Academic Promotion of HE Teaching Personnel : China

Dr. Prof. ZHU, Huaixin
Zhejiang University
Contents

- Context and background
- Objectives of national policies
- Structure and criteria
- Faculty recruitment and evaluation
1. Context and background

Overview of Chinese Higher Education

- Big gap between the higher education and Chinese socio-economic prosperity
- Quality faculty performance ensured by sensible faculty employment and academic promotion policies:
  - tenure-guaranteed faculty employment system
  => a contractual relationship
Table 1. Number of Full-time Teachers by Age (Regular HEIs in China)
Time: August 30, 2013
Unit: person

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>30 and under</th>
<th>31~35</th>
<th>36~40</th>
<th>41~45</th>
<th>46~50</th>
<th>51~55</th>
<th>56~60</th>
<th>61~65</th>
<th>66 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1440292</td>
<td>293610</td>
<td>340893</td>
<td>242377</td>
<td>199234</td>
<td>200304</td>
<td>85343</td>
<td>56443</td>
<td>13587</td>
<td>8501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>169423</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1396</td>
<td>9502</td>
<td>28382</td>
<td>61179</td>
<td>31769</td>
<td>24749</td>
<td>7397</td>
<td>4949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-senior</td>
<td>412692</td>
<td>2021</td>
<td>35767</td>
<td>92927</td>
<td>106109</td>
<td>102525</td>
<td>40267</td>
<td>24687</td>
<td>5149</td>
<td>3240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>576013</td>
<td>99963</td>
<td>240622</td>
<td>124432</td>
<td>58787</td>
<td>33198</td>
<td>11756</td>
<td>6134</td>
<td>872</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>209811</td>
<td>137107</td>
<td>51439</td>
<td>12432</td>
<td>4674</td>
<td>2527</td>
<td>1083</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No-ranking</td>
<td>72353</td>
<td>54419</td>
<td>11669</td>
<td>3084</td>
<td>1282</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Education. Number of Academic Qualifications of Full-time and Part-time Teachers in HEIs (Total).
1. Context and background

Highlight major developments

- In the 1980s, 1.5% → professor title; 9.4% → associate professor title
- Within this lecturer-dominated faculty structure, few faculty members held graduate degrees or possessed sufficient knowledge and research ability for the job.
1. Context and background

Highlight major developments

- **In the 1990s**, concepts of accountability and efficiency gained increasingly popularity.
- The personnel reform nationwide: *On Furthering the Personnel Reform in Chinese Higher Educational Institutions* in 2000
2. Objectives of national policies

Higher educational institutions in China
- universities
- research institutes
- specialized institutions
- independent colleges
- professional universities
- military institutions
- medical schools and colleges
- executive training schools
- **Admission** ➔ national entrance examination
2. Objectives of national policies

- **The Ministry of Education:**
  Teaching Quality Assessment for Undergraduate Programs (TQAUP)

- **Chinese government:**
  *Outline of China's National Plan for Medium and Long-Term Educational Reform and Development (2010-2020)*
2. Objectives of national policies

- **For university teachers**
  
  **Basic obligation:** research (basic and applied research)
  
  **Important strategies:** to combine researching and teaching

- **For universities** *(Esp. world-class universities)*
  
  **Most important factor:** academic ability
  
  **Two aspects:**
  1. promoting distinguished disciplines
  2. searching for international cooperation is important
2. Objectives of national policies

- Significant issues:
  - Strengthening the governance
  - Enhancing the institution construction
  - Promoting professional evaluation
2. Objectives of national policies

Teacher Profession

Requirements for teacher status:

- being a Chinese citizen;
- being sound ideologically and politically;
2. Objectives of national policies

Teacher Profession

Requirements for teacher status:

- meeting certain academic requirements: university graduates or postgraduates with researching abilities; and

- having educational and teaching skills, including a good command of pedagogic and psychological laws.
3. Structure and criteria

Personnel management reform

- From the 1980s to the present, evaluation criteria for university teachers have ranged from their political attitude, professional ethics, to qualifications and performance.

- The evaluation result is used as one of the bases for continuing the contract of, dismissing, promoting, awarding, or punishing staff.
3. Structure and criteria

Personnel management reform

- Teacher evaluation remains the central aspect of personnel management in the top-down structure of Chinese universities.

- The table below shows numbers of academic qualifications of full-time teachers in Chinese universities in 2012.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Doctor's Degrees</th>
<th>Master's Degrees</th>
<th>Normal Courses</th>
<th>Short-cycle Courses and Under</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time Teachers</td>
<td>1440292</td>
<td>254399</td>
<td>513793</td>
<td>651623</td>
<td>20477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of Which: Female</td>
<td>680918</td>
<td>84962</td>
<td>273827</td>
<td>315054</td>
<td>7075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>169423</td>
<td>75552</td>
<td>34375</td>
<td>57885</td>
<td>1611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-senior</td>
<td>412692</td>
<td>96281</td>
<td>101262</td>
<td>209819</td>
<td>5330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>576013</td>
<td>74035</td>
<td>255166</td>
<td>239488</td>
<td>7324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>209811</td>
<td>1624</td>
<td>90492</td>
<td>113976</td>
<td>3719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No- ranking</td>
<td>72353</td>
<td>6907</td>
<td>32498</td>
<td>30455</td>
<td>2493</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Education: Number of Academic Qualifications of Full-time Teachers (Regular HEIs).
3. Structure and criteria

Employment reform in China

- It began in 2000.
- As a national policy, the reform clearly stated that all public sector employees should be employed by contract.
3. Structure and criteria

Employment reform in China

- All areas of the public sector were expected to develop performance assessment exercises and an incentive system (such as linking salary to performance). Their reform was based on a contract system and quantitative requirements for research output.
3. Structure and criteria

Criteria for academic promotion

- For academics in the social sciences at one Chinese key University, the quantitative requirements for promotion to Professor were eight papers in national core journals and one academic book within 5 years. The candidate also needed to be the principal investigator of one national-level research project (or two provincial-level), with at least RMB 30,000 in research funds per year.
3. Structure and criteria

Criteria for academic promotion

- In another Chinese University, the promotion requirements were **eight papers** in national core journals and one academic book (with 150,000–200,000 words). He/she must have **hosted in one national-level research project**, or served as the **principal investigator** of a provincial-level research project, or have **RMB 2,000,000** in applied research funding.
4. Faculty recruitment

- **Since 1949**, the Chinese government assigned faculty members to a particular institution.

- **Disadvantages**: “regardless of whether the individual was willing to work at that institution or the institution really needed that particular person”

- **During the 1980s**, when universities were granted more autonomy in personal decisions they usually recruited new faculty from their own graduates.

- **Disadvantages**: serious academic inbreeding
4. Faculty recruitment

- **Since the 1990s**, Chinese universities places an emphasis on faculty candidates with overseas doctoral degrees during their attempts to bridge the gap with top-rated universities.

- **Disadvantages**: a big gap in the salary between domestic scholars and overseas doctors.
4. Faculty evaluation

- Between 1949 and the 1990s:
  - political correctness (additional important criterion)
  - teaching effectiveness

- Since the 1990s:
  - faculty productivity
  - academic ability / research productivity
4. Faculty promotion

Between 1949 and the 1990s:

- guaranteed tenure:
  - “permanent appointment”
- faculty promotion:
  - non-competitive and nearly automatic
  - rigid and ineffective appointment mechanism
4. Faculty promotion

Since the 1990s:

- **Personnel reforms:** contract employment with faculty to promote their productivity

- *Suggestions on Furthering the Personnel System Reform in the Chinese Higher Educational Institutions*, jointly released by the Organization Department of the Central Committee of the CPC, Ministry of Personnel, and Ministry of Education in 2000 to popularize the personnel reform nationwide.
4. Faculty promotion

Since the 1990s:

- Faculty promotion is more heavily scrutinized in the new personnel system. Following the Western pattern, many universities have organized academic committees as the primary evaluators and sought external experts for peer review to achieve a justified result.
Thanks for your attention!