

## On Practice and Experience of Higher Education Management in BC Province of Canada

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**Abstract.** A group of 20 people under the program of 2016 Yunnan Province Higher Education Senior Administrative Personnel Overseas Study went to Langara College for 3-month study in Vancouver of Canada from 18 September to 18 December in 2016. Through careful study, understanding and grasping the basic national conditions and multiculturalism of Canada, the concept, system, policy and operation of higher education in BC, we have raised our understanding of the characteristics of higher education in western countries such as Canada and the operation & management of colleges and universities, activated our reflections on further promoting the development of higher education in Yunnan Province and improvement of the quality of personnel training. Team participants said that they have broadened their horizons through learning, renewed their ideas, enriched their knowledge, established confidence, obtain many gains and changes, and had a positive effect on improving themselves and even the work of their own institutions.

### Study-Organizing Situation

The learning group is composed of 13 colleges and universities and the management cadres of higher vocational colleges. The study period from September 18, 2016 to December 18, 2016, lasted 3 months. During the period, the main study covers 14 special topics such as Canada and BC higher education management system, BC transfer credit system, university strategic planning, university leadership strategy, 7 colleges and universities, 5 cultural and art venues and 1 aboriginal Community. The whole learning took class lectures, guest lectures, field visits as the main forms.

These studies made the members of the whole regiment had a better understanding of the development history, social and cultural characteristics, education system and so on of Canada and BC, and personally experienced the development of Canadian customs, social economy and culture, citizens' higher overall quality and advanced social governance philosophy. At the same time, we also have some understanding and thinking about the similarities and differences between the two countries, Yunnan province and BC province higher education management system, teaching ideas, management ways, etc.

### Basic Facts about Langara College

Located in Vancouver City of Canada and founded in 1965, Langara College has more than 400 full-time teachers and 8,000 full-time students, and more than one tenth of these students belong to international students from over 50 countries in the world.

Among 8,000 full-time students, 25% of them mainly take 31 kinds of optional diploma or certificate courses which cover the fields of business, computer science, software development and application, humanity, service, applied art or communication, etc., and 75% of them are studying first-year and second-year courses. All these college credit-transfer courses have made Langara College the one that could provide most quantity of these kinds of courses in Canada. If students are able to complete the first two-year basic courses in this college, then through the credit-transfer system they will gain better opportunity and conditions to transfer smoothly into such famous universities as University of British Columbia(UBC) and University of Simon Fraser(SFU) to continue study for bachelor degrees.

## **Practice and Experience of Higher Education Management in BC Province**

### **Credit Transfer System**

Credit transfer is an important part of higher education management systems of BC Province in Canada, which is under the unified management of BC Province's the Committee of University Admission and Transfer(BCCAT) with members including all public universities, colleges, university colleges and part of private schools in BC Province.

The so-called credit transfer is that one educational institution admits the course education and corresponding credits completed in and awarded by another educational institution. Credit transfer is BC Province most important and best-featured part of its higher education system, which not only builds up the "overpass" for all-citizen education and lifelong education, but also provides different groups of people with opportunities for corresponding education to a more important degree.

### **Flexible and Diversified Features of Education**

Colleges and universities in BC Province could be divided into Career College, Community College, University College and University, and most of them are operated by government with publicity features while universities and colleges shouldering different tasks. Seen from level perspective, universities belong to undergraduate and postgraduate education while colleges belong to junior college education. Seen from talent-cultivation perspective, universities mainly focus on bringing up research talents with bachelor degree or above while colleges mainly focus on bringing up pragmatic talents. Seen from course designing perspective, universities mainly focus on fundamental theories and academic research while colleges mainly focus on application of pragmatic skills to enable students to be ready for employment.

BC Province government has limited adjustment right over universities and colleges, and schools themselves are responsible for making decision and implementation of higher education management and teaching. Teaching quality is attended by the special coordination committee.

### **Diversified Teaching Devices and Complete Quality-Ensurance System**

During the study process, we witnessed the diversification in terms of teachers and course arrangement and we understood that it is encouraged to use multiple teaching methods according to different teaching aims and tasks. We also felt that it is encouraged to put focus on students' experiencing study, to build up proper study atmosphere, to cultivate students' capacity, to bring up students' critical thinking and to promote the application of modern teaching devices in time.

There exists diversified teaching quality-ensurance system where internal ensurance system is legislated and empowered by Canadian provinces to set up its own quality-ensurance standards with the colleges' or universities' academic autonomous rights. The higher education internal quality-ensurance mainly adopts two forms as self-assessment and peer expert review. In terms of external ensurance system, higher education quality is ensured through legislation, performance examination, membership, university rankings, major authentication, diploma quality assessment, etc.

### **Cooperative Education**

External cooperation has become an important content for Canadian higher education. Taking Langara College as an example, its main cooperation objects are government, enterprises, other colleges and universities, and all interest-related parties. The school pays a lot of attention to the external cooperation and utilizing various social resources during its operation and development while communicating and making balance with interest-related parties. Cooperative education has become a main feature of Canada education. One of the main ways of cooperative education is work-learning-mixture program.

### **Student Management (Service)**

Based on characteristics of "customer-oriented" and under the guidance theory of "student development", the student service work in BC Province of Canada have following features: The first is that an integrated organizational institution has been set up as the pre-condition to pursue overall management of student affairs and highly-integrated work functions, implementing the so called "one-stop supermarket" service mode. The second is that related laws and regulations have been stipulated as ensurance, which obviously makes the management of student affairs lawful. The third is that the platform of team-building has been enhanced to carry out personnel training with

the support of special organizations, to stipulate industry standards and to realize the professionalization of student affairs management. The fourth is that autonomous management has been promoted for student affairs management where students play a main role. The fifth is that Canadian higher education schools emphasize on taking care of the trifles in the process of students' growth, encouraging the development of students' personality, respecting students' own choices in terms of study, school activities and personal life, and building up relaxing environment for all-around development of students. The sixth is that the education of civic virtues is the carrier to promote quality education involving all students.

### **Financial Management**

Features of financial management of BC Provincial higher education include: emphasis on investment for education, favorable fund allocation methods for easy fund allocation by higher education schools, high degree of autonomous right for financial management and high application rate of assets, high degree of financial disclosure and informatization, etc. BC Provincial government fund-allocation and tuition income are the major and most steady fund source which account for 70% of the total income or even over 90% for some colleges. All expenditures of higher education schools including purchasing equipment are on the schools' own account, and schools enjoy full autonomous rights over finance.

### **Education Internationalization**

Canadian government takes education internationalization as one of its core contents of higher education strategic development plan by sticking to the principle of "setting foot on the country while facing the future", which devotes to providing cross-world, cross-nation and cross-culture excellent internationalized higher education resources for a long time to its local students and international students. Thus, Canada has always been one of the most attractive countries that internal students would like to go to.

Seen from the perspective of education situation of international students in higher education schools of Canada, these students come from respectively more than 130 countries in the world while the majority of them come from Asia. Chinese students have the biggest numbers accounting for 30.4%, India ranks the second 8.9%, and France the third 8.1%. International students mainly center in various higher education schools of Ontario Province, Québec Province and British Columbia Province.

### **Teaching Staff Construction of Higher Education**

Canadian colleges and universities implement the system of recruiting teachers across the world and integrating full time teachers and part time teachers, which widely absorbs university and college teachers who can meet the requirements. In the meanwhile, their teachers directly face the market, voluntarily flow, and serve for both universities and society in a free manner, which provides them with bigger space for individual development.

Most of Canadian colleges and universities have special institutions to organize teachers' professional training. There are two lines for teacher promotion in Canadian colleges and universities: One is the promotion of research type of professors, and the other is the promotion of teaching type of professors. The research type sets high requirements towards teachers' research capacity while the teaching type focuses on the examination of teachers' teaching capacity. This "double line promotion" mode gives teachers bigger professional development space.

The labor union is an important feature in Canadian higher education's HR management. Labor unions of colleges and universities sign "collective agreement" with colleges and universities to stipulate in detail the rights and duties of full time teaching staff so as to protect effectively the lawful benefits and appeals of teachers within the union.

### **Science Research**

From 1960s, Canadian research-type universities continually strengthened human and material investment on science labs with rapid growth of postgraduates and diversified forms of university science research organizations. There are three major forms as follows: teachers in the special research institutions responsible for research tasks, professors leading postgraduates to carry out self-declared research programs, and universities signing science research agreement with social

organizations or economic institutions to carry out joint research work.

### **Diversified, Inclusive and Open Campus Cultures**

BC Provincial university campus cultures are deeply influenced by Canadian and BC provincial society, history, politics, economy, culture, etc., which have obvious features. Generally speaking, the features are embodied in aspects including diversification, inclusivity and openness.

### **Vocational Education**

Canadian vocational education institutions mainly include comprehensive high schools, regional vocational education center, vocational technique schools, community colleges and training center run by enterprises, and the post-high school education and higher vocational education mainly undertaken by community colleges are the major forms of Canadian vocational education.

Canadian vocational education, adult education and university education connect with each other, which endow vocational technical education with diversified functions. Community colleges carry out vocational education and training through enhancing connections with enterprises and communities, and the most popular cultivation mode is cooperative education which implement alternate course plan between study and work.

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