Exploring the Construction Path of Characteristic Volunteer Service Teams in "Double First-Class" Universities under the Volunteer Service Framework

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Abstract. Volunteer service, as an important component of the Communist Youth League's work with youth in "Double First-Class" universities, plays an indispensable role in carrying out ideological and political education and nurturing socialist core values. Currently, volunteer service, primarily driven by social forces, focuses mainly on public welfare-oriented social service projects. The sustainability of volunteer service forces in universities is generally limited, highlighting the urgent need for universities to establish relevant volunteer service systems to meet educational demands. Starting with the definition of characteristic volunteer service teams in "Double First-Class" universities, this article discusses the importance and necessity of building such teams. Additionally, it analyzes and discusses the current status of the construction of characteristic volunteer service teams in "Double First-Class" universities, addressing the related issues. Finally, taking the "Fun Programming into Campus" volunteer service team at Harbin Institute of Technology (Weihai) as an example, the article provides suggestions on how to build characteristic volunteer service teams in "Double First-Class" universities. These suggestions are intended to have a certain reference value for further promoting the comprehensive development of characteristic volunteer service teams in "Double First-Class" universities.

1. Introduction

Volunteer service, as a crucial component of the Communist Youth League's engagement in youth work in "Double First-Class" universities, plays an indispensable role in conducting ideological and political education and fostering socialist core values within higher education institutions. Currently, volunteer service is primarily driven by social forces, initiated by non-governmental entities, and focuses mainly on public welfare-oriented social service projects[1, 2]. Therefore, in order to more effectively meet educational needs, universities urgently need to establish a comprehensive and sustainable volunteer service system. This system should have a well-organized structure to ensure that volunteer training, coordination, and implementation proceed in an orderly manner. By establishing such a volunteer service system, universities can better harness the collective strength of students, offer diverse and targeted volunteer service projects, and thereby serve society more effectively while promoting the comprehensive development of students.

Universities possess a large pool of highly qualified individuals, representing latent high-quality resources for volunteer activities[3]. These individuals can meet educational needs across different age groups. Additionally, universities offer a diverse range of courses covering various fields, serving as important references for curriculum development, schedule arrangement, and educational continuity. Furthermore, volunteer service is increasingly attentive to the needs and sense of achievement of both volunteers and beneficiaries. Participants hope to receive spiritual feedback while fulfilling public welfare objectives, including but not limited to mindset transformation, guidance in values, and personal cultivation[4].

When examined through the lenses of societal progress and the evolving zeitgeist, the unique attributes of volunteer service in universities take on a rich array of connotations. It becomes evident that the development of these distinctive features requires not just attention but urgent prioritization. In light of the dynamic changes in our society and the ongoing evolution of our era, fostering and enhancing the unique aspects of volunteer service within university settings emerges as a critical imperative. This imperative is underscored by the growing complexities and diversification of societal needs, necessitating a strategic and forward-looking approach to university volunteerism that goes beyond the conventional and addresses the emerging challenges of our times.
2. The Necessity of Building Distinctive Volunteer Service Teams in "Double First-Class" University

From the view of the current status of university volunteer team construction, there is a serious lack of understanding of volunteering in most cases. The root cause is the absence of specific goals and methodological guidance, insufficient systematic development, and a somewhat inadequate offering of relevant course training in various universities. As a result, most volunteers lack professional expertise, and the role of volunteering is not very clear to them. They are unable to engage in volunteer services in an effective manner, leading to low efficiency in the current volunteer system. The preparation costs are high, requiring more pre-planning and communication measures to prevent unknown situations, which can be burdensome for volunteers[5, 6].

"Double First-Class" universities, distinguished by robust disciplinary strengths and a diverse range of majors, are strategically positioned to address a myriad of volunteer activity needs. These institutions possess the capacity to provide volunteer activity resources that align seamlessly with a spectrum of professional and workplace requirements. This inherent flexibility expedites the establishment of volunteer teams, laying a robust foundation for the development of distinctive volunteer service team systems within the university framework.

In the context of university volunteerism, there is a prevailing trend towards comprehensiveness and efficiency. Volunteer teams within universities generally demonstrate a comprehensive and effective approach, minimizing time costs, prudently conserving social resources, and exemplifying the overall high quality inherent in university student teams. This collective efficiency not only amplifies the impact of volunteer activities but also underscores the caliber and commitment of university students towards contributing to societal needs.

In the current sociocultural milieu, the predominant emphasis within the realm of volunteer service conspicuously revolves around routine assistance activities, as exemplified by initiatives like "caring for the elderly in nursing homes" and "maintaining urban hygiene." This observable trend underscores a discernible proclivity towards uniformity and singularity in the landscape of volunteer efforts, thereby placing significant constraints on the participants and circumscribing their capacity for individual expression and initiative.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that a substantial majority of universities autonomously organize and execute volunteer activities without the establishment of a systematic and cohesive volunteer service framework that could serve as a robust and comprehensive reference point. This inherent lack of systematic coordination and overarching structure inevitably gives rise to instances of redundancy and overlap in their respective endeavors. Consequently, this contributes to a broader set of limitations, characterized by a fragmented and arbitrary approach, which undermines the potential effectiveness and impact of volunteerism within the higher education landscape.

3. The Current Status of Building Characteristic Volunteer Service Teams in "Double First-Class" University

Upon analyzing the data gathered through on-site visits and information collection, it becomes evident that the ongoing development of university volunteer teams lacks a resilient system, presenting challenges in establishing a structured approach to volunteer activities. Universities, as a common trend, frequently overlook the provision of specific training for volunteer services. This omission results in escalated time costs during the initial stages of volunteer activities and necessitates a considerable adaptation period.

Moreover, a recurring issue lies in the overlapping content and objectives of related volunteer activities, with an undue emphasis on simplistic service areas and forms. This is notably observed in a predominant focus on targeted educational support in remote regions. Additionally, a discernible gap exists in addressing needs related to subject teaching and urban volunteer services, highlighting the imperative for a more diversified and comprehensive approach in this domain.

Currently, the main body of volunteer service is mostly composed of university students. Due to the uniform nature of volunteer activities, there is a biased understanding of volunteer activities. Some perceive volunteer activities primarily as acts of social service, such as providing charitable assistance, often involving one-way giving from volunteers. Consequently, volunteers themselves find it challenging to experience growth and feedback. This perception leads to many students being unwilling to participate in volunteer activities, viewing it as a waste of time, and completing volunteer "tasks" with a somewhat casual attitude. This results in difficulties for both parties in obtaining feedback, which, over time, hampers the development of volunteer activities[7, 8].

While in the coordination of work, clear communication barriers emerge between volunteer subjects and teams. During the initial stages, there is a conspicuous lack of information sharing, posing challenges in acquiring a comprehensive understanding of the on-the-ground situation during the preparation phase. This results in escalated upfront communication costs, demanding additional time and effort. The deficiency in facilities, protracted teaching processes, and an overarching emphasis on early childhood education collectively impede the harnessing of individual professional characteristics. Consequently, volunteers encounter difficulties in delivering more effective and precisely targeted volunteer services. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach to better leverage volunteers' professional strengths and achieve more effective and targeted volunteer services.
4. Exploration of Volunteer Service Team Construction at Harbin Institute of Technology, Weihai

In February 2017, a government document pointed out that "universities need to fully explore and utilize the ideological and political education resources inherent in various disciplines, integrate ideological values throughout the entire process and various aspects of education and teaching, establish a long-term mechanism for educating through teaching and practice, and further strengthen and improve ideological and political work in universities."

In response to the imperatives of the new era and the aspirations of the younger generation, numerous regions and universities are actively cultivating a culture of volunteer service within the realm of higher education. This dynamic engagement not only aligns with societal expectations, emphasizing the humanistic values and volunteer spirit inherent in young students but also strategically positions university students as a pivotal social resource. Beyond the confines of regular education, these voluntary initiatives serve as a profound and meaningful complement, enriching the overall learning experience by instilling a sense of social responsibility and civic engagement within the context of higher education.

Furthermore, this comprehensive approach to volunteerism facilitates effective coordination across diverse regions, providing a platform for university students to extend their assistance to a wider spectrum of individuals in need. By actively participating in volunteer service within the higher education context, students not only contribute to the betterment of society but also cultivate a holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities that exist beyond the confines of academic curricula. In this way, volunteerism becomes a transformative force, shaping not only the character of individual students but also fostering a culture of empathy, social awareness, and responsible citizenship within the society.

To better explore the significance of volunteer service, Harbin Institute of Technology (Weihai) established a volunteer service team in the School of Computer Science and Technology in the fall of 2020. In collaboration with Weihai Huancui International School, on October 20, 2021, they jointly established a university student practice base and officially established the first student practice base and officially established the first high school-university cooperative school-based student practice base and officially established the first high school-university cooperative school-based student practice base and officially established the first high school-university cooperative school-based student practice base and officially established the first high school-university cooperative school-based student practice base. This initiative facilitates the organized implementation of the pilot work in the early stages. Unlike many previous volunteer activities, which mainly focused on basic education, this volunteer service team primarily concentrates on supplementing programming knowledge and technology in collaboration with faculty and students from the School of Computer Science. The team's main members are current university students.

This youthful team not only contributes to maintaining work efficiency but also promotes the continuous advancement of teaching content and methods. It greatly aids in reforming the volunteer service system. The entire volunteer team is guided by the principle of "Fun Programming into Campus," emphasizing the improvement of the applicability and popularity of programming. They strive to reduce age and threshold restrictions for programming, delivering programming knowledge in a format enjoyable for students and imparting computer skills. By combining professional advantages with subject characteristics, the team guides students to think independently, explore autonomously, and lays the foundation for higher education for those interested. It also complements current high school programming education, meeting the contemporary societal demand for high technology.

Currently, the volunteer activities of this volunteer service team are roughly divided into three stages. In the early preparation stage, it mainly involves coordinating and communicating with the relevant responsible teachers, discussing, and preliminarily determining the course content. Simultaneously, by distributing surveys using platforms like Questionnaire Star, they collect and tally student learning needs and member teaching intentions. Based on this, they prepare and group lessons to facilitate the organized implementation of programming teaching activities.

During the mid-term teaching stage, they utilize the prepared information from the early stage and establish a complete teaching system, including organizing students into small groups for teaching to facilitate mutual reference during lesson preparation. Each group independently conducts teaching during the lesson, and the material submission stage is done on a group basis. Before class, they prepare the required materials for the lesson, including student worksheets, PowerPoint presentations, lesson plans, and post-class exercises. There is no fixed format for materials, and they can be created based on student situations and feedback from previous classes. Material collection is done during the class, and a summary and reflection are carried out after the class.

Throughout the teaching process, they maintain mutual communication among team members, communicate with students in a timely manner, and address any issues students encounter during post-class practice. They flexibly apply their knowledge to enhance the applicability of the teaching scenario and the rationality of teaching practices. By using examples and practical exercises, they guide students to immerse themselves in the learning atmosphere of programming, making the teaching content concrete, intuitive, and vivid. This fosters a teaching relationship that is both instructive and friendly.

The "Fun Programming into Campus" volunteer service team leverages its professional advantages and characteristics, primarily implementing educational volunteer services with a focus on interest. The team adopts a systematic and enjoyable approach to course content, emphasizing the enhancement of programming interest and abilities among primary and secondary school students. Simultaneously, it aims to popularize knowledge in the field of computer science, showcasing the enthusiastic dedication of university students. This
initiative not only conveys a sense of patriotism but also guides university students in establishing lofty ideals, contributing to the growth and development of students.

In response to the ongoing volunteer activities, the "Fun Programming into Campus" volunteer service team has undertaken a multifaceted approach to assess and enhance the impact of their endeavors. Employing surveys and comprehensive information collection efforts, the team has delved into the feasibility and effectiveness of their volunteer work.

Based on the insightful feedback garnered, it was revealed that a significant majority of students, surpassing half of the participants, perceive programming classes as a stimulating force, capable of cultivating interest and fostering a flexible and accessible learning experience. About 30% of students demonstrated commendable engagement, successfully completing both in-class and post-class exercises, while 15% acknowledged a limited understanding confined to the in-class content.

The team also focused on students' self-evaluation of their learned content. A substantial 70% of students self-assessed as excellent, affirming a high level of mastery, while 26% considered their understanding to be good.

Simultaneously, the team sought to understand the preferences of students actively participating in the teaching process. A significant 84% of students expressed a strong inclination towards interest-guided learning, emphasizing its effectiveness in grasping various dimensions of knowledge in the programming field. Additionally, 69% favored a hands-on approach, choosing to learn through practical small projects. Another 65% preferred a systematic learning structure that concentrates on syntax and fundamental knowledge, while 57% emphasized the importance of independent practice to enhance their ability to work autonomously. These nuanced insights illuminate the diverse teaching preferences within the student community, providing valuable guidance for further refining the volunteer service's educational approach.

5 Conclusion

Higher education institutions bear the profound responsibility of nurturing talent and serving society. Leveraging volunteer service as a platform, grounded in the philosophy that practical experience begets genuine knowledge, and prioritizing alignment with contemporary trends constitute effective strategies to refine the model of talent cultivation in universities. Given the escalating significance of constructing university volunteer service teams in the current landscape, the research findings of this paper present optimization strategies and viable approaches for universities to augment their volunteer service mechanisms. These insights hold broad implications for enhancing educational practices and furnish practical and feasible solutions for organizing specialized volunteer activities within the university context.

References