

# *Exploration and Practice of Educational Reform in Marine Technology Major under the Background of Integrating Science and Education*

Dingfeng Yu<sup>a</sup>, Hao Gao<sup>b,\*</sup>, Lei Yang<sup>c</sup>

*School of Ocean Technology Science, Qilu University of Technology (Shandong Academy of Sciences), Qingdao, China*

*<sup>a</sup>dfyu@qlu.edu.cn, <sup>b</sup>gaohao88\_sdioi@qlu.edu.cn, <sup>c</sup>yangleibest@qlu.edu.cn*

*\*Corresponding author*

**Keywords:** Educational Reform; Marine Technology; Multidisciplinary Knowledge; Applied Skills

**Abstract:** "Integration of Science and Education" stands as a pivotal trend in contemporary education, presenting fresh challenges and prospects for the realm of marine technology instruction. This article intends to explore the methodologies and implementations associated with reforming marine technology education within the context of merging scientific principles with educational practices. Embracing interdisciplinary amalgamation, hands-on learning experiences, and the cultivation of innovative thinking will constitute the core facets of this reform initiative. Through these strategies, the aim is to enrich the learning experience, empowering students in the marine technology discipline to thrive in an increasingly complex and dynamic field, effectively bridging academia with real-world applications.

## 1. Introduction

"Integration of Science and Education" stands as a pivotal trend in the field of education, aiming to seamlessly blend the realms of science and education to enhance students' comprehensive literacy and capabilities[1][2]. Within the domain of marine technology, this integration signifies the incorporation of multidisciplinary knowledge encompassing marine science, engineering technology, environmental studies, and more into the educational framework [3][4]. This approach seeks to cultivate students in a more holistic and comprehensive manner.

The marine technology discipline encounters several instructional challenges, including rapidly advancing technologies, intricate marine environments, and its interdisciplinary nature[5]. These challenges necessitate an educational approach that keeps pace with the times, providing students with forward-thinking and practical education[6]. Traditional subject segregation might not suffice to meet the demands for interdisciplinary comprehensiveness. Hence, there's a need to reform teaching methodologies and curriculum structures to better integrate knowledge across disciplines, thereby broadening students' cognitive horizons.

Educational reform is crucial for nurturing students' comprehensive abilities. Through the

integration of science and education, students can access knowledge from multiple disciplines, thus forming a more holistic perspective. For instance, students not only grasp the technical intricacies of marine engineering but also comprehend its impact on the environment and ecosystems, fostering systematic thinking. This comprehensive approach to education can stimulate students' innovation, enhance their problem-solving skills, and lay a solid foundation for their future professional development.

## **2. Interdisciplinary Teaching Strategies Under the Integration of Science and Education**

### **2.1. Integration of Multidisciplinary Knowledge**

In the curriculum design of marine technology programs, the integration of multidisciplinary knowledge aims to cultivate students' broader perspectives and comprehensive application abilities. The key to this strategy lies in the organic integration of various disciplines such as marine science, engineering technology, and environmental studies to create more practical and comprehensive course content. Firstly, the course design should revolve around actual marine issues, integrating theoretical knowledge from marine science. By delving into knowledge areas such as marine ecosystems, oceanography, and climate change, students gain an understanding of the complexity of the marine environment, laying the groundwork for subsequent engineering and technological applications. Secondly, combining engineering technology with marine science, designing course content capable of addressing real-world problems is essential. For instance, integrating knowledge of marine geology to develop engineering solutions for marine resource exploitation or utilizing environmental studies to design engineering projects for marine ecosystem conservation. Such designs can stimulate students' innovative thinking, cultivating their ability to apply theoretical knowledge to real problem-solving scenarios. Lastly, emphasizing interdisciplinary collaboration and comprehensive practicality is crucial. Introducing team projects or practical tasks in course design requires students to explore and solve problems from various perspectives, including marine science, engineering technology, and environmental studies. Such interdisciplinary collaboration can nurture students' sense of teamwork and their ability to conduct comprehensive analysis, adequately preparing them for future work scenarios.

Therefore, through the integration of multidisciplinary knowledge, course design can offer students a more comprehensive and practical learning experience. This teaching method not only fosters interdisciplinary understanding but also cultivates their ability to solve problems across disciplines, laying a solid foundation for their future development in the field of marine technology.

### **2.2. Interdisciplinary Collaboration Projects**

"Interdisciplinary Collaboration Projects" are a crucial teaching method in marine technology programs, aiming to foster students' teamwork and problem-solving abilities. These projects revolve around interdisciplinary team collaboration, requiring students to integrate knowledge and skills from various disciplines to collectively address complex real-world marine technology issues. Such projects typically involve multiple fields of study, such as marine science, engineering technology, and environmental studies. Students work in groups, leveraging their respective expertise within the team, to collaboratively discuss and resolve specific issues within the realm of marine technology. For instance, these tasks could involve marine resource development, environmental conservation, or marine engineering design. Moreover, interdisciplinary collaboration projects encourage students to communicate and cooperate effectively within their teams. They need to efficiently merge knowledge from their respective fields, engage in mutual learning and support, in order to devise comprehensive solutions. This collaborative approach not only cultivates teamwork but also

stimulates their abilities to tackle intricate problems. These projects prioritize practicality and the development of applied skills. Students apply learned knowledge in practical scenarios, working together in teams to solve problems and gain invaluable hands-on experience. Such experiential teaching methods aid students in transforming theoretical knowledge into practical applications, enhancing their professional skills and problem-solving abilities.

Interdisciplinary collaboration projects stand as an effective teaching method to promote interdisciplinary cooperation, foster teamwork, and develop problem-solving skills among students. Through such practical projects, students gain a more comprehensive understanding and application of knowledge within the field of marine technology, laying a robust foundation for their future career development.

### **3. Practical Teaching and Cultivation of Applied Skills**

#### **3.1. Enhanced Laboratory Teaching**

Enhancing laboratory teaching is crucial for cultivating students' practical skills and fostering innovative thinking. To achieve this, upgrading laboratory facilities is a necessary step. Upgrading equipment and tools, introducing advanced technology and simulation software, can better simulate real marine environments and engineering practices. This enables students to conduct a more diverse and realistic range of experiments within a safe environment. Simultaneously, improving laboratory teaching methods is essential. Introducing exploratory experiments, problem-driven experiments, and other teaching models encourages students to autonomously design experimental plans and explore approaches to problem-solving. This cultivates students' abilities in experimental design and data analysis while igniting their innovative thinking, allowing them to gain more inspiration and insights from experiments. This innovative teaching approach helps stimulate students' enthusiasm for the field of marine technology and nurtures their creative thinking, laying a solid foundation for their future professional development.

#### **3.2. Internships and Industry Collaboration**

Internships and industry collaborations play a crucial role in the field of marine technology, significantly impacting students' career development and enhancement of their applied skills. Firstly, internships allow students to merge classroom learning with practical work, deepening their understanding and mastery of marine technology through practical application of acquired knowledge. Internships offer a valuable opportunity for students to explore and cultivate essential professional skills and practical experience within a real work environment. Collaborating with industries exposes students to the challenges and demands of actual work scenarios. Projects in collaboration with industry partners enable students to grasp the latest industry developments, learn methods to solve real problems, and broaden their horizons. This hands-on experience can stimulate students' innovative thinking, encouraging them to seek new solutions and fostering their problem-solving abilities. Through internships and industry collaborations, students gain a better understanding of how their academic knowledge applies to real-world work settings. They continuously enhance their professional skills and problem-solving capabilities through practical experiences. These experiences not only ease students' transition into the workforce but also form a strong foundation for their career development. Additionally, by collaborating with industries, students build extensive professional networks, laying a crucial groundwork for their future career advancements.

## **4. Cultivation of Innovative Thinking and Problem-Solving Skills**

### **4.1. Case Analysis and Discussion Courses**

Case Analysis and Discussion Courses serve as effective teaching methods in nurturing problem analysis and solving capabilities among students in the field of marine technology. Introducing authentic cases allows students to gain in-depth insights into the challenges and solutions within the actual realm of marine technology. Case analysis immerses students in real-life scenarios, prompting them to explore and comprehend the essence of practical problems. Through case studies, students analyze key issues, causal relationships, and solutions, thereby honing their ability to analyze problems. Discussion courses provide a platform for students to exchange ideas and engage in critical thinking. During discussions, students share viewpoints and insights on cases, fostering collisions of different thoughts and inspirations through interactions and debates with peers. This interaction aids students in comprehensive problem examination and cultivates their abilities in collaborative exploration and proposing solutions. Through case analysis and discussion courses, students not only passively absorb theoretical knowledge but also exercise critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and teamwork through in-depth case analysis and collective discussions. These abilities will play a pivotal role in preparing them to tackle various complex challenges within the marine technology domain in the future.

### **4.2. Innovative Projects and Research-Oriented Teaching**

Innovative Projects and Research-Oriented Teaching are crucial avenues for cultivating innovation and research capabilities among students in the field of marine technology. To inspire students' innovative potential, these projects should address authentic marine technology issues, encouraging students to autonomously design and implement innovative projects. This can involve improving existing technology, developing new technology, or devising solutions for marine environmental issues. Research-oriented teaching is equally significant. By encouraging students to engage in research projects, they gain hands-on experience in the scientific research process, learning research methods and scientific thinking. Students can choose to participate in faculty-guided research projects or independently pursue research topics, thereby honing their research abilities and fostering an innovative spirit. These projects not only enable students to apply learned knowledge in practice but, more importantly, cultivate their problem-solving abilities, teamwork, and innovative thinking. By attempting to solve real-world issues, students uncover challenges underlying these problems, thereby igniting their pursuit of innovation and passion for scientific research. Such experiences aid students in being more confident and competitive in their future academic and professional endeavors.

## **5. Conclusions**

The integration of science and education holds profound significance for the reform of marine technology education. It not only broadens students' academic horizons but also crucially fosters interdisciplinary integration and comprehensive capabilities. In this era of rapid information evolution, science and education integration offer students a forward-thinking, practical, and comprehensive learning experience, equipping them with stronger adaptability to confront complex challenges in the future.

However, educational reform requires continuous deepening and refinement. With the constant evolution of technology and knowledge, teaching content and methods also need to continuously evolve to meet the demands of the times. This necessitates joint efforts from educators and scholars

to continuously explore and innovate teaching methods, designing courses that better align with real-world needs. Educators should listen to students' needs, actively seek feedback on course effectiveness, and continually adjust and improve teaching approaches to ensure the efficacy and relevance of education.

Teaching reform isn't just about adjusting content and methods; it represents a revolution in educational philosophy. It requires educators to break away from traditional frameworks, adopting diverse teaching approaches to spark students' interests and innovation potential, nurturing their lifelong learning abilities. Only through continual deepening and refinement of teaching reform can education in marine technology better adapt to future developmental needs, providing students with a more comprehensive and enriching learning experience, thereby laying a robust foundation for their future professional development.

## Acknowledgements

The work was supported by the Shandong Province Undergraduate Teaching Reform Research Project (Project Number: Z2021143); Educational Reform Project, University of Technology (Shandong Academy of Sciences), (Project Number: 2021zd11, rcpy202101); Project for the Construction of Excellent Teaching Teams, University of Technology (Shandong Academy of Sciences),(Project Number: 2023JXTD010 ); University-Industry Collaborative Education Program, Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China(Project Numbers:202102245036, 202101044004).

## References

- [1] Akala, B. M.M. (2021). *Revisiting education reform in Kenya: A case of Competency Based Curriculum (CBC)*. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 3(1), 100107.
- [2] Yurkofsky, M.M., Peterson, A.J., Mehta, J.D., Horwitz-Willis, R. and Frumin, K.M. (2020). *Research on continuous improvement: Exploring the complexities of managing educational change*. *Review of Research in Education*, 44(1), 403-433.
- [3] Tsai H.Y., Chung C.C. and Lou S.J. (2017). *Construction and development of iSTEM learning model[J]*. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, 14(1): 15-32.
- [4] Papadakis, S., Vaiopoulou, J., Sifaki, E., Stamovlasis, D. and Kalogiannakis, M. (2021). *Attitudes towards the use of educational robotics: Exploring pre-service and in-service early childhood teacher profiles*. *Education Sciences*, 11(5), 204.
- [5] Wang, Y., Deng, Q. and Zhang, Y. (2020). *Research on the coupling and coordinated development of marine technological innovation and marine ecological economic development*. *Journal of Coastal Research*, 99(SI), 419-427.
- [6] Hindhede, A.L. and Højbjerg, K. (2022). *Disciplinary knowledge, pedagogy, and assessment in non-university marine engineering education—consequences for student academic success*. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 1-16.