

# A Practice of the Concept of Holistic education in Medical Humanities Curriculum

## -- The Report of Action Research in "Shi-literati and Chinese Culture"

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### Introduction

#### ● Holistic education :

The definition of Holistic Education given by Ron Miller (1990) advocated that schools should provide an ideal study climate for Holistic Worldview and set goals to help students developing their potential, brought up students as "the Whole Person" perspective. The concept can be described as three levels:

(1) Goals and Principles: Learner-centered Teaching. (2) Content and Formations: Integrating knowledge, learning skills, historical thinking, social practice, team-work, creatively learning process...etc. (3) Institution and Organization: suitable materials, environment and resource supported by educational administration.

#### ● Action Research :

Under the actions of improving circumstance, Action research is strategy for solving practical problems. Action Research of Teaching helps teachers address the issues through mutual learning in teaching communities, solving on-site teaching problems. Not only to figure out the solutions, a teacher use Action research to reflect and confirm the connection between teaching goals and effectiveness.

#### ● Medical Humanities Curriculum

The elective course, categorized into Medical Humanities Program for third grade medical students, aims to enhance students' communicative ability and to take practical action that turn knowledge into actual actions. The course, of which content was a basic introduction to the origin and social influences of *shi-literati* (intellectuals) in the field in History of Chinese Culture, assigned students to study classical academic journals, write down their reviews, and proceed Group discussion in class. The curriculum helps medical students to build up Professional ethics concepts. The activities of Experiential Learning positively facilitate medical students' Affective Domain Development on the goals of Medical Humanities Program.

### Objective

Though the method of Action Research, researcher could reflect on the using of traditional history teaching in medical humanities education curriculum in Holistic Worldview.

### Method

#### ● Compare Observation Method of Qualitative Description:

Observation Method of Qualitative Description: Gather and analyze the students' final reports in each semester. The data was collected in three semesters, from 2013 to 2016 (R1, 2, 3). According to these documents, we discuss the effectiveness as the change of the curriculum design.

#### ● Classroom Data Collection:

Students were asked to write down their feedback toward today's class. The teaching assistant (TA) also would make discussion with students and take notes. The data collection includes those feedbacks, classroom observation records by the TA.

#### ● Course Design:

To develop students' Culture literacy, Humanism quality and, to strengthen systematic discourse ability, we designed a personal final report formation for about 40 third-year medical students. The students were asked to choose and to do the research of historical personages or events with the theme of "Social Responsibility of Intellectuals" and compile the data and contents as complete reports. The first year (R1) takes the form of a personal written report; the second round (R2) drastically changes the report form into oral and written reports in groups; the third round (R3) course continues the pattern of the R2.



### Progress in Action Research

#### R1 → R2 : Modification

**problem** • Did the result correspond to the goal of Holistic Education?  
• The average level of history special reports written by R1 students was impressive, but it lack of the expectation and imagination of prospective medical clinical work in their topics and contents of writing.

**analysis** • Medical students expect humanities knowledge can be used in the practical clinical circumstances.

**solution** • Feedback shows that most medical students regard the contents of medical humane courses as "a class to take a rest". It is difficult to realize the character of training humanistic courses in clinical practice circumstances.

**problem** • Change the formation of final report to enhance students' intrinsic motivation.

**analysis** • Beginning with the second round(R2), the final report is changed to a group of 4-5 people. Students should interview a "public intellectual" to design an interview topic based on the respondents' life histories, social practices and actions. The members of the group should work together to discuss, prepare an oral presentation in 20 minutes and complete a written report in 5,000 words or more.

#### R2 → R3 : Observation

**problem** • Could the effectiveness of the group interview report formation be sustained?  
• As a whole, R2 was outstanding. However, could effectiveness be continually preserved by copying the formation?

**analysis** • Dilemma: the multiple perspectives and presentation exquisiteness of the subject.

**solution** • In R3, the students showed more multiple perspectives than previous year, but the presentation was usually monotonous. On the aspects of discussion details, R2 showed more ambition and intricacy in students' discussion activities.

**problem** • Using effective resources to integrate the class activities and relative curriculums

**analysis** • The group-interview-report for final presentation was proved feasible, but still need to be integrated with other mid-term activities in the class. Also, it could be integrated with other teaching content including Clinical Practice Programs.

### Results / Effectiveness Evaluation

#### Assessment of Student Performance:

On the scope of Chinese history, 60% students of R1 selected historical events or phenomenon (such as battles or social trends) as a discussion report; another 40% chose the characters as subject. The content of R1 had shown more historical knowledge, less personal inner exploration of students. Next, the results and analysis of the R2 and R3 in group reports are shown in the following table:

	R2 (2015 Spring)	R3 (2016 Spring)
interview target	4 groups : Medical Doctor 2 groups : Professor of humanities and social sciences 1 group : Professor of Arts 1 group : Public official of Public Health	5 groups : Medical Doctor 1 group : Professor of Arts 1 group : Public official of Public Health 1 group : Member of Non-government organization (NGO)
Performance results	All reports contained social practices of "intellectuals" and presented much personal feelings while interacting with their interviewee.	Some students found it harder to grasp the definition of "Public intellectuals" and presented more environmental issues (e.g. social or eco issues). They paid less attention to the interviewees' life than R2 did.
Issue in the whole	Presenting a high degree of correlation between the history of individual lives and their social contribution.	Presenting experts and scholars' professional accomplishment and their rigorous disciplines.
Mutual evaluation	Each student joined the scoring system. Analyzing the students' work and the teacher's quantitative and qualitative feedback, the scores and opinions between students and the teacher are quite consistent.	

### Discussion / Conclusion

● Action Research can help teachers improve the quality of their teaching design and precise implementation in medical humanities Curriculum. From the perspectives of the educators' observations and teaching records, we could massively use a variety of Qualitative Research Method to evaluate the effectiveness of educational affective domain.

● Following the concept of Constructivism in Curriculum, History teaching in Medical Department involves the ability of Information integration and context analysis, which can promote students to effectively construct and integrate the ethics concepts and social practice, and to continually arouse their reflexive thinking.

● Though Action research, we could understand and interpret the meaning of each unique educational phenomenon, and substantially improve the history teaching quality toward the objectives of Holistic Education for medical students.

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