

# Research on the Comprehensive Experimental Teaching Model of Liberal Arts Dominated by the Original Repertory in Art Colleges

Guo Jian<sup>1,a</sup>, Liu Siyang<sup>1,b,\*</sup>, Zheng Qifan<sup>1,c</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Art and Technology Department, Dalian Art College, Dalian, China

<sup>a</sup>763432861@qq.com, <sup>b</sup>slartdesign@163.com, <sup>c</sup>598950980@qq.com

\*Corresponding author

**Abstract:** To achieve effective integration, comprehensive experimental teaching of liberal arts must begin with the similarity of practice beyond the realm of professional theoretical knowledge in liberal arts, then combine the practical teaching environment and correlation of experimental resources. By combining PBL project teaching and the creation of original plays in art colleges, the existing practical teaching content connected in the project process, and according to the concept of comprehensive experiments in liberal arts, it is summarized into four types of experiments conducted in two experimental venues inside and outside the school teaching module. Throughout the years of practical teaching of arts in the liberal arts, a comprehensive experimental teaching model featuring original plays and diverse liberal arts majors has been gradually developed.

**Keywords:** New liberal arts construction; experimental teaching; comprehensive experimental platform for liberal arts; original repertory

## 1. Introduction

The construction of the “New Liberal Arts” is a new requirement for the teaching objectives and organization of the traditional liberal arts disciplines. The construction of experimental courses and comprehensive experimental platforms in the liberal arts is an innovation of the traditional liberal arts in terms of research issues and methods, giving it new content and connotations. Art colleges can use their existing resources for teaching art practice. Art colleges can use their existing resources for teaching art practice. On the one hand, they can build on existing arts teaching resources and integrate them with the practical teaching courses of various arts majors through original repertory projects. On the other hand, they build a shared and open experimental system to realise the transition to a comprehensive.

## 2. State of Research and Ideological Development

### 2.1. Origin and Development of the Concept of Integrated Experimentation in the Liberal Arts

Experimentation is the method and the first attribute of a liberal arts laboratory training course<sup>[1]</sup>. The concept of “experiment” was developed as essential support for separating the practical part of liberal arts and transforming creativity into practical skills through systematic experimental methods or experimental platforms. The “integrated experiment” is based on the concept of “experiment,” integrating the public resources of similar liberal arts majors or realizing the interdisciplinary crossover and exchange of different liberal arts majors through a unified platform and project form. The ultimate aim is to realise the scientific and systematic nature of the practical part of liberal arts majors based on the typical construction of disciplines and the sharing of resources.

### 2.2. Current Situation of the Practice of Comprehensive Experimental Teaching in Liberal Arts

The teaching practice of integrated experimental teaching mode and demonstration center of liberal arts has started late, mainly due to many categories of liberal arts disciplines. Furthermore, the connectedness and differences between the disciplines are extensive, making it challenging to integrate a unified experimental platform in a short time. Combining their disciplinary backgrounds, various

universities have made attempts from the perspectives of project teaching method integration to achieve multi-disciplinary synergy, general curriculum development, faculty construction, experimental demonstration center construction, and virtual platform construction. They have initially formed a new model of interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary collaborative practice teaching in the context of liberal arts.

The current research found that the research focuses on the comprehensive experimental teaching mode of liberal arts mainly on three aspects: First, the study of the relevance between different liberal arts laboratories. The process of liberal arts experimental teaching has the feasibility of resource sharing from aspects such as experimental environment (carrier)<sup>[2]</sup> and duplicate construction is avoided through resource sharing; research on the integration mode of similar liberal arts majors. Mainly through actively promoting the project-based reform of experimental and practical teaching links, the training of students' innovation, entrepreneurial ability, and vocational ability is implemented into the discipline integration and industry-education integration experimental platform<sup>[3]</sup>; research on the form of a comprehensive experimental platform for liberal arts. Adopting the management principle of unified planning, resource sharing, focusing on application and improving efficiency, and the construction principle of joint co-construction of laboratories connected to the construction of a large platform following the construction of a dedicated and shared virtual reality, unified planning of practical teaching is carried out<sup>[4]</sup>. Moreover, there is less research on the comprehensive experimental teaching mode of the arts disciplines with more significant common characteristics, the construction of art laboratories in art and design. For example, the Architecture and Art College of the Dalian University of Technology has tried to introduce digital technology into the sculpture major (traditional liberal arts) to realize the transformation of the traditional workshop into a modern experimental teaching mode by combining art and technology. At the same time, a forum for interactive teaching and display of results of multiple majors was created, and a project interface with film and animation majors was initially achieved. However, the degree of professional synergy is low. It does not fully meet the requirements of sharing laboratory and equipment resources for professional co-construction of integrated experiments in arts. The integration and categorisation of practical teaching laboratory modules in an integrated experimental platform by drawing on the mature form of project teaching and carrying out the same type of liberal arts disciplines and corresponding practical teaching content in tandem has become the focus of this paper's research.

### **3. Practical Articulation of Original Repertory and the Departmental Curriculum**

#### ***3.1. Practical and Experimental Features of the Project of the Original Repertory***

The PBL teaching method can be both project-led and problem-driven and is an effective practical teaching method in which teachers, students, and majors collaborate and work together to implement projects. The project-led approach, the integration of disciplines through group work, and the exploratory approach to solving practical problems align with the basic concept of "integrated experimentation" and are conducive to changing and integrating traditional art teaching methods. Original stage productions are large-scale original musicals that combine music, dance, drama, literature, multimedia, and other forms of artistic expression<sup>[5]</sup>. Their creation process and performance process have prominent practical and experimental characteristics. In the case of the Dalian Art College (DAC) (Figure 1), the basic grounding and exhibition of the original stage play require the cooperation of the creative team, rehearsal team, co-ordination team, teaching team, practical teaching team, scientific research team, publicity team, security team, logistics team, and archive team. Among them, the creative team is directly related to the collaboration of the arts majors of the different academies; the rehearsal, co-ordination and publicity teams communicate with the venue and schedule of the show; the security team and the post-security team ensure the safety of transportation, accommodation, and food during the performance. The teaching group (experimental teaching group), the research group, and the archives group coordinate the teaching and research of teachers and students; the groups work closely together to guarantee the complete presentation of an original play.

The creation team's work has a particular experimental character, running through the entire play creation process, choreography, costumes and props, choreography, music and special effects to performance. This is also a critical disciplinary basis and part of this paper's research on linking the practical courses of various disciplines, working together to solve the problems that arise in the stages of the creative process, and building a comprehensive experimental platform for the liberal arts.

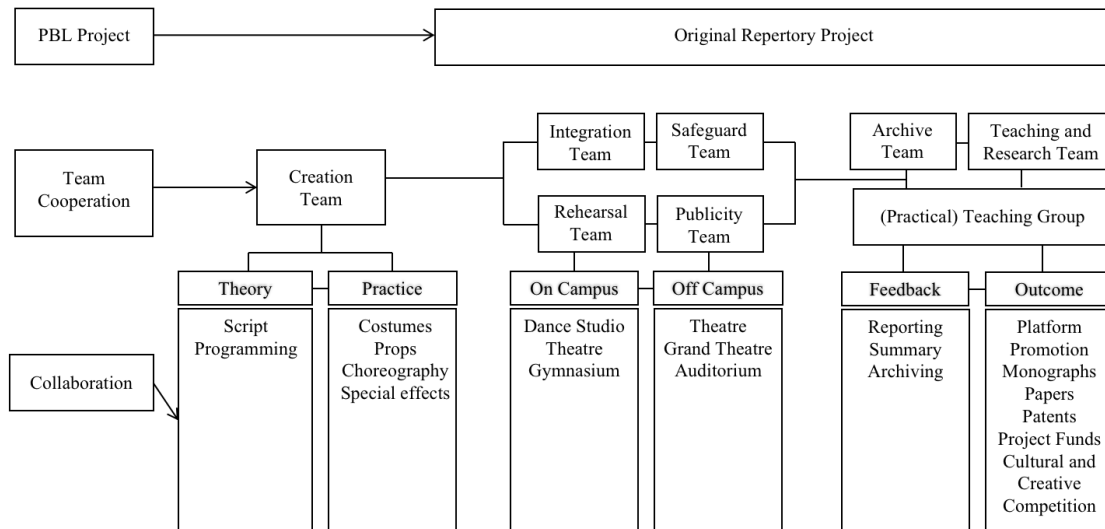


Figure 1: A comprehensive experimental module and outcome format for the arts led by an original repertory project

3.2. Coordination of Original Repertory with the Practical Teaching Courses of all Majors

Table 1: Summary of the playwriting process related to the faculty professional and practical courses

Creative process	Creation	Scriptwriting and Rehearsal	Costume	Stage prop	Choreography	Music	Special effect, highlight	Performance
Academy	Theater, film and television	Music	Fashion	Art Design	Theater, film and television	Music	Theater, film and television	Dance, Music, Theater, film and television
Arts Major	Playwright film and television drama literature	Music performance	Fashion design ,Costume design and performance	Product design	Stage art design	Music performance The choir , Symphony orchestra , National orchestra	Animation, Film and television photography	Dance, Performance , Musical, Broadcasting and hosting
Member	Teacher-dominated	Teacher-dominated	Teacher & student cooperation	Teacher& student cooperation	Teacher& student cooperation	Teacher& student cooperation	Teacher& student cooperation	Teacher& student cooperation
Practice Course	Script writing	Repertory rehearsal	Costume design and production Stage makeup	Props design and production	Stage design	Instrumental ensemble	Film and television post editing	Repertory performance

As shown in Table 1, all majors in the School of Theatre, Film, and Media (Theatre and Communication) are involved in creating the original repertory, leading the story direction, character relationships, plot development and thematic ideas of the play. Choreography, lighting, animation, and product design are responsible for the stage scenery and sound and lighting effects. Costume design and performance are responsible for designing costume, character modelling and make-up for performances. One or more practical courses related to stage productions have been set up under each major, and the foundation for creating a comprehensive experimental platform for the arts is already in place.

4. Content innovation and experimental module construction of original repertory projects

4.1. From the “Peace Trilogy” to the “Youth Pentalogy”

Since 2013, DAC has created the”Peace Trilogy”(Tang Ruowang, The Soul of Sakura and Ode to Peace) and the “Youth Pentalogy” (Silk Road - Youth, Chasing Dreams-Youth, Dreams-Youth , Faith-Youth and Embrace-Youth), a series of eight plays that praise the significant era from the unique perspective of young people<sup>[5]</sup>. The original repertory of “Ode to Peace”, “Silk Road - Youth”and

“Chasing Dreams-Youth” were performed at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing. In 2021, the play “Embracing-Youth” was created and successfully staged, showing the series of epidemic prevention initiatives taken by students and teachers on campus during the epidemic period under the guidance of the ideological and political education and promoting the role of youth in the times of special times as well as the determination and spirit of the whole nation in fighting the epidemic.

At this phase, the content innovation and practical teaching achievements of the stage repertoire are mainly reflected in the innovation of the teaching system and teaching formats. On the one hand, it has formed a particular practical teaching system for art majors. Among them, “Ode to Peace “ looks at talent cultivation from the whole process of creation, training, learning and performance, which is precisely a manifestation of the unity of learning and training and the integration of learning and performance between classroom teaching and practical teaching, promoting the construction of an innovative practical teaching system by DAC, a vivid and comprehensive public class on the practical teaching of repertoire, leading a comprehensive reform of the innovative talent cultivation model<sup>[6]</sup>. On the other hand, it realizes the innovation of the form of combining the ideological and political open class with the subject matter of the play. The original musical drama “Chasing Dreams - Youth” has made a demonstration for college course ideological and political, reflecting the new media way, new method, new exploration and new path of college ideological and political education under the perspective of the new era, playing an exemplary and leading role in the reform and innovation of ideological and political course, which is a successful attempt of college ideological and political course<sup>[7]</sup>. For example, the original symphony “Symphony of the Sea Road” won the National Arts Foundation’s large-scale stage art creation funding project; The original songs “New Nanniwan” and “I am a Craftsman” won the grand prize of Liaoning University’s original song competition; The cultural and creative competition: “The Ultimate of DAC” is a competition for creative products with thematic elements of the play; And the output of stage props patents: practical new type patent - a stage device for performance and appearance patent.

#### 4.2. The Combination of Diverse Practical Teaching and Multiple Output

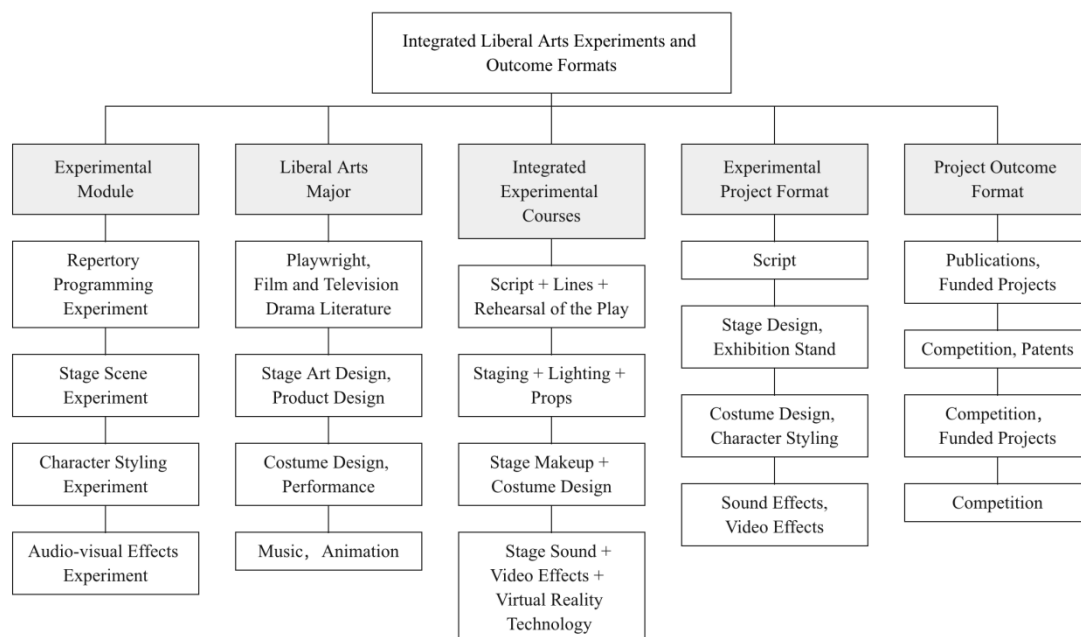


Figure 2: Experimental modules and outcome forms for a comprehensive liberal arts experiment led by an original repertory project

The project requirements of the original repertory project are linked to the practical teaching part of the liberal arts, and the modules of the laboratory are divided according to the process of play creation. As shown in Figure 2, the lab is divided into four experimental modules: play choreography experiment, scene experiment, character modelling experiment, and audio-visual special effects experiment, corresponding to different liberal arts majors and their practical teaching courses. The four experimental modules are based on theatre, film and media majors and strengthen the integration and complementarity with music, dance, costume and product design disciplines to build a practical teaching and education system that takes the creation of theatre projects as the experimental venue. Combined with the

characteristics of different majors, theoretical knowledge and artistic practice are combined in stages. At the same time, the effective docking with teaching materials, competitions, patents, fund project declarations, and cooperation with school groups to realise the diversified forms of experimental project results.

#### ***4.3. The Construction of a Dual Culture of Original Repertory Experimentation***

The original repertory project-led teaching mode of the comprehensive experimental platform of the liberal arts should not only pay attention to the content, expression and commodity appearance of the repertoire topics, but also realise the dual experimental culture construction of the physical and spiritual environment to enhance the high quality of artistic value and the competitiveness of cultural similarity. The physical environment consists of a spatial layout of laboratories appropriate to the liberal arts majors. In contrast, the spiritual environment refers to an open and transparent research atmosphere. The reform of the teaching system and the transformation of discipline construction into cross-cutting and clustering have led to the development trend of the laboratory space from inward and divided to open and clustered<sup>[8]</sup>. The two environments are linked in some way. Through spatial design means, based on meeting the essential functions of the physical environment, the integration of elements of disciplinary characteristics can facilitate the creation of the experimental culture of the spiritual environment. For example, the combination mode between the experimental module units, using the open space pattern of a shared office, is convenient for unified management and conducive to exchanging members and equipment between different experimental modules. The floor-to-ceiling glass is a partition of the laboratory, which is conducive to real-time observation and guidance of teachers and is also convenient for external display and communication. An excellent spiritual and cultural atmosphere will also lead to a more compelling layout and use of the space, promoting the smooth and efficient development of the project.

The construction of an experimental culture can strengthen the sense of cultural identity in the creative content of the repertoire. The exchange and collaboration of different arts disciplines will enable the creation and continuous promotion of a series of plays, gradually forming a brand image of plays with regional characteristics of Dalian. Through social exhibitions and the promotion of aesthetic education through self-published media platforms, the public can be guided towards the consumer mentality and aesthetic psychology of domestic original stage productions.

### **5. Strategies to Enhance the Teaching Mode of Original Repertory in the Liberal Arts under the Concept of Integrated Platform**

#### ***5.1. Personnel Training and Incentive Measures***

The repertoire creation team's continuous inheritance and stable renewal is an essential guarantee for achieving simultaneous iteration of repertoire quality enhancement. The construction of a comprehensive liberal arts experimental center should give equal importance to experimental teaching and theoretical teaching, yet organically combine them and knowledge transfer with experimental exploration so that students can have both a broad theoretical foundation and practical application ability<sup>[9]</sup>. From the perspective of the cultivation of students' repertoire creation talents, it should be combined with the certification of innovation credits and the replacement of elective credits to encourage non-performing arts majors with repertoire creation or performance to declare repertoire creation projects and become assistants of repertoire creation experiments, to increase the environment of exchange between disciplines for repertoire creation and stimulate new repertoire subject contents and exhibition forms.

The construction of faculty is the basis for quality assurance of teaching in universities. Faced with the new requirements of being able to manage and research simultaneously, the new liberal arts experimental teaching staff needs to be integrated with the ability to develop experimental projects, manage and renovate laboratories, and design teaching programs<sup>[10]</sup>. From the perspective of repertoire creation talent training, as the core lead in project teaching, repertoire creation teachers are required to undergo double certification as experimentalists. Through regular training, they will become 'Double-qualified' talents' who have the theoretical knowledge of the entire original repertoire and the practical experience of their expertise. Teachers are encouraged to design and develop the content of their repertoire and can use the laboratory for exploratory research. At the same time, repertoire creation is linked to teachers' practical teaching courses, research project declarations, competitions, and the construction of first-class courses. It can be incentivised in practical workload, research performance,

grants, or subsidies for research platforms.

### **5.2. Multi-platform Performance and Feedback Readjustment Mechanism**

The on-campus rehearsal hall laboratory is an essential venue for practical teaching, and the off-campus theatre show is a suitable venue for the community. It is important to value the rational planning of the focus of the two laboratories: the on-campus laboratory has more space that can use the campus multiple linked transmissions for resource sharing of public elective courses in associated majors. In January 2022, the original stage play “Embrace - Youth” was broadcast on the youth channel of Liaoning Radio and Television on the theme of campus epidemic prevention. Through student retweets and feedback statistics, it is clear that environmental design students actively participated by editing short videos, sharing their personal experiences of campus life in the play with their families, and expressing their understanding and suggestions.

From the educational point of view of publicly presenting original repertory to the community, it is important to deepen and explore the themes of unique regional customs, cultural heritage, and the deeds of leading figures. To make the original plays a critical window for the integration of city schools to jointly promote aesthetic education and publicise the characteristics of the city. For example, the red drama currently being prepared by DAC is based on the revolutionary history of Liaoning's “six places,” which is an in-depth fusion of thinking and political elements and original drama. It will become a public social thinking class to promote the spirit of Liaoning's red revolution. At the same time, we have established an effective feedback and evaluation system, using questionnaires and interviews to receive objective feedback from the public and humbly consulting with cultural and artistic groups in the community to achieve the same direction and synchronisation with the needs of society and the requirements of the industry.

## **6. Conclusion**

The comprehensive platform for teaching and research provided by the integrated experimental teaching of arts disciplines is an effective way to promote disciplinary exchanges and break the traditional barriers of professional independence. It can both integrate the advantages of their respective majors and effectively solve the bottleneck problems encountered in the development of their respective majors. It is also a meaningful way to enhance the quality of composite and application-oriented talents cultivated by universities by cultivating undergraduates' innovative, practical abilities—the project form of original repertory to connect the faculty-level liberal arts majors and practical courses. The content innovation and results of the eight practical teaching repertoires are summarised. The experimental modules under the concept of integrated liberal arts experiments are divided based on the existing practical teaching courses. The original repertoire model of Dalian Art College can become a referential example for similar private art institutions in constructing new liberal arts and exploring an integrated experimental teaching model of liberal arts.

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