

Exploring the Integration of Ideological and Political Education into the Course of *Methods of Social Survey Research*: A Pedagogical Practice

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Abstract

Guided by the fundamental mission of fostering virtue and nurturing talent in higher education in the new era, curriculum-based ideological and political education (CIPE) has become an important direction for the reform of college teaching and education. Taking the course *Methods of Social Survey Research* as a case study, and combining the first six chapters of the curriculum, this paper explores effective ways to integrate ideological and political education into specialized courses. Based on the instructor's personal experiences and real-world research cases, it discusses how to naturally embed ideological and political elements into the entire teaching process from six aspects: course introduction, topic selection and design, survey planning, sampling methods, measurement of social phenomena, and questionnaire design. The study shows that through case-based introduction, situational teaching, and practice-oriented education, students' understanding and application of professional knowledge can be enhanced, while their social responsibility, patriotism, and moral awareness can also be effectively strengthened. This paper aims to provide reference for the implementation of CIPE in university specialized courses, and to promote the organic integration of knowledge transmission and value guidance.

Keywords

Higher Education, CIPE, Case-Based Teaching

1. Introduction

Guided by the fundamental mission of fostering virtue and nurturing talent in higher education in the new era, CIPE as a key approach to achieving comprehen-

sive, whole-process, and all-around education, is being vigorously advanced across universities nationwide. CIPE does not simply involve mechanically inserting ideological and political content into professional courses; rather, it aims to integrate value guidance into the process of knowledge transmission, thereby maximizing the educational function of teaching. Unlike traditional political courses that focus on explicit ideological instruction, CIPE operates through implicit, context-embedded value education. Its core principles include integration rather than addition, meaning ideological elements are woven into disciplinary content and real-world applications; student-centered inquiry, emphasizing the exploration of values through critical thinking and experiential learning rather than rote memorization; and professional relevance, which links moral and social values to disciplinary ethics and professional responsibilities. As a foundational social science course that combines theoretical and practical elements, *Methods of Social Survey Research* possesses inherent ideological and political resources and broad potential for moral education, making it an important vehicle for implementing CIPE.

In recent years, the concept of CIPE has gained significant traction in higher education, with research in this area experiencing rapid growth (Wu & Li, 2022). This surge reflects a broader global shift towards integrating values education across the curriculum, moving beyond the traditional stand-alone ethics course. The CIPE approach aligns with the fundamental mission of fostering virtue and nurturing well-rounded talents in the new era. However, despite its promoted importance, the practical implementation of CIPE faces significant challenges, many of which are rooted in a lack of deep theoretical understanding and pedagogical frameworks. From the teachers' perspective, a primary obstacle is the insufficient grasp of CIPE's essence. This often leads to the phenomenon of "two separate skins", where ideological-political education is mechanically attached to, rather than organically integrated with professional content (Yang, Wang, & Wei, 2024; Liu, 2022; Zhang, 2022). This issue echoes longstanding debates in integrated ethics education about the risks of "add-on" models versus "embedded" approaches (Davis, 1999). Some instructors perceive CIPE as equivalent to teaching political theory or an additional burden, neglecting design approach. This is particularly true for young educators who struggle to identify and extract implicit ideological-political elements within their professional courses, resulting in superficial implementation. This challenge is not unique to CIPE but is a common hurdle in teaching professional ethics across social science disciplines, where values are often implicit. From the students' viewpoint, a prevalent misconception is that the core mission of university education is solely the acquisition of professional knowledge and skills, leading them to underestimate the value of ideological formation. Additionally, how to scientifically and reasonably balance the content of professional courses with the allocation of class hours for ideological-political elements has become an urgent issue to be addressed (Wu, Yu, & Wang, 2022).

In response to these challenges, this paper takes the course *Methods of Social Survey Research* as a case study. Drawing on the accumulated teaching practices

of the author, it explores effective pathways for integrating CIPE. This study is informed by established pedagogical theories, including experiential learning (Grace, Stockhausen, Patton, & Innes, 2019; Dugas, Zygmunt, Sanders, & McCarthy, 2025) and case-based teaching methodologies (Göçen & Bulut, 2024), which have proven effective in ethics education by allowing students to confront real-world dilemmas within a disciplinary context. By integrating authentic cases into the first six chapters of the course, this paper aims to provide a replicable model for achieving deep, rather than superficial, integration of professional learning and value cultivation.

2. Overall Design of the Integration Pathway for CIPE

Under the fundamental mission of fostering virtue and nurturing talent in higher education in the new era, CIPE serves as a crucial approach to realizing the “three holistic approaches” (education by all, throughout the entire process, and in all dimensions). It facilitates the deep integration of disciplinary knowledge with ideological and political values. *Methods of Social Survey Research*, as a social science course that emphasizes both theory and practice, possesses inherent ideological and political resources and educational advantages. Guided by the philosophy of CIPE, the course is grounded in constructivist learning theory, using Kolb (1984)’s experiential learning theory as the primary framework for its instructional design (Kolb, 1984). This foundation informs a systematic design for integrating ideological elements into teaching, focusing on the first chapters of the curriculum.

In terms of teaching philosophy, this course adheres to the principle of “problem-oriented, student-centered, and education as the core purpose”. This approach is aligned with Problem-Based Learning (PBL), which uses real-world problems as a context for students to develop critical thinking and acquire knowledge (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). This ensures the organic integration of ideological and political education goals with professional teaching objectives, effectively avoiding mechanical or “label-attaching” approaches. In terms of teaching content, six core stages of social research are identified, each linked to specific ideological and political theme (e.g., patriotism, sense of mission, craftsmanship spirit). This design enables a two-way integration of curriculum content and moral guidance, ensuring that value cultivation is embedded within the authentic context of discipline, a key tenet of Situated Learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In terms of teaching methods, this course employs case-based teaching and situational teaching, which are core strategies of PBL and Experiential Learning. By integrating current social issues, problems relevant to students’ lives, and national strategic topic into classroom instruction, students are guided to learn knowledge, develop skills, and enhance their competencies through a process of experiential inquiry and reflection. This method deepens students’ understanding of professional content while simultaneously strengthening their sense of social responsibility and historical mission. Regarding class hour arrangements, the course adheres to the principle of “nourishing silently”, naturally embedding ideological and political elements into the entire process of professional teaching without imposing additional class time. This approach

achieves a seamless integration, reflecting the concept of the “Hidden Curriculum”, where values are transmitted implicitly through the educational environment and practices (Azimpour & Khalilzade, 2015). The course upholds the principle of “mutual integration of content and values, and organic fusion of professional education and ideological and political education”, successfully avoiding the phenomenon of “disconnection” between the two. It ensures the unity of knowledge transmission and values guidance. Through this systematic CIPE design, which is underpinned by established pedagogical theories, this teaching model provides instructors with an operational pathway for identifying and integrating ideological and political elements into professional courses, thereby enhancing their ability to implement CIPE. The design for *Methods of Social Survey Research* achieves deep integration, from concept to practice and from content to methodology, offering an operational and replicable teaching pathway for educating students through professional courses. The overall framework of this integration pathway is visually summarized in **Figure 1**.

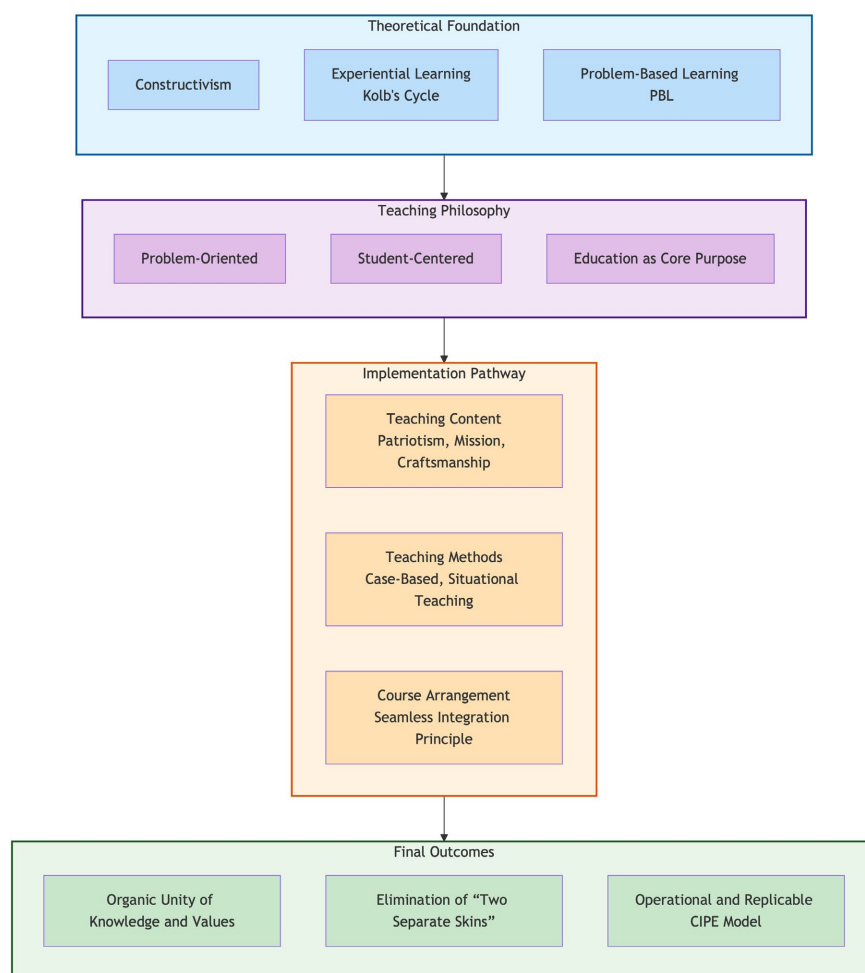


Figure 1. A schematic framework of CIPE integration pathway for the course “*Methods of Social Survey Research*”. The model demonstrates how foundational pedagogical theories inform core instructional principles, which are subsequently translated into specific practices for content, methodology, and course management, ultimately achieving deep integration.

Chapter 1: Introduction—Serving society through surveys, cultivating a sense of national identity and social responsibility

In the introductory chapter, we first guide students to understand the fundamental significance and social value of social surveys. To enhance their sense of engagement and responsibility, the instructor incorporates personal research experiences into the teaching process. For example, during the pandemic, the instructor organized a “Survey on University Students’ Psychological Well-Being”, combining field visits and questionnaire collection. The findings revealed widespread anxiety among students due to isolation. The results were shared with the university’s mental health center, prompting the establishment of an online counseling platform to address students’ needs. This case study helped students recognize that social surveys are not merely academic tools but also vital means of identifying problems, serving society, and fulfilling youth responsibility.

Additionally, the instructor shared experiences from a summer fieldwork project in rural areas, where students conducted household income surveys to assess the implementation of national poverty alleviation policies. Witnessing the dedication of grassroots officials firsthand, students gained deeper insights into national conditions and people’s livelihoods, fostering their patriotism, commitment to the Party’s cause, and sense of social responsibility.

Chapter 2: Topic selection—Focusing on the issues of the times and enhancing a sense of mission

In social survey research, topic selection constitutes the first and fundamental step researchers must undertake. Building upon the theoretical foundation established in Chapter 1, Chapter 2, *Research Topic Design*, further guides students in understanding both the significance and scientific rigor of selecting an appropriate research topic. It emphasizes that a well-conceived research question should not only address real-world issues but also reflect a sense of social responsibility. To help students grasp this concept more concretely, two authentic case studies were introduced in class. The first case was a student-led investigation into the issue of “chaotic food delivery services on campus”. Upon identifying problems such as disorderly delivery practices during peak hours in the cafeteria, which disrupted campus order, the students initiated a survey and proposed practical solutions. Their efforts ultimately contributed to the standardization of campus food delivery procedures. This case was used to illustrate how even seemingly minor issues in everyday life can generate meaningful social impact when approached with observation, critical thinking, and systematic research. The second case was a research project conducted by the author and students on the current development of rural e-commerce under the broader context of rural revitalization. Through field interviews with local e-commerce enterprises, students gained firsthand insights into how national policies are implemented at the grassroots level. They compiled a comprehensive research report that offered actionable recommendations for local industrial development. This experiential learning activity not only enhanced students’ practical research capabilities but also deepened

their understanding of and alignment with national strategic development goals. Through the study of this chapter, students acquired a solid understanding of the basic principles of topic selection and developed a stronger awareness of the importance of engaging with societal issues and contributing to social progress. These outcomes laid a solid foundation for the subsequent chapter.

Chapter 3: Investigation plan design—promoting the craftsman spirit and upholding the principle of seeking truth from facts

It is essential to make plans and preparations in advance before undertaking any task, as this helps avoid blind or haphazard actions—this is also true for social investigation and research. In the teaching of Chapter 3, “Designing a survey plan”, we emphasize the importance of a scientific and reasonable survey plan for the entire research process. To naturally integrate ideological and political education into the teaching, I have shared with students my own teaching experiences to highlight the significance of rigorous scholarship and academic ethics. For example, I once guided students in designing a questionnaire on college students’ employment outlook. However, due to improperly formulated questions and a non-representative sample selection, the data analysis results deviated significantly. By reviewing this failed survey process, I guided the students to realize that research cannot be rushed; scientific planning and careful arrangements must be made during the design phase in order to obtain accurate and effective data. In addition, I shared my experience in designing a survey on the mental health status of college students. In that survey plan, special clauses on privacy protection and information about psychological counseling resources were added to ensure respect for every respondent throughout the survey process. This case helped students understand that as researchers, they are not only responsible for ensuring data accuracy, but must also demonstrate humanistic care and social responsibility. Through the study of Chapter 3, students not only mastered the methods of designing survey plans, but also gradually developed a scholarly attitude of seeking truth from facts and striving for excellence, as well as values centered on respecting others and caring for society. This has laid a solid foundation for their further study of sampling methods.

Chapter 4: Sampling methods—embodying fairness and justice, promoting balanced social development

Building on the knowledge acquired in the previous three chapters, in the teaching of “*Sampling Methods*” (Chapter 4), we focus on guiding students to understand the central role of sampling in survey research, emphasizing how scientific sampling is crucial to the representativeness and validity of survey results. To naturally integrate ideological and political education into the teaching process, we incorporated two real-world cases into the discussion. The first case involved a student satisfaction survey conducted before our school revised its canteen management policies. We employed a stratified sampling method to ensure fair representation of students across different grades, genders, and majors, making the survey results more convincing and providing strong support for the school’s de-

cision-making. Through this case, we guided students to recognize that ensuring every group's voice is fairly heard in a survey is not just a technical issue but also a reflection of democratic and equitable principles.

The second case involved a survey that explored disparities in educational resource allocation between urban and rural regions. In this study, we adopted a multi-stage sampling method, covering schools in urban, township, and rural areas to ensure a reasonable distribution of samples. Through field visits, students witnessed firsthand the disparities in educational resources across different regions, deepening their understanding of the national strategy to promote balanced educational development. By studying Chapter 4, students not only enhanced their comprehension of sampling methods but also developed a greater awareness of social equity issues, strengthening their sense of social responsibility and institutional confidence. This foundation prepares them for the learning journey in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Measurement of social phenomena—strengthening thinking abilities and establishing proper values

Dmitri Mendeleev once said, “There is no science without measurement”. Just like natural phenomena, things that exist in society can also be measured. In teaching Chapter 5, *Measurement of Social Phenomena*, the author guides students in mastering how to transform abstract social concepts into operational and measurable indicators. To enhance students' understanding and ideological awareness, the author incorporated two practical cases into the teaching. The first case involved guiding students in class to develop a measurement scale for college students' sense of happiness. Students discussed various dimensions, such as academic pressure, interpersonal relationships, and future planning, in an attempt to construct scientifically reasonable measurement indicators. Through this exercise, the author guided students to reflect on what true happiness means and encouraged them to cultivate a positive attitude toward life and correct values. The second case was a measurement study conducted by the author to assess college students' awareness and attitudes toward cyber violence. The survey results showed that although most students subjectively opposed cyber violence, they could easily become perpetrators in anonymous environments. This finding prompted deep reflection among the students and provided an opportunity for the author to emphasize the importance of online ethics and advocate for civilized online behavior. Through the study of Chapter 5, students not only improved their professional skills but also subconsciously enhanced their media literacy and sense of social responsibility, preparing them for the learning of Chapter 6.

Chapter 6: The questionnaire technique—maintaining ethical standards and encouraging respectful communication

Questionnaires are an essential tool for researchers to collect data, and their quality directly affects the authenticity and reliability of the information gathered. In teaching Chapter 6, *The Questionnaire Method*, we introduced the basic principles and techniques of questionnaire design.

More importantly, we emphasized that questionnaires are not merely tools for data collection, but also important reflections of a researcher's professional competence and ethical responsibility. To integrate ideological and political education into this chapter, I incorporated two real-life case studies into the teaching. The first case involved some students fabricating questionnaire data during a survey. Initially, they filled out several questionnaires casually to save time. When I discovered this, I gave them serious criticism and required them to conduct the field survey again. Eventually, they gained valuable experience and authentic data through genuine interviews. This incident provided me with an opportunity to stress to the students that academic integrity is the bottom line of scientific research, and any act of fabrication undermines the credibility of scholarly work. The second case involved collaborating with students to design a questionnaire exploring college students' views on romantic relationships. During the process, we paid special attention to using civilized and respectful language, avoiding any wording that might cause misunderstanding or offense. Through this experience, I guided the students to realize that language is not only a means of expression but also a reflection of one's attitude and character. Through the study of Chapter 6, students not only mastered the technical methods of questionnaire design, but also deeply understood that being a survey researcher requires not only professional competence, but also a strong sense of integrity and humanistic care, thereby providing a solid conclusion to the current stage of curriculum-based ideological and political education exploration and practice.

3. Conclusion

CIPE is not simply about attaching political labels, but rather about naturally integrating the core socialist values into professional instruction. The course *Methods of Social Survey Research*, due to its strong practical orientation and close connection to real-world social issues, offers a broad space for implementing CIPE. Through the use of real-life cases, personal experiences, and the exploration of current social problems, students not only enhance their professional skills, but also develop a stronger sense of social responsibility and historical mission. During the implementation of CIPE, this paper explores effective strategies for organically integrating ideological and political elements into professional course content. This approach ensures the integrity of the professional curriculum while achieving the goal of value guidance, offering practical insights into balancing subject matter instruction with ideological education. Through the organic integration of CIPE, students gradually deepen their understanding and acceptance of the core socialist values.

To assess the effectiveness of this integration, multiple qualitative methods were employed. Student reflection logs and final research reports were analyzed for evidence of value awareness development. For example, in the rural e-commerce survey project, several students explicitly reflected on "the responsibility of researchers to serve local communities" and "the importance of data integrity in

policy-making”. In terms of professional skills, student performance was evaluated through the quality of their research designs, survey instruments, and final reports. Compared to initial assignments, most groups showed significant improvement in sampling strategies, questionnaire validity, and data interpretation accuracy—indicating enhanced methodological competence. Additionally, an informal end-of-course feedback survey indicated that over 80% of students felt the course had strengthened their understanding of research ethics and social responsibility. While these findings are preliminary, they suggest that the integration of CIPE has positively influenced both professional competence and value formation.

Despite the overall success of the integration, challenges included occasional student resistance to perceived “political” content, tight scheduling that limited in-depth discussions, and the difficulty of sourcing suitable case studies for all topics. These issues were mitigated through transparent communication, careful time management, and iterative case selection. Future iterations will further refine these aspects to enhance both accessibility and depth.

A systematic CIPE design combined with real-case teaching can effectively avoid the phenomenon of “separation between professional and ideological education” (the so-called “two separate skins”), thereby achieving a deep integration of both. Furthermore, the systematic instructional design provides teachers with an actionable path to identify and incorporate ideological elements into their professional courses, which is particularly beneficial for enhancing the CIPE design capabilities of young instructors. In the future, efforts will continue to deepen the development of CIPE, exploring more effective integration methods to cultivate the new generation of talent who are both professionally competent and morally grounded.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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