

# Integration of Ideological and Political Elements in *Economic Law* Curriculum for Economics and Management Majors: Exploration and Instructional Design

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**Abstract:** The teaching objectives of *Economic Law*, which emphasize "integrity in commerce, awareness of commercial regulations, and strength in business skills", align closely with the ideological and political education goal of "building character and cultivating a holistic, well-rounded, and ethically proficient talent". This course holds substantial value in terms of ideological and moral guidance, as it integrates rich resources from traditional culture, contextualizes real-life cases relevant to students, and incorporates current societal issues into professional knowledge. Through the exploration and integration of ideological and political elements, the course aims to enhance both capability and value-based education within the framework of knowledge transmission.

**Keywords:** Economic Law, Ideological and Political Elements, Traditional Culture, Current Events.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In 2016, General Secretary Xi Jinping, at the National Conference on Ideological and Political Work in Higher Education, emphasized the educational vision of "building character, cultivating ethical and capable talent with comprehensive abilities for holistic development". On May 28, 2020, the Ministry of Education issued the *Guidelines for Ideological and Political Construction in Higher Education Curriculum*, which states: "To fulfill the fundamental task of character building, it is essential to integrate value cultivation, knowledge transmission, and competency development into a unified whole. Promoting ideological and political education within the curriculum means embedding value guidance within the process of knowledge and skill development, thereby helping students cultivate the proper worldview, outlook on life, and values. This is essential to talent cultivation and is a requisite component" (Ministry of Education, 2020). This statement clarifies the relationship among the three core elements—values, knowledge, and ability—in higher education's role in shaping students. It elucidates the essence of ideological and political education, underscoring that in the character-building process, values surpass knowledge and skills in importance; value cultivation is the foremost priority and must be organically integrated with skill development and knowledge transmission. The educational efficacy of nurturing well-rounded talent lies in fully exploring the ideological and political elements embedded within diverse courses. As a foundational course in economics and management majors, *Economic Law* plays a crucial role in fostering socially responsible citizens and economically adept professionals in a rule-of-law society.

## 2. THE NECESSITY OF IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION IN THE ECONOMIC LAW CURRICULUM

In the context of globalization, studying *Economic Law* not only involves understanding the national legal system but also requires an international perspective, particularly as China advances the "Belt and Road Initiative" and foreign trade exchanges intensify. The demand for legal professionals with international expertise is steadily growing. Currently,

economic governance trends are shifting towards internationalization and standardization. Therefore, ideological and political education within the *Economic Law* curriculum should not only focus on popularizing domestic laws but also aim to cultivate students' understanding of international legal principles and frameworks. By incorporating recent international trade issues and legal case studies into the curriculum, students' perspectives are broadened, their awareness of legal principles is strengthened, and a sense of pride in China's achievements in building a rule-of-law economy is fostered.

### 2.1 Wide Audience for the Course

As a foundational course in numerous disciplines (such as accounting, international economics and trade, investment studies, financial engineering, human resource management, e-commerce, marketing, information management, and engineering management), *Economic Law* covers a wide range of professional fields and engages large student cohorts. Integrating ideological and political education with *Economic Law* content allows students to simultaneously develop their understanding of professional knowledge, legal thinking, legal awareness, and professional ethics. The complexity and specialization of the economic domain demand a thorough exploration of national spirit and interest. Cultivating students' abilities to discern core issues beyond surface-level complexities and to evaluate matters from the perspective of national and cultural interests is essential.

### 2.2 Close Connections Between Course Content and Ideological and Political Education

The *Economic Law* course encompasses relationships among market entities, transaction relationships, market competition and supervision, macroeconomic regulation, and market protection. Core topics include: laws governing market entities, such as *Company Law*, *Partnership Enterprise Law*, *Individual Proprietorship Law*, and *Bankruptcy Law*; laws governing market conduct, such as *Contract Law*, *Guarantee Law*, and *Agency Law*; laws governing market competition and supervision, such as *Product Quality Law*, *Anti-Unfair Competition Law*, and *Anti-Monopoly Law*; and laws protecting the market, such as *Consumer Protection Law* and *Intellectual Property Law*. The course covers numerous areas of law, combining theoretical and practical elements. Many legal institutions are closely linked with daily life and social realities. Through learning fundamental legal concepts, principles, and rules, students gain an understanding of the legal adjustments and constraints that underlie various economic and commercial activities. They develop a legal mindset, recognizing that a market economy is a rule-of-law economy where market transactions and competitive behaviors are governed by laws; lawful actions receive protection, while unlawful ones face legal consequences. This perspective lays a foundation for future courses in economics and management.

### 2.3 Alignment of Course and Ideological and Political Education Objectives

The primary objective of this course is to study a range of legal regulations that govern economic activities, requiring students to master fundamental legal principles and basic knowledge across various fields of law. Students are expected to apply their knowledge in analyzing and solving real-world issues. By exploring the inherent ideological and political value of the curriculum, the course emphasizes value-oriented education within the transmission of knowledge, achieving the teaching objectives of "integrity in commerce, awareness of commercial regulations, and strength in business skills" (Yan, 2021). "Integrity in commerce" calls for economics and management students to uphold and value commercial ethics, including honesty, fair trade, cooperation, mutual benefit, and equity; "awareness of commercial regulations" encourages students to become familiar with laws related to business and *Economic Law*, establishing legal awareness and developing a legal mindset; "strength in business skills" prepares students to acquire essential professional skills and competencies in areas such as negotiation, contract discussions, teamwork, and dispute resolution. Ultimately, as students gain expertise in legal knowledge, they also enhance their "public morality, professional ethics, and personal virtue".

## 3. EXPLORATION OF IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE ECONOMIC LAW CURRICULUM

The exploration of ideological and political elements aims not only to enhance the ideological depth of the curriculum but also to guide students in understanding and reflecting on the real-world implications of *Economic Law* from multiple perspectives. By integrating ideological content with legal studies, students can more profoundly appreciate the social responsibilities and moral obligations underlying the rule of law. Centering on students' real-life needs, the course content transforms into topics for reflection and learning, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the rule of law and civic

legal awareness in a rule-of-law nation. The ideological elements in *Economic Law* emphasize not only the transmission of legal knowledge but also the cultivation of students as responsible citizens with legal thinking, a sense of duty, and moral integrity.

### 3.1 Exploring Traditional Cultural Resources in China

Since the 18th National Congress, General Secretary Xi Jinping has repeatedly emphasized cultural confidence, providing numerous profound insights. He stated, "Without the 5,000-year civilization of China, there would be no successful path for us today." Chinese culture, extensive and profound, has cultivated traditional values over 5,000 years, embodying the core spiritual pursuit of the Chinese nation and representing its unique cultural identity. The foundations of China's civil and economic legal system draw upon the essence of Western legal systems while remaining deeply rooted in Chinese traditional culture, providing a wealth of historical and cultural material to explore. The teaching of *Economic Law* requires both an international perspective and an understanding of traditional Chinese culture. Selected materials help students appreciate the relationship between Chinese cultural traditions and legal philosophy, offering insights into the evolution and achievements of China's legal system. Confucian values such as "benevolence", "righteousness", "harmony", and "moderation" reflect the ethical foundation of Chinese culture, supporting *Economic Law* in its pursuit of fairness and justice (Li, 2020). Connecting *Economic Law* with Chinese traditional culture reinforces cultural confidence. For instance, when explaining the "concept of law", the ancient character for "law" (灋) provides a useful entry point. The mythical creature zhì (獬豸) was believed to judge right from wrong and would strike the guilty with its single horn. In *Shuowen Jiezi*, it is recorded: 灋 means punishment and fairness, symbolized by water; zhì represents judgment, striking down injustice, hence 灋 combines water, zhì, and balance. The character 灋 embodies the ancient pursuit of fairness and justice, revealing the wisdom of past generations. Such cultural references encourage students to build confidence in Chinese culture. Following the explanation of 灋, students are encouraged to ponder: Is "level as water" true equality? Does absolute equality equate to fairness? Are "military personnel priority", "green channels" in hospitals, and "priority seating for the elderly, weak, sick, and pregnant" unequal? This critical reflection helps students understand "fairness and justice" more deeply. In *Consumer Protection Law*, preferential treatment for consumers, and in *Individual Income Tax Law*, the use of progressive tax rates—taxing the wealthy more and the poor less or exempting them—illustrates the core objective of substantive fairness as one of the guiding principles of *Economic Law*.

### 3.2 Exploring Contemporary, Real-Life Contexts Relevant to Students

Aligned with the goal of cultivating talent in economics and management, the *Economic Law* curriculum is designed to balance theory and practice, with an emphasis on application. The renowned American jurist Justice Holmes remarked, "The life of the law has not been logic; it has been experience," while a Chinese scholar observed, "The life of the law lies not only in experience but in life." Abstract and complex legal texts and regulations hold value only when applied in real contexts, with comprehension as a prerequisite for legal application. Drawing from students' study and daily lives enables a sense of empathy and resonance. Case studies of familiar examples elucidate legal principles, clarify legal intent, highlight legal values, and facilitate deeper understanding of legal rules and systems. For example, "well-known trademarks" in *Trademark Law* receive special protections such as cross-category protection, safeguarding against malicious trademark registration, and resistance against unauthorized company name or domain name registration. A trademark remains the same, but its status can change drastically. Here, I introduce a story about the actor Huang Bo, who noted that in the early days of his career, he encountered people from all walks of life on set. Now, however, he is surrounded by people who treat him exceptionally well, always smiling, asking if he is tired, or offering him food. This observation illustrates that while the person remains the same, the surrounding environment changes, altering one's circumstances. From a generic trademark to a well-known one, from a background actor to today's Huang Bo, each journey embodies perseverance and effort. Sometimes, when it seems impossible to change one's environment, focusing on self-improvement may yield unexpected results.

### 3.3 Integrating Social Hotspot Events

Social hotspot events are those that attract widespread public attention, spanning multiple societal sectors and significantly impacting social development. They are characterized by broad public interest, complexity, dynamic nature, timeliness, and authenticity (Qiao, 2021). With increasing information accessibility, social hotspots are becoming more

frequent, often affecting public welfare and closely relating to individuals. Educators should stay attentive to these issues, incorporating them into the classroom to guide student discussions and foster skill development and value-based education. In a rule-of-law society, each prominent event can be analyzed and interpreted from a legal perspective. For instance, integrating events such as the COVID-19 response, U.S.-China trade disputes, the control battle at Dangdang, Kangmei Pharmaceutical’s financial fraud, trademark issues involving "Tongguan Roujiamo" and "Xiaoyao Town Spicy Soup", parody ads of "Guojiao 1573", and Gree’s air conditioner controversy into the *Economic Law* curriculum provides students with legal insights. By discussing these events, students are encouraged to build a sense of patriotism, social responsibility, and mission, as well as a well-rounded worldview and value system.

**3.4 Integrating Ideological Elements with Professional Knowledge**

Ideological education should not exist for its own sake nor be forced into the curriculum. Instead, ideological elements should be seamlessly woven into core knowledge points, enabling students to experience a subtle but transformative educational process. Professional knowledge provides the framework, while ideological elements naturally integrate, creating a symbiotic relationship that elevates the curriculum to a higher level of thought. This integration, as seamless as water merging with milk, enhances students' comprehension and acceptance, allowing ideological education to subtly influence them without overt imposition.

**Table 1: Ideological and Political Integration Points in *Company Law***

| Professional Knowledge Point                   | Ideological and Political Integration Point   |
|--|---|
| Corporate Social Responsibility                | Corporate social responsibility highlights the importance of civic responsibility; organizational responsibility guides individual responsibility.                                      |
| Forms of Capital Contribution                  | Using "intellectual property as capital" encourages students to continually invest in and enhance their intellectual capital in the knowledge economy era, fostering lifelong learning. |
| Company Name                                   | The company name approval system, including cases where names like “Neighbor Wang” are rejected, promotes resistance to vulgar culture.   |
| Qualifications of Directors and Supervisors    | Restrictions on director and supervisor qualifications due to criminal or dishonest behavior emphasize integrity and the principle of “Gentlemen seek wealth righteously.”              |
| Non-competition for Directors and Supervisors  | The duty of loyalty for directors and supervisors reinforces the importance of commitment to one’s team and dedication to the organization.   |
| Equity Transfer in Limited Liability Companies | The rules on equity division during divorce highlight the importance of financial independence, personal integrity, and autonomy in relationships for women.                            |

**4. TEACHING DESIGN OF IDEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL ELEMENTS IN THE ECONOMIC LAW CURRICULUM**

To effectively integrate ideological and political education into the *Economic Law* curriculum, a diverse range of interactive methods should be employed. Especially in the context of advancing information technology and new media, combining online and offline teaching methods can significantly enhance the impact of ideological and political education. Teachers can leverage various online resources and learning platforms to present ideological content to students in audio, video, and text formats, creating a multi-sensory learning environment and enriching the course content. This multidimensional interaction not only increases the course’s appeal but also helps students engage with ideological and political content naturally, fostering a deep understanding of *Economic Law’s* role in promoting social fairness, justice, and order.

**4.1 Pre-Class Introduction**

Pre-class introductions to ideological elements can be facilitated by assigning case analyses, discussions on current events, or project-based open assignments. Case analysis or open assignments can be completed as team projects before class and presented as PPTs for classroom discussion, with grades allocated based on content and presentation quality as well as each member’s contribution. Pre-class introduction enhances students’ autonomous learning, as the assigned cases

or social issues are typically complex and multifaceted, requiring knowledge from various areas of law. Teachers should guide students to conduct comprehensive analysis by integrating previously learned legal concepts and upcoming content, thereby encouraging both review and preview for improved engagement in self-directed learning.

For instance, after covering *Partnership Enterprise Law*, *Company Law*, and *Enterprise Bankruptcy Law* and before introducing *Securities Law*, I assigned a comprehensive pre-class project on the landmark “Kangmei Pharmaceutical Financial Fraud Case,” which recently reached its first-instance judgment (all defendants announced no appeal, making the judgment final). This pre-class project invited students to analyze the facts of the case and explore issues such as false statements, independent directors, joint liability, and securities class-action suits by drawing on principles from *Partnership Enterprise Law*, *Company Law*, *Bankruptcy Law*, and *Securities Law*. Additionally, students examined the basis for the independent directors’ substantial liability, the calculation of compensation owed to investors, and the case’s implications for the development and improvement of the securities market. Due to the duration, scope, and high profile of the Kangmei case, as well as the significant financial impact and the shocking nature of the judgment, the case naturally sparks student interest. Through a thorough analysis of the case combined with a review and preview of professional knowledge, inquiry-based learning helps students deeply understand the structure and functioning of legal institutions. They gain insight into the protection of investors, severe penalties for violators, the duties of loyalty and diligence required of directors and supervisors, and the serious consequences of financial misconduct—a powerful “case-based” ideological education lesson, particularly for accounting majors.

#### 4.2 In-Class Integration

In-class integration primarily involves combining the specialized knowledge of economics and law in the textbook with Marxist thought, core socialist values, legal awareness, and other ideological content. This is achieved by using specific examples and assigning tasks for analysis, debate, or role-playing during lectures, which helps students develop skills in organizing ideas, analyzing issues, and solving problems. It also fosters active learning, strengthens logical thinking, and hones language skills in expressing and organizing arguments. Through critical thinking about social issues, students engage with social phenomena and use Marxist innovative theory to analyze and debate topics, identifying the underlying ideological elements within the professional content (Fan, 2020). This approach enhances students’ legal awareness, instills correct worldviews, values, and outlooks on life, and establishes a solid foundation for cultivating highly skilled professionals who uphold the values of law-abiding conduct, dedication to work, honesty, and trustworthiness in their future professional practices.

#### 4.3 Extracurricular Practical Expansion

Extracurricular practical activities mainly utilize students’ spare time to organize hands-on training related to *Economic Law*. Examples include watching legal programs, films on economic crimes, and court trial recordings. Students submit reflective essays on these experiences, enhancing their legal awareness and strengthening their understanding of the rule of law from a sensory and visual perspective. Activities such as *Economic Law* case debates, role-playing, and skits help bridge theory and practice. The preparation process fosters teamwork, while task allocation and role assignments nurture a sense of responsibility, communication skills, cooperation, and interpersonal abilities. These activities enhance personal character, organizational skills, and verbal articulation, improving students’ overall competencies. Additionally, hosting lectures on *Economic Law*, where legal practitioners share real-life cases, enables students to grasp the tangible presence of *Economic Law* in everyday life.

### 5. CONCLUSION

Ideological and political education, at its core, encompasses patriotism, self-care, love for others, dedication, self-discipline, integrity, responsibility, the pursuit of justice, and willingness to contribute—all aiming at a prosperous nation and individual well-being. All forms of education that inspire people toward goodness, beauty, and truth are ideological and political education; they can be both grand and humble, expansive or intimate, ranging from the majesty of mountains and rivers to the warmth of daily life. The humanities and social sciences, focusing on cultural and social phenomena, inherently embody a wealth of human spirit and serve as a cultural sanctuary (Pan & Wang, 2021). Therefore, the curriculum in the humanities and social sciences possesses significant ideological and political value. Transforming a course into one with ideological and political depth is a subject every educator should study deeply. The role of

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specialized educators is to seamlessly incorporate ideological and political elements into professional teaching, merging knowledge transmission with value formation. This approach allows students to experience ideological and political education without feeling its presence, achieving the ideal of “vast landscapes, everyday life, all is you, and none is not you”—the highest state of ideological and political education.

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