

# Research on Cultural Construction Strategy of University Motto

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**Abstract.** University motto is the concentrated reflection of university educational philosophy. To carry out the cultural construction of university motto should pay attention to the following three aspects: the form of the university motto should be consistent with the unification of refinement and diversification; the content of university motto should be consistent with the unification of uniqueness and innovation.

## 1. Introduction

The university motto is to embody the cultural tradition, historical accumulation, value pursuit and school-running characteristics of a university, which is the coagulation and sublimation of the education concept of university. Through the university motto, one can go into the spiritual world of this university to appreciate and explore the priceless treasures. Reviews on the cultural development of the university motto in China, summarizes cultural construction strategy of the university motto, and prospects the trend of the cultural construction development of the university motto in China, which has a great significance for the university cultural construction.

## 2. The form of the university motto should be consistent with the unification of refinement and diversification

### 2.1 Refinement

China's ancient the concise family instructions, couplets and "academies motto" have an important influence on the form of the university motto. In the form of the university motto, should be precise and tolerant, with profound meaning, philosophy, and be intuitive and concise, catchy, easy to recite and promote. That is to insist on the refinement.

University motto is like the soul of a university, which is different from the university rules and focuses on the value orientation of a university, so the motto is suitable for the expression of refinement. University motto and enterprise publicity slogans have similarities. They all have the function of the propaganda, to make external publicity of the university and expand the reputation of the university. It is naturally for the refinement and clearness to make internal propaganda of education philosophy of the university and the requirement to the teachers and students. The motto of the university is to focus on the spirit of making a contribution in all kinds of common values. Only seek refinement, instead of quantity.

### 2.2 Diversification

The expression of university motto should be concise, but is not equal to the form of monotony. The form should be diversified, and should not be limited to "style of four words in eight characters" or "style of two words in eight characters". It is also no need antithesis neat, or the arrangement of words, while it can be a sentence, a verb, or a noun. In which form to express the university motto, it is determined by the content. The purpose of the selection is to better express the content.

Most of the existing university motto stated specification in our country, emphasized the antithesis neat and rhyme, which made the university motto be concise, or showed the philosophy by material, enlightened conscientious, or vivid, attractive with mild tone, such as southwest forestry university's motto "to nurture men and plant trees, most real and most good" and the motto of Nanjing university of aeronautics and astronautics "diligently explore till acquire profound

knowledge, and be willingness to give till achieve the great idea of governing and benefiting the people", etc.

The western university's motto is not to ask for rhyme or antithesis, nor does it has the requirement of normative statement. The most of motto of the western university is to use the form of sentences, even if it is not a sentence, it is also a noun phrase. It is not like the university motto in our country mainly with the verb. Such as the university of Pennsylvania's motto "you can get nowhere without character study", the university of Edinburgh's motto "egghead were able to see the appearance of things, also found that its connotation" which are all a sentence; the university of Michigan's motto "art, science, truth", the United States Military Academy's motto "duty, honor, nation", etc., which are all a noun phrase. "It is related to the Chinese and western national characteristics and language habits. The university's verbs mottos of China reflect a strong practical rational spirit, but western mottos are with more speculative color, which pay attention to the true state of things and theoretical exploration of truth. It can be seen that different university motto reflects the national culture of different styles.<sup>[1]</sup>

Creating a new university motto, both must fully absorb the advantages of the traditional Chinese university mottos, also should pay attention to draw lessons from the strengths of the university mottos of western countries. The expression of university motto should pursue the diversification of forms on the basis of the refinement principle, to avoid the integral monotonous, rigid and formatting in university motto in China.

### **3. The content of university motto should be consistent with the unification of uniqueness and innovation**

History tells us that the government's excessive intervention in higher education will reduce the "vitality" of colleges and universities, which is not conducive to the development of higher education. To guarantee the principal status of the university's running and to uphold academic freedom can greatly stimulate the "positive energy" of colleges and universities, and promote the diversity and prosperity of higher education. The unity of uniqueness and innovation in the content of university motto is the direct embodiment of the diversification and prosperity of higher education.

#### **3.1 Uniqueness**

The university motto should be rich in connotation, but not exhaustive and all-embracing. It should emphasize the characteristics of the university, uniqueness and individuation. University motto is a cultural card of the university, and should closely related to the university's educational philosophy, university-running orientation, personnel training target, historical tradition, academic pursuit, subject setting, and geographical characteristics, therefore the university motto of each university should reflect its own personalized features, unique, to make people hear the university motto and can quickly raise to the perceptual knowledge and rational comprehension of the university.

There are many aspects of Chinese universities orientation, which can be divided into affiliated institutions and local colleges according to the relationship of administrative subordination. According to the university-running subject, it can be divided into state-sponsored universities and private colleges. According to the division of subject structure, it can be divided into single-subject colleges and universities, multi-disciplinary colleges and universities and comprehensive colleges and universities. It can be divided into research colleges and universities, teaching-and-research-oriented colleges and universities and vocational technical colleges according to education-running levels.<sup>[2]</sup> According to different criteria, there will be different university orientation, which will make different positioning universities have different university motto construction. In January 2007, the new university motto of Shanghai foreign studies university "Have noble character and lofty aspiration, and take the essence of ancient and modern civilizations to promote harmony between society and human beings" was formally established, replacing the original motto "civilization, unity, truth and progress". New motto is concise, vividly embodies the construction of Shanghai international studies university with internationalization,

high level, multi-disciplinary attribution and type of research and teaching of the university-running orientation. At the same time, avoid the broad, the same, and overcome the rigidity and embody its characteristics.

The specialty of the university and the characteristics of the subject are also the elements to construct the university motto. In this respect, some professional colleges and universities have already made a good example. China youth university for political sciences' motto "seeking truth from facts and be full of vigor and vitality", which fully reflects the youth group is "vigor", and are the backbone of the country, the hope of the nation. As Zhedong Mao given a speech to Chinese overseas students in Moscow in 1957: "the world is yours, also is our, but at the end of the day is yours. You young people are full of vigor and vitality. It is like the sun at eight o'clock in the morning. The hope is on you."<sup>[3]</sup> At the same time, it is necessary for the youth to study politics to adhere to the scientific attitude of "seeking truth from facts".

### **3.2 Innovation**

The innovation of the content of university motto is firstly reflected in The Times of university motto. On the one hand, we should reflect the consistent cultural tradition and educational philosophy of the university, and oppose the utilitarianism and secularization thoughts to make erosion to the independent spirit of the university. On the other hand, we should keep pace with the Times and innovate constantly to give the university a certain sense of social sense and responsibility. The motto of Beijing university of technology "strive to make progress, innovate constantly" and Hunan university's motto "seek truth from facts, dare to be first", etc., are all reflected good motto of social era characteristics, the sense of responsibility and sense of mission.

The innovation of the content of university motto is more important in the openness aspect of university motto. On the one hand, we should inherit the excellent traditional culture of our country, and highlight the demands of individual ethics and learning and culture. On the other hand, the construction of the university motto should also use the experience of the famous universities and universities of foreign countries, so as to develop the new education concept and make up for the lack of the concept in the existing university motto. Creating a new university motto, should strengthen the expression of the pursuit of truth and academic freedom's voice, and enhance the consciousness of serving for the country and the society, to establish "people-oriented" education philosophy, and to strengthen the humanistic care and attention to individual needs and personality development.

The content of university motto should be consistent with the unification of uniqueness and innovation. It not only should stick to its own tradition and characteristics, also should reflect the spirit of era, and learn advanced education concept from foreign countries. It requests us to have the features of inclusive and forward-looking in constructing university motto.

### **4. Conclusion**

Shall conduct literature publishment about the content, standard words and derivation, and connotation explanation of the university motto after the formation of university motto of colleges and universities. And also shall make full use of ways, such as the university files, propaganda window, university website and the campus broadcast, to develop propaganda of the university motto, interpretation of the university motto, and create culture atmosphere of the university motto. In addition, can also put the university motto in the buildings, such as tablet, wall, and monument and carved buildings. Or writing the university motto in enrollment guide, the university profile, surface of campus card, and the letter of admission for freshmen, and yearbook, etc. The university teachers and students can know, understand and remember the university motto through the literature way.

The spirit of university motto is as a dominant consciousness of university, which formation is not achieved overnight, and must go through a process of patient repeated guidance and cultivation. Therefore, shall constantly carry out education activities of the university motto, and promote the cultural construction of the university motto. University motto publicity and education activities

should be integrated into other campus cultural activities. The education activity will have the best effect only if it attracts the participation of all staff and students and evokes the emotional resonance of staff and students.

Culture construction of university motto is not a simple of "consider school motto as it stands", but a comprehensive and all-round system engineering, which will be brought into the university cultural construction system, to constantly enrich and promote the construction of university culture.

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