continuing education bases within higher education institutions
- The program on the study, demonstration, and application of the lifelong learning public service platform
 - Exploring the patterns and mechanism of building an integrated lifelong learning service platform based on the traditional TV universities.
 - Exploring the scheme to integrate and share digital learning resources.
- The program on the study of criteria for and implementation of the recognition and transfer of academic credits in continuing education within higher education institutions.
 - Studying the criteria and quality connotation for the credits in courses in undergraduate and non-academic continuing education
 - Studying the system and mechanism for credit transfer
 - Studying the establishment of the system of learning outcomes accreditation and an academic credit bank system.
- The program on the study and application of the patterns of opening up the digital learning resources in continuing education within higher education institutions
 - Exploring the patterns and schemes to integrate and open up the digital learning resources in regular higher education institutions
 - Urging the higher education institutions to make its digital learning resources available to the society

Carrying Out the Plan of Making Digital Learning Resources Available to the Society for Free



- 103 higher education institutions has joined the Alliance of Open Digital Learning Resources in Continuing Education in Regular Higher Education Institutions.
- In November 2011, the first batch of “Video-based Open Courses of Chinese Universities”—taught by star professors in prestigious universities such as Peking University and Tsinghua University—were issued online and became available to the public for free.
- The Ministry plans to develop 1,000 quality video-based open courses in the next five years and to share 5,000 courses.



Policy Issues for the Future

- Speeding up the pace on the legislation of lifelong learning and continuing education at the national level
- Building and improving a leading and coordinating scheme on lifelong learning and continuing education (e.g., a cross-branch leading and coordinating agency and a specialized administration unit within the educational administration system)
- Speeding up the construction of the lifelong learning and continuing education system and of the incentives scheme.
- Strengthening the instruction, advising, and specialized cultivation of administrators in lifelong learning and continuing education.
- Advancing equity on access to continuing education, reducing the disparity between different groups of people
- Increasing the fiscal input on continuing education.



Thank You!

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