

## The Establishment and Effectiveness of Incentive Mechanism for Teaching Faculty Management in Universities

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### Abstract

The quality of the teaching faculty is the basis for existence and survival of a university. The university should develop the practical and effective incentive mechanism based on actual conditions, which is the important guaranty for the teaching quality and the good reputation. The university developing an incentive mechanism on the basis of self-conditions embodies the human-oriented management ideology, which not only has practical meanings for the improvement of teaching effectiveness and the cultivation of students' comprehensive qualities, but also generates positive impacts on teachers' career planning and clear self-positioning in the long run. In this paper, authors firstly introduce the practical meanings of developing an incentive mechanism for teaching faculty management in universities, then analyze the current conditions of teaching faculty management, and at last propose targeted incentive measures and suggestions for this issue, in the hope of presenting valuable reference for related management departments and researchers.

**Key words:** Teaching faculty, Teaching faculty management, Incentive mechanism, Establishment and effectiveness

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The excellent teaching faculty is the key for the success of a university. Good teachers can not only properly

carry out the supposed teaching aims, fostering the well-rounded and outstanding graduates, but also trigger lots of potential and far-reaching impacts on students' growth in a subtle way. Just as what was said by former President of Tsinghua University Mei Yiqi, "For a university, great masters matter, not buildings." A great master is not only good at academic researches, but also noble and respectable. Therefore, teachers' professional qualities, moralities, and competences determine the level of teaching qualities and the qualities of graduates to a great degree. Thus, to enhance the levels of college teachers' scientific researches and teaching qualities means a lot to universities and students. Currently, many universities try to strengthen the management of teaching faculty by developing a series of diversified incentive mechanisms, which can motivate and stimulate teachers to improve the level of scientific researches, cultivating well-rounded talents with comprehensive competences. In addition, it can benefit the teachers' self-career planning and the university's good reputation, generating more "positive effects" on the entire higher education. Next, authors make a brief introduction to the important effectiveness of universities developing incentive mechanisms for the teaching faculty Establishment and management from two aspects, i.e. improving the professional levels and reflecting the human care.

### 1. THE IMPORTANT SIGNIFICANCE OF ESTABLISHING THE INCENTIVE MECHANISM FOR TEACHING FACULTY MANAGEMENT IN UNIVERSITIES

The research on incentive mechanism belongs to the science of management. It is a mechanism that can bring about positive impacts on one organization, in which organizational managers, on the basis of certain laws and regulations, values, and cultural environment, try to stimulate and encourage the followers' behaviors,

thoughts, and performances and make them continue to work hard. An incentive mechanism is important for the growth and the development of an organization. Specifically, it can be reflected in the following aspects.

**(a) Guiding.** The guiding emphasizes on the overall concept, the long-term view, and the collective ideology. All these ideas serve the objectives of an organization. In order to stimulate and induce individuals' behaviors, there must be certain objective. To guide and regulate teachers' behaviors, we should encourage teachers to act in the supposed way, following the principle of unifying the personal needs and organizational and social needs.

**(b) Meeting the needs.** Only by meeting employees' senior needs, can an organization mobilize their enthusiasm for production and generate more stable and sustainable strengths. The expected value for the target is to unify the realization of personal values and that of social values. An effective incentive mechanism can motivate college teachers' enthusiasm for the work and creativity in work. To strengthen the work motivation can trigger the great potentials of college teachers. They would prefer to accomplish the tasks of the university and contribute themselves to the teaching cause.

On the one hand, to construct the incentive mechanism for teaching faculty management in universities can help to stimulate teachers to improve professional skills, make innovations of teaching approaches, enlarging students' vision. Doubtlessly, regardless of any changes of situations, the teaching qualities and the students' competences are the most important standard to judge whether a college teacher is excellent or not. Similarly, the original intention of constructing the incentive mechanism in universities is also to improve students' professional techniques and overall qualities. At this stage, the "spoon-fed" teaching is popular in most domestic universities, i.e. teachers keep talking on the platform and students are busy with listening and taking notes. The class is boring and lacks of interaction and communication. Students do nothing but memorizing all rules and items, like machines. The teaching effect is terrible. Although the teaching is unsatisfying, college teachers, especially the young college teachers are afraid of making changes, because of the absence of an innovation mechanism. College teachers cannot make innovations in teaching and keep the conservative thinking, which not only limits the exertion of class effects, but also affects their professional skills and scientific researches in the long run. It will damage both teachers and students. Therefore, the establishment of an incentive mechanism can solve the problem to a large extent. It will provide the basis and the guaranty for the innovation of teaching approaches and the expansion of class teaching. All college teachers, especially the energetic young teachers, can take various innovative measures, such as integrating trans-disciplinary resources, developing trans-college interactions, to enrich and diversify the class teaching, which will not only train the thinking and improve

the levels of scientific research and teaching quality, but also help to create a new interactive class pattern. Therefore, it is meaningful for the growth of teachers and students and the long-term development of universities.

On the other hand, to construct the incentive mechanism for teaching faculty management in universities on the basis of taking college teachers' characteristics into consideration completely reflects the human-oriented human care of universities. It is well-known that college teachers are a special group consisted of many intellectuals. Because they are engaged in creative work in life, besides self-esteem, self-respect, and self-reliance, they hope to win the recognition and respect of the community and they work hard to exceed themselves and achieve progresses. Currently, universities and academics evaluate college teachers in terms of their titles. However, due to restrictions of traditional thinking and old system, there are a series of problems in the current title system that needs to be improved. These defects and flaws ruin college teachers' initiatives and enthusiasm for work to certain extent. For example, college teachers need to meet the work experience requirements when promoted from lecturers to associate professors. Because the experience requirements are fixed firmly, the young teachers cannot be promoted as exceptions even if they have made exceptional contributions to professional studies. It will harm teachers' enthusiasm and creativity. In the long run, it will also damage the normal academic communication and competition. The establishment of incentive mechanism will make all activities become evidence-based. Teachers can mobilize their work ethic and enthusiasm and threw themselves into intense scientific researches, without any worries.

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## 2. THE SHORTCOMINGS OF CURRENT TEACHING FACULTY MANAGEMENT IN UNIVERSITIES

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We advocate to establishing an incentive mechanism for teaching faculty management in universities because of the shortcomings of current teaching faculty management, mainly reflected in the following aspects.

Firstly, college teachers lack of voice for their academic capabilities and universities lack of atmosphere of democratic management. Because of the restriction of current system, it is still the administration that possesses the dominant positions in universities. In contrast, the teaching levels and scientific research levels that reflect teachers' actual professional competences are at the inferior position. Therefore, under existing system, some excellent teachers who possess superior professional skills choose to leave the teaching platform or give up the scientific research. They might prefer to administrative work or just bury themselves into boring life. In the long run, it will not only dampen the professional teachers'

enthusiasm for participation and the creativity, but also generate bad influences on the cultivation of teaching faculty, as well as the teaching.

Secondly, the existing incentive mechanism for teachers is relatively simple, backward, and inefficient, and lacks of flexibility, which is not good for mobilizing teachers' enthusiasm. In the existing incentive mechanism, universities may host a reward ceremony for excellent teachers in the Teacher's Day, or commend advanced individuals at the end of each year. The extremely-simple incentive mechanism has already established the relatively fixed model and system. It has made it clear as for the specific incentives, concerning the means and contents, etc. in relevant regulations and systems. In the long run, these "fixed provisions" will bore college teachers due to the lack of flexibility and elasticity.

Thirdly, universities cannot evaluate and assess teachers' performances scientifically and reasonably because of the lack of quantitative assessment indicators. Some universities are still in the condition of egalitarian. In existing system, the assessment of college teachers is mainly composed of two parts, i.e. leaders' evaluation and democratic evaluation. The prominent problems include the singular assessment, the unclear process, and the lack of quantitative indicators. For example, in some universities the assessment of teachers has no fixed terms, which is very careless for the assessment. Even if some universities do have fixed assessment period, the results of assessment is just one word, i.e. "excellent, qualified, or unqualified". In some universities, the incentive mechanism is just for formality, seldom actually adopted. These shortcomings above weaken the practical effects of incentive mechanism. As a result, the faculty management in universities has never been able to establish an improved and dynamic personnel mechanism.

Fourthly, the spiritual incentives are the dominant stimulation. It lacks of necessary material incentives. Limited by self-financial conditions or fixed systems, many universities merely adopt the spiritual incentives instead of materials incentives. It seriously damages teachers' enthusiasm for their scientific researches or teaching. The scientific achievements and the teaching progresses cannot bring practical returns for them. The imperfect incentive mechanism seriously dampens the good teachers' enthusiasm and damages their innovative ideas and creativity.

### **3. THE COUNTERMEASURES FOR CONSTRUCTING THE INCENTIVE MECHANISM FOR TEACHING FACULTY MANAGEMENT IN UNIVERSITIES**

Firstly, develop a correct recognition to the significance of incentive mechanism for teaching faculty management in universities and pay attention to this issue. The incentive

mechanism plays an irreplaceable role in management. It is an essential skill of managers. As for university management, how to manage and coordinate teachers has always been a complex and diversified system. Especially in today's knowledge economy times, how to make best use of current human resources, financial resources, and physical resources and motivate teachers' initiatives and enthusiasm for scientific researches and teaching activities, and achieve the optimized allocation of human resources is a challengeable project. It is well known that all branches face intense competition. In the higher education field, it is the competition for talents. How to coordinate the interactive relationship of teachers is the key for solving other problems. Therefore, related agencies should pay more attention to this issue and make full use of the incentive mechanism to improve teachers' professional qualities, teaching qualities, and school-running efficiencies. At this stage, some university managers still follow the previous management pattern and refuse to introduce the incentive mechanism to daily teaching management, resulting in the rigid system and difficult to achieve the desired effects. In order to change the conditions radically, management agencies must update their attitudes and recognize the importance of the incentive mechanism. University managers should develop sound policies, integrate human resources, and create the ideal environment, in order to ensure the implementation of the incentive mechanism, comprehensively improving teachers' professional qualities, students' overall competences, and the school-running efficiencies.

Secondly, on the basis of self-conditions, managers should develop practical incentive principles, mainly including the scientific, fair, different, systematic, and transparent principles. The first is the scientific principle. As we discuss about teachers' teaching approaches we emphasize on students' personal conditions. Similarly, we also emphasize on the principle of considering specific conditions as we discuss about the establishment of incentive mechanism. As for the establishment of incentive mechanism for college teachers, we should respect the objective laws, take universities' practical conditions and teachers' personal characteristics into consideration, and absorb the knowledge of psychology, education, and management. The second is the principle of fairness. An old saying is that "no worry for scarcity, but worry for uneven". The principle of fairness is the key factor that ensures the smooth implementation of regulations and rules and achieves the expected results. Similarly, it is also a truth for the establishment of incentive mechanism for college teachers. Therefore, as we develop related incentive measures, we must firstly classify the target group on the basis of practical needs, and then apply the unified policy to the same class, avoiding the negative effects caused by unfair systems. The third is the difference principle. Here we should mention that the difference principle is not to deny the

principle of fairness but more embody the emphasis on fairness. Different people have different needs. Even for the same person, he or she may have different needs at different stages. On this basis, the management agencies should make comprehensive consideration when develop incentive measures, understanding the most urgent needs of different groups of people and establishing different incentive measures according different people's needs. By this way, make the incentive measures generate the greatest effects. The fourth is the systematic principle. We know that an individual's needs are not constant, but rather a "variable" that changes with social development. Individual needs are the systematic project restricted by many factors. Therefore, we must make systematic consideration when we develop the incentive measures. Many aspects, such as the compensation policies, the reward system, the training incentives, and involvement in management, should be taken into consideration. The fifth is the principle of transparency. This one is the key whether the four principles above can be carried out or not. Only on the condition of the principle of transparency, can the four principles above play their best roles. Otherwise, it will not only weaken the practical effectiveness of incentive measures, but also cause the gap between universities and teachers, which will finally restrict the improvement of teachers' professional skills and the long-term development of universities.

Thirdly, pay attention to balancing the relationship of academic power and administrative power and ensure that teachers can use their academic power to make them heard in front of administrative power. In traditional management system, the administrative power and the development of university are usually controlled by managers, while the professors and masters who possess professional skills and qualities have no voice to be heard and no decision right. Over time, their enthusiasm for participation and their innovation have been weakened. In order to change this terrible condition, the key is to improve the influence of academic power and properly weaken the administrative power in teaching faculty management in universities. Manage the scientific research and teaching activities by following the principle of "professionals for school-running, professors for teaching". By this way, it will encourage college teachers to improve their professional levels, engage in scientific research innovations, and participate in university management.

Fourthly, according to college teachers' practical needs, establish and improve the incentive mechanism that combines material incentives and spiritual incentives. The material incentives are the base for other incentives because material incentives are the substance basis for college teachers' living and also the university's recognition to teachers' work. Relatively speaking, college teachers are generally more valued spiritual incentives

because they, as senior intellectuals, more expect the recognition and respect of the community, especially the academia. From this perspective, to establish the incentive mechanism, including both material incentives and spiritual incentives, will generate positive impacts on the teaching faculty management in universities.

#### **4. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INCENTIVE MECHANISM IN TEACHING FACULTY MANAGEMENT IN UNIVERSITIES**

The establishment and improvement of an incentive mechanism means to mobilize people's enthusiasm and enhance their responsibilities. The goals are supposed to be scientific, reasonable and operable. It needs the multi-angle, multi-level, and in-depth consideration. Therefore, an effective incentive mechanism is easy to be improved in order to become perfect and feasible.

To establish and improve an incentive mechanism for teaching faculty management in a university will bring vitality to practical management work. In an effective incentive mechanism, every teacher can find his or her appropriate position. Excellent talents can show their talents properly and completely, and people who have no passion for work will find it hard to keep the job. By this way, the teaching position will not be as safe as an iron bowl. Meanwhile, the implementation of an effective competition and incentive mechanism can help to reduce the burden of incapable staff, cutting down the number of working staff, and increasing the salary of teachers who devote themselves to teaching. Carry out and improve the effective competition and incentive mechanism, and enhance the management people's enthusiasm for work and increase their work efficiency. Increase the social benefits and economic benefits of teaching, scientific researches, and social services of universities. Form the virtuous circle, in which talented people can display their talents and people get equal compensations on the basis of their work.

In Changchun University of Science & Technology, by means of fair competition, we select and employ the most suitable teachers, and we have made some breakthroughs. Firstly, we broke the old tradition of "only promotion but no demotion". People who are incompetent will be dismissed or demoted. Secondly, we got rid of the routine of "age-based promotion". Regardless of the degree, age, or gender, use the most talented people, especially for the employment of high-level and high-quality talents. Thirdly, change the rigid approach. Perform the dynamic management and set positions scientifically. Implement the post office appointment system and establish the competition and incentive mechanism. Make sure that everyone faces pressures and needs to turn pressures into motives. By this way, people can make more achievements.

Besides, the University has set up a series of incentive programs to attract, keep, and train more talents, forming the optimized allocation of teaching faculty.

In a word, the establishment of an incentive mechanism in universities can be a sound foundation for keeping and attracting talents, enhancing the educational vitality, improving operation efficiency, and developing high-quality teaching faculty. An incentive mechanism will help the teaching faculty management to achieve great progresses.

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