

## Article

# Research on Construction of Practical Teaching Model for Piano Major in Universities under Employment Orientation

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**Abstract:** Against the backdrop of universal higher education and intensifying competition in the art talent job market, the traditional piano education model centered primarily on performance skills has become increasingly inadequate to meet the industry's demand for versatile, application-oriented, and practice-driven music professionals. Employment-oriented approaches that emphasize the cultivation of practical, transferable skills have therefore emerged as an inevitable direction for reforming piano programs in universities. This study systematically examines current employment trends, competency requirements, and pedagogical challenges faced by piano majors, and elucidates the intrinsic logic linking career orientation, professional identity formation, and practical teaching. On this basis, it constructs a practice-based teaching model aligned with societal and industry needs from five interrelated dimensions: educational objectives, curriculum system design, instructional methods, practical teaching platforms, and multi-dimensional evaluation mechanisms. The model advocates integrating classroom instruction with school-enterprise cooperation, performance practice, and community cultural services to enhance students' comprehensive musical literacy, pedagogical ability, and innovation awareness. Furthermore, the study proposes concrete implementation strategies, including optimizing course structures, diversifying practice scenarios, and refining formative and summative assessment. The findings aim to enhance students' professional competitiveness and employment outcomes, thereby promoting a more precise alignment between university art education and the evolving demands of the cultural and creative industries.

**Keywords:** employment-oriented education; piano major; practical teaching model; higher music education; applied music talents

## 1. Introduction

With the rapid development of cultural industries in China, including art training, preschool education, community aesthetic education, and new media music sectors, the societal demand for piano professionals has experienced significant transformation. Employers now seek individuals with diverse professional competencies, moving beyond the traditional emphasis on performance skills. These competencies include teaching proficiency, accompaniment expertise, practical stage experience, event organization capabilities, and the ability to effectively utilize new media platforms for communication. This shift reflects the evolving expectations within the industry and highlights the importance of cultivating multifaceted skills to meet contemporary demands [1].

For an extended period, piano education in Chinese universities has faced persistent challenges, such as an excessive focus on technical proficiency at the expense of practical application, an overemphasis on solo performances rather than collaborative learning, and a prioritization of theoretical instruction over real-world relevance [2]. Additionally, academic research has often overshadowed career readiness, resulting in graduates who excel in performance but lack essential teaching abilities, struggle to translate their knowledge into practical contexts, and frequently change career paths shortly after graduation. In response to these issues, it is imperative to establish a teaching model that

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aligns with employment-oriented goals, emphasizes hands-on training, and assesses competencies based on job-specific requirements. Such a model is crucial not only for adapting piano programs to modern educational reforms but also for enhancing the quality of talent cultivation and fostering high-quality employment opportunities for students [3].

## **2. Practical Significance of Piano Major Teaching in Higher Education Institutions Under Employment Orientation**

### *2.1. Alleviating Structural Employment Contradictions in Piano Majors*

The current art talent market demonstrates a significant imbalance between the supply of and demand for professionals. While opportunities for high-level soloist positions are exceedingly limited, there is a notable shortage of individuals qualified for practical roles such as music educators, art training instructors, members of cultural troupes, professionals in new media music, and event coordinators [4, 5]. To address this disparity, it is essential to restructure teaching models with a focus on employment-oriented strategies [6, 7]. By aligning the cultivation of talent with the specific requirements of the job market, educational institutions can proactively reduce employment pressures and better prepare students for the realities of the workforce.

By tailoring educational programs to meet market demands, universities can optimize their curricula to better serve students' career prospects. This involves reducing the emphasis on purely technical training courses that have limited relevance to practical job roles and increasing the inclusion of modules that focus on applicable skills. For example, courses in piano pedagogy, improvisational accompaniment, music event planning, and digital music production can be expanded. To address the growing demand for art educators capable of teaching, performing, and organizing, institutions might introduce simulated preschool piano instruction and practical adult group piano classes. These courses would enable students to develop essential teaching methodologies, effective communication techniques, and classroom management skills alongside their performance abilities [1, 8]. Furthermore, to cater to the evolving needs of the new media music industry, universities could incorporate training in music video production, live piano performance, and interactive digital sessions. These additions would foster a digital-first mindset and enhance students' operational competencies. Such curriculum adjustments not only help students identify their career trajectories early but also equip them with the necessary skills to succeed in their chosen fields. This proactive approach significantly reduces the risk of post-graduation employment challenges caused by mismatched skill sets, thereby addressing the imbalance between an oversupply of technically focused talent and a shortage of professionals equipped for practical roles [3].

### *2.2. Promoting the Transformation of Piano Programs in Higher Education Institutions from "Skill-oriented" to "Vocational-oriented"*

Traditional piano education has historically focused on cultivating pianists with a high level of technical expertise, often resulting in a narrow scope of applicability [7]. In contrast, employment-oriented education emphasizes the development of vocational competence, practical skills, and adaptability [3]. This approach promotes a shift in piano education towards application-oriented, interdisciplinary, and innovative talent cultivation, which aligns more effectively with the broader objectives of general higher education institutions [5]. By focusing on practical relevance and career readiness, this model ensures that piano programs cater to the evolving demands of the professional landscape.

The transformation of piano education does not dismiss the importance of skill development but rather redefines its role within a broader framework of professional competency. Instead of focusing solely on isolated technical training, the curriculum integrates diverse knowledge areas such as pedagogy, psychology, and management. This enables students to not only perform proficiently but also understand effective

teaching strategies, excel in interpersonal communication, and manage organizational tasks. Collaborative efforts between academia and industry further enhance this approach by creating practical platforms where students engage with industry professionals, gaining exposure to real-world workflows and standards across various roles. Such initiatives bridge the gap between classroom learning and career demands, fostering the development of problem-solving abilities and innovative thinking [7]. Graduates emerge as versatile professionals equipped to meet immediate job requirements while possessing the adaptability to expand into fields such as music education, cultural promotion, and arts management. This evolution from traditional stage performance to professional practice broadens career opportunities, empowering students to navigate diverse professional contexts with confidence and competence [3].

### *2.3. Enhancing Students' Professional Competence and Sustainable Development Capabilities*

Practice-oriented teaching significantly improves students' practical skills while fostering essential abilities such as effective communication, teamwork, adaptability in challenging situations, and proficiency in organizing instructional activities [1, 6]. These attributes form the foundation of students' competitive edge in their future careers, enabling them to secure high-quality employment and achieve sustained professional growth [6].

During practical training sessions, students actively collaborate with peers to accomplish tasks like designing educational projects and organizing artistic activities. This collaborative process encourages them to engage with diverse perspectives, synthesize resources, and resolve conflicts, thereby enhancing their ability to work efficiently in teams. When confronted with unexpected challenges such as unanticipated student inquiries, technical issues during lessons, or last-minute adjustments in performances, students are guided to analyze problems and adapt plans effectively. These experiences build their capacity to manage complex situations, improve their emergency response skills, and strengthen their resilience under pressure. Practical education also integrates humanistic values and professional ethics into real-world applications. For example, music instruction helps students understand individual differences and emotional needs, fostering qualities like patience, responsibility, and empathy. Organizing art events requires adherence to industry standards and ethical practices, promoting meticulous attention to detail and cultivating a trustworthy professional image. By developing these competencies, students are equipped to transcend the limitations of single-discipline expertise, adapt to evolving career demands, and continuously acquire new knowledge [7]. This holistic approach empowers them to confidently address emerging challenges within their industries, seize new opportunities, and achieve sustainable professional development over the long term.

## **3. Major Issues in the Disconnection Between Piano Education and Employment Demand in Higher Education Institutions**

### *3.1. Displacement between Training Objectives and Employment Positions*

Most piano programs in higher education institutions continue to emphasize performance skills as their primary focus, often overlooking the broader competencies required for diverse career paths. These paths include roles in music education within primary and secondary schools, social art training, cultural performances, and cultural service sectors. This narrow focus has created a significant gap between the educational objectives of these programs and the actual demands of the job market. By failing to align training with the practical needs of these professions, institutions inadvertently limit the career readiness of their graduates, leaving them ill-prepared to meet the expectations of employers in these fields [7].

Many institutions persist in adhering to an outdated, elitist model of education that prioritizes the cultivation of professional musicians. This approach is evident in curriculum designs that heavily favor specialized performance training, such as advanced

solo repertoire and chamber music ensemble courses, while neglecting essential applied knowledge and practical skills. These include areas such as piano pedagogy, music education theory, child psychology, and arts event planning, all of which are critical for success in real-world careers. As a result, graduates often encounter significant challenges when entering the workforce. For example, those teaching music in primary and secondary schools may struggle with lesson planning, engaging students effectively, and coordinating classroom activities. Similarly, in vocational training settings, many lack the age-specific teaching techniques and market-oriented awareness necessary to adapt to professional demands. Graduates with exceptional piano skills frequently find it difficult to simplify complex music theories for beginners or design interactive lessons that align with children's cognitive development. These deficiencies not only reduce their employability but also hinder their ability to meet the growing demand for versatile, application-oriented piano professionals in various sectors [5]. Addressing these gaps requires a fundamental shift in educational priorities to ensure that graduates are equipped with both technical expertise and the practical skills needed to thrive in diverse professional environments.

### *3.2. Curriculum System Emphasizes Theory Over Practice*

The curriculum predominantly emphasizes piano majoring, music theory, harmony, and the historical study of Chinese and Western music, while practical courses such as piano pedagogy, improvisational accompaniment, singing and playing, ensemble performance, art activity planning, and new media applications in music are allocated a comparatively smaller proportion [1]. As a result, students often lack adequate reserves of professional skills necessary for comprehensive development [1, 6].

In the piano program curricula of numerous universities, theoretical courses are frequently assigned significantly higher credit weights compared to practical ones [5]. Students dedicate the majority of their academic efforts to refining solo performance techniques and delving into music theory, while practical skills essential for career advancement are often relegated to secondary importance. For instance, improvisational accompaniment, a skill highly relevant to K-12 music education and community arts training, is typically offered only as an elective with limited instructional hours. This restricts students from acquiring systematic knowledge of arrangement techniques across various musical genres and mastering improvisational performance strategies, thereby hindering their ability to provide effective accompaniment for vocal performances or simple melodies in real-world teaching scenarios. Similarly, piano-voice courses reveal a comparable challenge—while some students exhibit advanced piano proficiency, they frequently encounter difficulties in achieving vocal-instrumental coordination, maintaining pitch accuracy, and controlling rhythm, rendering them inadequately prepared to fulfill fundamental teaching requirements in music classrooms. The absence of ensemble performance courses further exacerbates the issue, depriving students of opportunities to develop collaborative skills essential for listening, coordinating, and balancing during group performances. This disconnect from practical workplace demands, such as participation in school bands or community arts groups, highlights a critical gap in their training. Additionally, the lack of courses addressing concert planning and digital music media leaves students unprepared for modern industry competencies, including event organization, artistic project management, and digital music distribution. Consequently, graduates often face challenges in tasks such as organizing campus arts festivals or utilizing new media platforms to promote music education. This curriculum structure, which places disproportionate emphasis on theoretical knowledge over practical application, results in students possessing extensive academic understanding but insufficient practical skills and applied capabilities to address real-world professional challenges, ultimately impeding their ability to adapt swiftly to the demands of their job roles [7].

### 3.3. *Traditional and Monotonous Teaching Methods*

Educational practices often rely heavily on the "one-on-one tutoring" model, which emphasizes skill correction but lacks diversity in teaching methodologies. This approach frequently excludes simulated teaching exercises, classroom drills, project-based learning, and training in real-world scenarios. As a result, students are left with minimal practical experience, which hinders their ability to adapt to professional environments [6]. Furthermore, practical platforms are insufficiently aligned with societal demands [5, 8]. On-campus activities are typically limited to final presentations and performances, which are repetitive in nature and occur infrequently. These formats fail to provide students with dynamic and engaging learning opportunities. Additionally, off-campus practice bases are inadequately developed, and partnerships with training institutions, schools, cultural organizations, and cultural enterprises are often superficial. This lack of meaningful collaboration restricts students' exposure to authentic workplace environments, leaving them ill-prepared for the challenges of their future careers. A more integrated approach that bridges the gap between academic training and professional practice is essential to address these shortcomings effectively [7].

The current evaluation system places disproportionate emphasis on performance levels as the primary criterion for assessment, neglecting the broader spectrum of professional competencies. This narrow focus fails to incorporate a systematic evaluation of essential skills such as teaching capabilities, practical performance, collaborative abilities, and innovative thinking. Additionally, the system does not adequately consider employment outcomes, which are critical indicators of a student's readiness for the professional world. By overlooking these key aspects, the evaluation framework does not provide students with clear guidance on the importance of developing well-rounded professional competencies. A more comprehensive assessment system that integrates these dimensions would better support students in prioritizing their growth in areas that are vital for long-term career success [1]. Such an approach would also encourage educational institutions to adopt teaching methods and practices that align more closely with the demands of the modern workforce.

## **4. Construction of Practical Teaching Model for Piano Majors in Higher Education Institutions Under Employment Orientation**

This research develops a comprehensive, practice-oriented teaching model designed to enhance the professional competencies of piano majors in higher education institutions. The model integrates key components, including objectives, curriculum design, instructional methods, platform utilization, and evaluation mechanisms, into a cohesive five-in-one framework. By aligning these elements, the approach aims to bridge theoretical knowledge with practical application, fostering a more robust skill set tailored to meet employment demands. This holistic structure ensures that students are better equipped to adapt to the evolving requirements of the professional music industry [3].

### 4.1. *Establishing Employment-oriented Practical Training Objectives*

To align with the evolving demands of the job market, a structured three-tier framework for practical training objectives has been established [6]. The foundational tier prioritizes the development of robust skills in piano performance and a thorough understanding of music theory, ensuring students acquire a strong technical and theoretical base [1, 3]. The core tier is designed to enhance critical professional abilities, including the capacity to teach piano effectively, perform improvisational accompaniment, integrate vocal performance with piano accompaniment, collaborate in ensemble settings, and gain confidence through stage practice. The advanced tier aims to foster a diverse skill set, encompassing event planning, effective classroom management, proficiency in new media operations, and expertise in art education. This comprehensive approach seeks to cultivate adaptable and highly skilled music professionals capable of excelling in various applied fields within the arts industry.

#### *4.2. Establishing a "Position Competency-Driven" Practical Curriculum System*

The curriculum structure is designed to align with the practical demands of mainstream teaching roles, ensuring that graduates are equipped with relevant skills for the evolving job market [5]. Courses such as "Piano Pedagogy," "Practical Children's Piano Instruction," "Classroom Organization and Management," and "Instructional Design & Courseware Development" are tailored to meet the specific requirements of educational institutions. To further enhance employability, programs including "Improvisational Accompaniment," "Piano Singing," "Ensembles & Choral Performance," "Chamber Music," and "Stage Performance & Practice" are integrated to refine artistic and collaborative abilities. Additionally, specialized courses such as "Art Event Planning," "Music New Media Operations," "Aesthetic Education Practice & Community Services," and "Art Exam Preparation & Grading Guidance" are introduced to expand career pathways and foster adaptability in diverse professional contexts. Practical components are emphasized through teaching internships, stage performances, volunteer services, art education initiatives, and concert organization, all of which are systematically incorporated into the credit system to ensure comprehensive skill development and real-world application.

#### *4.3. Innovative "Immersive and Job-oriented" Practical Teaching Methods*

The simulation teaching method encourages students to assume the role of "piano instructors," engaging in trial lectures, demonstrations, error correction, and interactive classroom activities. This approach is designed to cultivate their readiness for future teaching responsibilities through hands-on practice and constructive feedback. Project-based learning integrates real-world scenarios such as concerts, cultural events, artistic competitions, and music production sessions. These activities allow students to immerse themselves in rehearsals, event planning, performances, hosting duties, and comprehensive coordination tasks, fostering practical skills and professional adaptability. Collaborative teaching strategies emphasize teamwork through activities like four-hand piano playing, dual piano performances, and vocal-instrumental collaborations, which enhance interpersonal coordination and collective creativity. Additionally, flipped classrooms and online practices leverage digital tools, including short videos, live streaming, and micro-lecture recordings, to refine students' abilities in new media communication and presentation. These methods align with the evolving trends in online education, ensuring students are equipped with modern pedagogical and technological competencies [1].

#### *4.4. Establishing a Multi-dimensional Practical Platform for "On-campus and Off-campus Collaboration"*

The campus practice platform is equipped with facilities such as piano training classrooms, digital piano studios, performance halls, and recording studios [7]. These spaces are utilized for hosting a variety of activities, including solo concerts, faculty-student collaborative performances, teaching demonstrations, class showcases, and skills competitions. These events provide students with opportunities to refine their abilities in a structured and supportive environment. Off-campus practice bases are developed through stable partnerships with educational institutions, art training centers, cultural organizations, performing arts groups, and enterprises in the cultural sector. These collaborations aim to create integrated internship and employment platforms that bridge academic learning with professional practice. Additionally, social practice platforms focus on organizing art outreach initiatives, community aesthetic education programs, public welfare performances, art education support projects, and volunteer services [3, 6]. These efforts are designed to enhance students' social service capabilities while fostering a strong sense of professional identity. Competitions serve as a motivational tool for learning, while performances provide a practical avenue for skill refinement and application [7, 8].

Students are encouraged to actively participate in various provincial and municipal art competitions, teaching skills contests, and accompaniment competitions [6]. These events offer valuable opportunities for students to enhance their practical abilities through competitive experiences, allowing them to apply their knowledge in real-world scenarios and develop a deeper understanding of their craft [1, 2]. By engaging in these activities, students not only improve their technical proficiency but also gain confidence and adaptability, which are essential for their future professional endeavors [4].

### **5. Implementation Guarantees for Employment-Oriented Practical Teaching Model**

To cultivate a highly skilled and versatile faculty team, efforts will focus on encouraging educators to participate in rotational assignments across art institutions, schools, and training sectors [2]. This approach aims to enhance their practical experience and deepen their understanding of industry-specific requirements [3]. Additionally, professionals with extensive expertise in the field, such as accomplished piano instructors and performance specialists, will be invited to join as adjunct faculty members. This strategy ensures that teaching remains relevant and aligned with current industry standards [5]. Institutional measures will include embedding practical teaching components into talent development frameworks, continuously optimizing curricula to reflect evolving needs, and establishing robust systems for managing internships. Furthermore, comprehensive safety protocols and performance evaluation mechanisms will be implemented to ensure that hands-on education is delivered in a standardized, effective, and sustainable manner.

Significant investments will be directed toward enhancing infrastructure, including the development of well-equipped practice rooms, multimedia classrooms, advanced training equipment, high-quality recording devices, and professional-grade performance venues [4]. These resources will support the creation of a comprehensive piano practical teaching resource library, providing essential material support for hands-on education. Collaborative efforts with enterprises and local organizations will be intensified to establish direct pathways from internships to employment opportunities [1]. This will include initiatives such as career planning workshops, personalized resume development guidance, interview preparation training, and employment referral programs. These measures aim to achieve a seamless integration of teaching, practical application, and employment, ensuring that students are well-prepared to transition smoothly into their professional careers [1, 6].

### **6. Conclusion**

The development of a practice-oriented teaching model for piano majors in higher education institutions under employment-focused guidance signifies a transformative approach to aligning educational practices with societal needs. This model emphasizes a shift from traditional performance-centric methods to a framework centered on cultivating professional competencies, while transitioning from isolated classroom instruction to dynamic, real-world practical education. By prioritizing adaptability and relevance, this approach seeks to bridge the gap between academic training and workforce requirements, ensuring that graduates are equipped with the skills necessary to thrive in diverse professional environments. Furthermore, this paradigm fosters a holistic perspective on education, encouraging institutions to embrace innovation and flexibility in their pedagogical strategies to better prepare students for the evolving demands of cultural industries and aesthetic development.

Higher education institutions must strategically align their efforts with workforce demands by redefining educational objectives, restructuring curricula, and adopting innovative teaching methodologies. Expanding practical platforms and refining evaluation systems are essential steps in creating a seamless integration between piano education and societal needs. This comprehensive approach not only enhances the employability and interdisciplinary capabilities of graduates but also contributes to the

broader development of cultural industries and aesthetic education. By fostering career-ready pianists who possess both technical proficiency and adaptability, institutions can ensure sustained progress in the quality of piano education. Future research should explore the long-term impacts of such models on graduate success, the scalability of these practices across diverse educational contexts, and the potential for interdisciplinary collaborations to further enrich piano education. These efforts will ultimately drive continuous improvement in the alignment of academic training with professional realities, ensuring that higher education remains a cornerstone of cultural and artistic advancement.

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