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# Requirements for Young Teachers in the Transition Period of Local Colleges and Universities in China

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**Abstract:** It was a strategic decision, made by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council of the People's Republic of China, to guide the transition and development of some local colleges and universities in China. As the main force of university teaching staffs, it is an issue worthy of attention that young teachers how to play their own characteristics, the trend of transition of local colleges and universities in the rapidly changing roles, and constantly improve themselves, for the transition and development to contribute their ability and cleverness. In this paper, the requirements of local colleges and universities in transition period to the teaching staffs as the breakthrough point, combined with the characteristics of young teachers, some requirements to young teachers in transition period are analyzed. Some requirements are put forward for young teachers at last in transition period.

**Keywords:** Young Teacher, Local Colleges and Universities, Transition Period, Role Change

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## 1. Introduction

According to statistics from the Development Planning Department, Ministry of Education of China, by the end of 2013, there were 1058 local colleges and universities (including civilian-run regular, and independent colleges and universities), accounting for about 90.43% of the total number of colleges and universities of China.

China has built the world's largest higher education system, and made great contributions to the modernization drive. But with the economic development into the new normal, profound changes have been arisen in the relationship between supply and demand of talents.

Facing with the deep-going profound adjustment of the economic structure, speed up the pace of industry upgrading, continuous progress of the social cultural construction, especially the implementation of innovation driven development strategy, the structural contradiction of higher education is more prominent. In addition, colleges and universities also have many serious problems, such as homogenization tendency, difficult and low quality of

employment, application, compound, innovative types talent training mechanism of production and service frontiers urgently-needed has not been fully established. Therefore, the structure and quality of talents training are not adapted to the requirements of economic structure adjustment and industrial upgrading.

The transformation and development of colleges and universities, in essence, is the structural reform of the supply side of the higher education. After entering the stage of mass development, higher education structure is not reasonable because of higher education convergence, and the quality of talent training can not meet the needs of economic and social development because of irrational structure of disciplines. The colleges and universities in China have to make a passive transition, in order to adapt to the new development situation of the planned economy system to the market economy system. Meanwhile, it is also a conscious choice for the colleges and universities to actively seek for the development of characteristics.

In recent years, China's higher education has been developing rapidly. The number of colleges and universities is rapid increasing. Great changes have taken place in the

number and the structure of teachers.

Table 1 is the number of higher education institutions (HEI, for short) and distributions in China, by the end of 2014 [1].

**Table 1.** Number of HEIs and distributions in China.

Region	Sum	ODP*	HVC <sup>#</sup>
Beijing	89	64	25
Tianjin	55	29	26
Hebei	118	58	60
Shanxi	79	31	48
Inner Mongolia	50	15	35
Liaoning	116	65	51
Jilin	58	37	21
Heilongjiang	80	38	42
Shanghai	68	37	31
Jiangsu	159	76	83
Zhejiang	104	57	47
Anhui	118	44	74
Fujian	88	33	55
Jiangxi	95	42	53
Shandong	141	65	76
Henan	129	52	77
Hubei	123	67	56
Hunan	124	51	73
Guangdong	141	62	79
Guangxi	70	33	37
Hainan	17	6	11
Chongqing	63	25	38
Sichuan	107	50	57
Guizhou	55	26	29
Yunnan	67	30	37
Tibet	6	3	3
Shaanxi	92	55	37
Gansu	43	21	22
Qinghai	12	4	8
Ningxia	18	8	10
Xinjiang	44	18	26
<b>Total</b>	<b>2529</b>	<b>1202</b>	<b>1327</b>

\*ODP - Offering Degree Programs

<sup>#</sup>HVC - Higher Vocational Colleges

Table 2 is the number of full-time teacher of HEI by academic qualification and distributions in China [2].

**Table 2.** Number of Full-time Teacher by Academic Qualification in HEIs.

Region	Sum	Doctor's Degrees	Master's Degrees	Normal Courses	Others
Beijing	69931	38109	18766	12493	563
Tianjin	31945	9572	11202	10970	201
Hebei	69389	8878	24870	34649	992
Shanxi	41769	4433	15514	21028	794
Inner Mongolia	25239	2615	8753	13244	627
Liaoning	66604	13232	24541	27795	1036
Jilin	39804	8273	15881	15211	439

Region	Sum	Doctor's Degrees	Master's Degrees	Normal Courses	Others
Heilongjiang	48720	9995	16610	21787	328
Shanghai	41343	19084	12961	8733	565
Jiangsu	105315	28668	35442	40542	663
Zhejiang	59035	15562	20178	22776	519
Anhui	57273	7730	24392	24618	533
Fujian	44337	8556	15944	19357	480
Jiangxi	55318	5726	18084	30556	952
Shandong	102924	17050	35847	48531	1496
Henan	96995	12190	36928	46803	1074
Hubei	83859	18657	30144	33765	1293
Hunan	65714	10358	21272	33080	1004
Guangdong	97812	20553	35437	39974	1848
Guangxi	38719	4376	16724	17098	521
Hainan	8975	1180	3305	4336	154
Chongqing	39560	7120	15692	16095	653
Sichuan	82779	12922	30644	37292	1921
Guizhou	28515	2571	9822	15649	473
Yunnan	35463	4748	13068	16855	792
Tibet	2601	244	1178	1117	62
Shaanxi	66686	14703	25107	26080	796
Gansu	25726	3571	10146	11722	287
Qinghai	4096	312	1052	2595	137
Ningxia	7831	855	2740	4071	165
Xinjiang	21771	2100	7476	11682	513
<b>Total</b>	<b>1566048</b>	<b>313943</b>	<b>559720</b>	<b>670504</b>	<b>21881</b>

Table 3 is the number of full-time teacher of HEI by professional rank and distributions in China [2].

**Table 3.** Number of Full-time Teacher by Professional Rank in HEIs.

Region	Sum	Senior	Sub-Senior	Middle	Junior	Others
Beijing	69931	17534	24673	22994	2842	1888
Tianjin	31945	4649	10432	12516	3097	1251
Hebei	69389	9677	20586	27273	8409	3444
Shanxi	41769	3012	11201	16227	8102	3227
Inner Mongolia	25239	2584	7760	9605	3700	1590
Liaoning	66604	9115	20635	27201	6934	2719
Jilin	39804	5908	12472	15493	5369	562
Heilongjiang	48720	7479	16009	19872	4143	1217
Shanghai	41343	7337	13206	16571	2773	1456
Jiangsu	105315	13487	34764	45030	8808	3226
Zhejiang	59035	8022	18195	25488	3694	3636
Anhui	57273	4544	15345	22172	12104	3108
Fujian	44337	4956	12449	17781	7247	1904
Jiangxi	55318	5563	14899	22996	9136	2724
Shandong	102924	10436	29196	44322	15024	3946
Henan	96995	8103	25799	38899	18247	5947
Hubei	83859	10652	26276	31694	10761	4476
Hunan	65714	7055	19114	27559	7414	4572
Guangdong	97812	11524	25061	41378	9856	9993
Guangxi	38719	4085	10568	15328	4317	4421
Hainan	8975	953	2208	3693	1265	856

Region	Sum	Senior	Sub-Senior	Middle	Junior	Others
Chongqing	39560	4328	10917	16077	5441	2797
Sichuan	82779	8619	21758	32497	14630	5275
Guizhou	28515	2684	8773	9297	4408	3353
Yunnan	35463	3781	9635	13382	5874	2791
Tibet	2601	221	851	1001	424	104
Shaanxi	66686	8005	18106	28252	9395	2928
Gansu	25726	2959	7804	9951	3397	1615
Qinghai	4096	741	1355	1123	491	386
Ningxia	7831	1221	2207	2229	1261	913
Xinjiang	21771	1294	6134	9332	2877	2134
Total	1566048	190528	458388	627233	201440	88459

Figure 1 is the change of HEIs in China from 2009 to 2015 (Data come from <http://en.moe.gov.cn>).

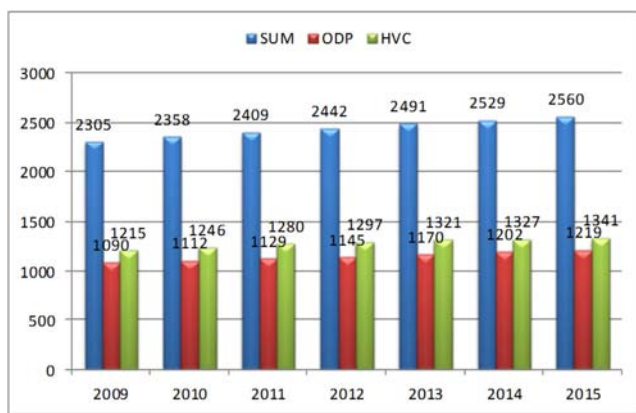


Figure 1. The change of HEIs in China from 2009 to 2015.

As can be seen from the table 1-3 and figure 1, with large numbers in scale, the colleges and universities in China have been made outstanding achievements in talent training and scientific research, vigorously promote the economic and social development, and go to new higher goals. But the contradiction between the requirement of economic and social development to the university and university service can not fully meet the needs of the society is still exist. Higher education in China still exist some problems, such as similar and lag professional settings, meticulous and narrow professional divisions, difficult employments, and so on. In order to solve these problems, colleges and universities in China must transform and reform as soon as possible.

In the transition of colleges and universities, Anhui Province led the first of China.

In 1997, the structure of higher education in Anhui Province was not reasonable. Among the total 27 colleges and universities, there were about two third specialist, and two third normal universities, little scale, small number, and low level as the result.

After that time, the scale was rapid expansion, because Anhui Provincial Party Committee and Provincial Government put forward urgently to develop higher education, but the contradiction between higher education diversification needed by economic and social development and higher education convergence is becoming more and

more prominent.

In 2003, a number of newly built colleges and universities boldly put forward the orientation of local application, and the exploration and practice of the transition from bottom to top in this province.

In 2008, Anhui Province put forward the development policy of “scientific orientation, classified guidance, multiple development and characteristics of running school”, and then established the cooperative alliance of application-oriented colleges and universities.

In 2009, Anhui Province opened the prelude to the application-oriented higher education system construction, by carrying out the pilot construction of provincial demonstration application-oriented colleges and universities projects.

In 2014, led by Anhui Province, the Yangtze River Delta application-oriented colleges and universities alliance was established, and the successful experience of transition made by colleges and universities of Anhui had become a model for pushing the development of the alliance.

Under such background, the State Council of People’s Republic of China held a national vocational education conference in Beijing in 2014. Some important decisions had made in the conference, one of the most important was the strategic decision that guide a number of ordinary undergraduate universities to the type of the applied technical transition and development. Subsequently, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang clearly put forward the guiding part of the local colleges and universities to the applied technical universities, in the government work report in 2015 [3].

In October 2015, the Ministry of Education, Development and Reform Commission and the Ministry of Finance of China, jointly issued the “guiding opinions to guide some local ordinary undergraduate universities to applied universities” (hereinafter referred to as “guiding opinions”), required to determine a lots of colleges and universities which with conditions and the will to explore the application type development model (including universities, applied technology colleges), and gave full play to the leading role of the demonstration pilot, colleges and universities to stimulate the transition of endogenous power to drive more vitality, accelerate the pace of transition of local colleges and universities [4].

Then the head of Development Planning Department, Ministry of Education of China, made a further explanation for the “guiding opinions”, pointed out that the basic meaning of transition is not “listing”, rename or upgrade, but the transition and development of the ordinary undergraduate universities. It is the adjustment of the educational idea, orientation and mode [5].

## 2. The Status of Teaching Staffs

In order to build unique application technical universities, in the transition period, except to accelerate the construction of integrated practice bases, focus on enterprise innovation training modes of talent integration, local colleges and

universities should focus on strengthening the construction of teaching staffs, and teachers should be completed by the “Diploma + Degree” to “Quality + Ability” and “Double Teachers” role change, and by the combination of theoretical teaching theory to single the change of teaching mode and practice, construction of a high level of teaching, practical ability, university-enterprise interoperability, a combination of high quality “Double-qualified” teaching staffs, for providing talents support of transition of local colleges and universities [6].

Young teachers in colleges and universities are the backbone of higher education development and the core strength of the sustainable development of colleges and universities, and they directly affect the sustainable development of higher education and the quality of talents training.

An investigation, made by the Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, showed that middle and young teachers (under 45 years old) in China had already accounted for about 70% of the total number of teachers, by the end of 2014 [7].

Young teachers have strong theoretical foundation, the systemic professional knowledge, and full enthusiasm, but they also have some prominent problems, such as lack of systematic training on education methods, less teaching experience, lack of factory practice experience, and so on. Very few young teachers have not yet pass teaching quality [8, 9].

Therefore, it is worth further discussion that the young teachers how to quickly realize the role change in the transition period of local colleges and universities.

### 3. Young Teachers How to Quickly Realize the Role Change

#### 3.1. Analysis of the Characteristics of Young Teachers

It is necessary to analyze the characteristics of young teachers to discuss how to quickly realize the role transition.

First, young teachers are with good education background, high degrees in general.

At present, impressive education, young teachers in colleges and universities graduated from famous universities, and most of them have master’s degrees or even doctorates, and have a solid theoretical basis, the system of professional knowledge, strong research ability, after systematic studying and practice training.

Second, young teachers are lack of teaching experience.

Young teachers in colleges and universities have realized the first transition from students to teachers, from the point of view of career experience, as a new blood on the teacher’s post, but also they are lack of teaching experience.

Third, young teachers are with high enthusiasm for work.

Young teachers are full of youthful spirits, high enthusiasm, energetic, passionate, energetic and innovative spirit, and willing to accept the challenge.

Fourth, young teachers have a natural advantage of

communicating with the university students.

Differ in age, young teachers are little generation gap with students, more common interests, so easy to win the respect and love of the students.

Fifth, young teachers are short of knowledge of educational theory.

If do not accept systematic training of education theory, practice and other aspects, young teachers may not master the relevant teaching aspects in a short time, so it is difficult to meet the requirements of the development of higher education for university teachers.

Sixth, Young teachers are practical experience deficiency.

Most young teachers are directly into the post of teaching after graduating, so they have no social work experience, as the result that it is difficult to meet the needs of students in practical ability [10].

#### 3.2. The Requirements for the Young Teachers in the Transition Period

The transition of local colleges and universities is an inevitable trend to adapt to the social and economic structure adjustment, social transition and the development of higher education. This trend will certainly put forward new higher requirements to the teachers, especially for the young teachers. In addition to some basic requirements of abiding the teacher’s professional ethics, mastering educational theory, knowledge and skills, young teachers should do the following aspects.

First, young teachers must enhance the ability to develop innovative curriculums.

Different from other schools, the essential characteristic of universities are the knowledge inheritance, innovation and the cultivation of creative talents, while innovation is the soul of university.

The essence of reform lies in the transition of local colleges and universities curriculum content (knowledge innovation) and change of teaching methods (teaching methods innovation), and these kinds of reform and change, leading mainly by the education management departments, but certainly implementing by teachers.

Therefore, teachers must to promote the ability of developing innovative curriculum, which has become the basic requirement of curriculum reform.

The “guiding opinions” clearly pointed out: by social economy development and industrial technology progress drive curriculum reforms, the integration of relevant professional basic course, main courses, core courses, professional skills and application of experimental course in practice, more attention to the cultivation of learners’ technical skills and innovation and entrepreneurial abilities [4].

These require the university curriculum setting and contents should not only pay attention to practical application, but also to continue to innovate, in order to meet the requirements of economic and social transition for talents cultivation.

And if do not innovate curriculum development, use still “textbook + classroom”, the traditional mode of imparting knowledge, then the practical abilities of students will very

difficult to get a substantial change, improving students' innovation abilities may become prattles. In addition, innovative curriculum development capabilities can fully reflect the creativity of teachers.

So in the new situation of transition, young teachers in colleges and universities should not only quickly master the basic teaching skills, but also study the curriculum system and teaching content. Only in this way can they be consistent with the pace of development of the times [12].

Second, young teachers must go out of the classroom, and close interaction with the enterprises.

The "guiding opinions" requests: universities must strengthen students' experiment, training, and practice. Establish the quality assurance system of practice training, so that the proportion of the practical training course account for the total class hours is more than 30% [4].

Although the local ordinary colleges and universities as the main body of the transition, if there is no enterprises to participate in the talents cultivation, universities do not fully or correctly understand the talents need direction of enterprises, do not master the trend of enterprise management and technology development, then talents training in colleges and universities will lose their purpose, transition can not be implemented.

From the previous university-enterprise cooperation or integration, lots of contacts were superficial, basically no depth to the enterprise, so they do not belong to substantive cooperation.

Therefore in order to realize the true sense of the deep transition, university classroom teaching must closely link together with the needs of enterprise, let classroom into the enterprises, into the workshops, also invite enterprise elites lecturing.

In addition to conduct by the universities, all of these activities must be implemented by the front-line teachers.

And the young teachers' entries are relatively short, it is difficult for linking the teaching content and the actual needs of enterprises seamlessly, because of lacking understanding of enterprise.

Therefore, young teachers should be required to get out of the classroom as soon as possible to the enterprise to understand and grasp the needs of the first hand information, enrich practical experience, enhance communication skills, and extended interactive channels.

Third, young teachers must to improve their sense of service and dedication.

"It takes a teacher to transmit wisdom, impart knowledge, and resolve doubts", described in "What teacher said" by Han Yu, a Chinese Tang Dynasty famous writer and thinker, in the popular saying has been seen as a precise description of their duties.

The teachers are to impart knowledge, and answering questions for students. However, with the continuous progress of society and the deepening of the reform of higher education system, the role of teachers in colleges and universities has also changed profoundly, the role of young teachers also need to re-examine and re-positioning [13].

Since the influence of teacher occupation has been deeply rooted, most young teachers conceptualized their self role as dispensers, a role respected by others, rather than givers. Based on this position, some of young teachers in colleges and universities have a weak sense of service, lack of awareness of servicing students, enterprises, and society.

In the transition trend, local colleges and universities are not only the talent training units, but also should become the supply side of the service for local economic and social development, of course, this kind of service needs teachers must hands-on.

Therefore, it is necessary to set up service consciousness of young teachers in colleges and universities, and give play to the spirit of dedication, and contribute to the transition and development of local colleges and universities.

Young teachers must also have an open mind to learn from the experienced teachers, and constantly improve their comprehensive abilities [13].

## 4. Conclusion

As a new force of teachers in colleges and universities, whenever young teachers must clearly understand the trend of transition of local colleges and universities, recognize talent training burdens they carried, effort to work, and actively explore the laws of education, go to the enterprises deeply, and constantly enrich and improve themselves, to adapt to the needs of transition and development, improve their teaching level, fast implementation the role change, contribute their talent and wisdom for the transition of local colleges and universities.

In addition to the young teachers should continue to enrich and improve themselves, colleges and universities should provide the conditions for young teachers in all aspects of development and progress, such as establishing a healthy and incentive mechanism for the rapid development of young teachers [14]. Only in this way can the young teachers achieve the rapid role change in the transition period.

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