

## Article

# Building a Regularized Mechanism for Education on Forging a Strong community-consciousness education for the Chinese Nation in Universities

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**Abstract:** Forging a strong community-consciousness education for the Chinese nation is the central thread of the Communist Party of China's ethnic affairs work in the new era. As primary sites for fostering virtue through education, universities have an important responsibility to educate young students in this regard. Current practice is often fragmented and campaign-driven, making educational gains difficult to sustain. Drawing on the concept of regularization, this study conceptually analyzes, develops an analytical framework, and clarifies the internal operating logic of regularized publicity and education. It then develops a framework encompassing guiding principles, core components, and implementation pathways. The proposed mechanism is intended to shift education from episodic activities to a long-term, systematic educational practice and thereby advance universities' fundamental task of fostering virtue through education.

**Keywords:** community-consciousness education for the Chinese nation; university publicity and education; regularized mechanism; fostering virtue through education

## 1. Introduction

Universities play an important role in cultivating students' understanding of national identity, history, cultural heritage, and social cohesion. In recent years, universities across China have implemented various educational initiatives aimed at strengthening students' sense of shared identity and promoting mutual understanding among different ethnic and cultural groups. These initiatives have been incorporated into ideological and political education courses, class meetings, thematic lectures, and campus cultural activities, and have achieved positive educational outcomes in some contexts. Nevertheless, several challenges remain in current educational practices. In some institutions, educational activities are closely associated with short-term campaigns and may lack continuity after the conclusion of specific initiatives. Educational content can also be fragmented, with insufficient coherence in instructional design and limited integration across different educational settings. In addition, inadequate coordination among educational stakeholders may result in weak connections between classroom instruction, campus culture, and social practice. Existing evaluation approaches also tend to emphasize the number of activities, participation rates, and completion of program requirements, while paying less attention to students' actual understanding, attitudinal development, and behavioral changes. Such campaign-oriented approaches may generate visible short-term outcomes but are less likely to facilitate the sustained internalization of educational values and their translation into everyday behavior. Establishing a systematic, continuous, and institutionally embedded educational mechanism is therefore an important practical issue for universities.

A growing body of scholarship has examined education on forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. Existing studies have primarily addressed its policy and theoretical foundations, its relationship with ethnic education and curriculum

Received: 17 July 2026

Revised: 23 August 2026

Accepted: 03 September 2026

Published: 09 September 2026



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development, the practical constraints encountered in universities, and possible pathways for educational implementation [1]. Much of the empirical discussion focuses on universities in ethnic minority regions or institutions specializing in ethnic affairs, while ordinary private undergraduate universities receive comparatively limited attention. In terms of perspective, many studies ask what education should be provided but pay less attention to the internal logic that enables publicity and education to operate continuously as a regularized mechanism. Methodologically, qualitative and conceptual analysis predominates, and insufficient attention has been paid to the operating mechanisms of regularization and the interaction among systemic elements. In education, regularization should not be understood as the mechanical repetition of identical activities. Sustainable educational change requires depth, continuity, diffusion across organizational settings, and a gradual shift in ownership from temporary initiatives to institutional actors [2]. Regularized education therefore involves embedding educational objectives and practices in routine university governance while retaining the capacity to adapt them to changing student needs and institutional conditions.

## **2. Theoretical Interpretation of Regularized Education on Forging a Strong Community-Consciousness Education for the Chinese Nation**

### *2.1. Theoretical Meaning of Regularization*

Regularization is an important analytical concept in organizational sociology and education. Chinese scholarship generally approaches it from three perspectives. From an institutional-management perspective, regularization consists of managerial rules and measures that maintain an orderly working process. From a process-and-practice perspective, it stresses participation at all times, in all places, and by all people, highlighting sustained attention and continuity in practice. From a dynamic-evolution perspective, regularization is not a fixed and unchanging state. Rather, it is a process through which existing practice moves continuously toward a desired condition and is appropriately adjusted in response to changes in the external environment.

International scholarship on institutionalization, organizational routines, and normalization can be analytically organized into two complementary strands. The first emphasizes the structuring role of institutions, rules, and organizational arrangements in stabilizing social practices. From this perspective, institutionalization is sustained through the reciprocal relationship between institutional structures and situated action rather than through the mere existence of formal rules [3]. The second strand adopts a process-oriented perspective and examines how practices are repeatedly enacted, interpreted, adapted, and embedded in everyday organizational life. Research on routine dynamics shows that organizational routines contain both relatively stable patterns and performative variations, enabling them to generate continuity and change simultaneously [4]. Similarly, Normalization Process Theory explains the routinization of practices in terms of the collective work through which actors implement, embed, and sustain them within particular organizational settings. Taken together, these perspectives suggest that regularization should not be reduced to the codification of formal rules. Formal institutional arrangements may provide stability and legitimacy, but practices become regularized only when organizational actors repeatedly enact, interpret, and adapt them in everyday work. Regularization is therefore better understood as a dynamic process produced through the continuing interaction of institutional arrangements, collective action, and changing organizational conditions [5].

In university publicity and education, regularization means moving beyond short-term education driven by special campaigns and embedding the cultivation of community-consciousness education in every stage of talent development. Through institutional safeguards, coherent content provision, coordination among participants, and environmental influence, universities can ensure continuity of educational activity, progressive organization of content, and active participation by educational actors. This process supports students' gradual movement from cognition to emotion, conviction, and

action. Regularization does not require unchanging forms of education. mediating elements and methods should be adjusted in light of current issues and the characteristics of different student groups. Its central purpose is to make educational outcomes sustainable.

## *2.2. Theoretical Foundations*

First, Marxist theories of ethnicity and community provide the fundamental value orientation. Marxist thought on community reveals that the human essence is the ensemble of social relations and that a genuine community realizes a dialectical unity between the individual and the whole. community-consciousness education is a community with a shared future formed through the long history of interaction, exchange, and integration among all ethnic groups. The Marxist principles of ethnic equality and unity therefore provide both the fundamental value guidance for university education and the direction for constructing a regularized mechanism.

Second, fine traditional Chinese culture provides rich educational resources. More than five millennia of Chinese civilization have produced abundant historical evidence of interaction and integration among ethnic groups. Ideas such as national unity and the belief that all under heaven belong to one family constitute a deep cultural foundation for a strong community-consciousness education for the Chinese nation. Traditional Chinese culture offers substantial content for regularized education and also demonstrates that community-consciousness education emerges through long-term cultural influence rather than through a small number of special events.

Third, the laws governing ideological and political education explain why continuity is necessary. Such education proceeds through the transformation of knowledge, emotion, conviction, will, and action. The internalization of ideas is gradual and depends on repeated reinforcement; it cannot be completed at a single moment. Education on forging a strong community-consciousness education for the Chinese nation should therefore avoid pursuing only short-term results. It must provide sustained influence, repeatedly consolidate understanding, cultivate emotional identification, and ultimately translate that identification into students' conscious conduct.

## *2.3. Operating Mechanism of the Regularized Education System*

According to the four-element model of ideological and political education, the publicity and education system comprises educational subjects, educational objects, mediating elements, and the educational environment. Regularization occurs through the continuous interaction and cyclical operation of these four elements. Educational subjects include teachers of ideological and political theory, teachers of disciplinary courses, student counselors, staff in publicity and student-affairs departments, and personnel responsible for campus administration and services. They drive the regularized process. The educational objects are all enrolled university students, whose cognitive responses should in turn inform adjustments to content and methods. mediating elements include curriculum content, practical activities, cultural vehicles, and institutional norms, which connect educators and students. The educational environment comprises campus culture, the broader social setting, and the online public-opinion environment, all of which provide external conditions for educational practice.

The mechanism operates as follows. Institutional safeguards enable multiple educational actors to coordinate their work. They continually provide educational content through courses, activities, and digital platforms, while supportive on-campus and off-campus environments facilitate implementation. After receiving and interpreting this content, students generate cognitive and emotional responses. Feedback then returns to educational actors, prompting them to adjust content, media, and methods. The resulting closed loop of provision, reception, feedback, and adaptation operates repeatedly and allows educational effects to accumulate. The regularized mechanism can thus be understood as an adaptive system rather than a linear process of policy delivery. Implementation research indicates that the sustainability of an organizational practice depends on continuing interactions among collective action, available resources,

institutional conditions, and actors' negotiations with changing contexts [6]. Student feedback should therefore be treated not merely as an outcome measure but as an input into the continuing adjustment of educational content, media, and institutional arrangements. If any element is absent or the feedback chain is broken, education is likely to become intermittent rather than regularized.

### **3. Current Conditions and Causes of Problems**

Existing research and observations of university educational practice indicate that education on forging a strong community-consciousness education for the Chinese nation has produced positive results. However, a gap remains between current practice and the goal of regularized operation, and some universities still display clear signs of discontinuity.

#### *3.1. Current Conditions of Publicity and Education*

At the subjective level, most educational actors in universities recognize the importance of fostering a strong community-consciousness education for the Chinese nation, but the degree of attention is uneven. Teachers of ideological and political theory and student counselors generally attach greater importance to this work. Some disciplinary teachers and administrative or logistics staff, however, have a comparatively weak awareness of their educational role. They may regard community-consciousness education as the exclusive responsibility of schools of Marxism or student-affairs departments and see no need to participate themselves. Students' identification with the Chinese national community should not be treated as a static cognitive outcome. Research indicates that identity construction among ethnic minority university students is shaped by the interplay of institutional power, sociocultural environments, and individual agency [7]. More recent empirical evidence further suggests that perceived ethnic-group continuity is positively associated with a sense of community for the Chinese nation, with ethnic-group identity mediating this relationship [8]. These findings indicate that cognitive understanding needs to be accompanied by affective identification and opportunities for meaningful educational engagement.

At the level of objective operation, five problems are evident. First, educational objectives are insufficiently differentiated. Some universities set broad and abstract goals but do not define progressive objectives for students from the first through the fourth year or align cultivation requirements with students' developmental stages. Second, educational content lacks systematic organization. It is fragmented and often concentrated on explaining policies of ethnic unity, while the history of interaction, exchange, and integration among ethnic groups, the shared spiritual home of the Chinese nation, and theories of community-consciousness education are not presented coherently. Publicity may intensify around festivals but remain largely absent from routine teaching. Third, educational methods and media are imbalanced. Universities rely heavily on centralized offline activities such as special lectures and themed Youth League events, while integration among classroom teaching, social practice, and new media remains limited. Some activities emphasize ceremony and form at the expense of substantive intellectual guidance. Fourth, organizational coordination is weak. Schools of Marxism, student-affairs offices, Youth League committees, and publicity departments often lack a routine coordination mechanism, organize activities independently, and disperse resources instead of creating educational synergy. Fifth, the operating process lacks durable institutional constraints. Work depends heavily on the initiative of individual staff members, accelerates when a special assignment is issued, and loses momentum after the assignment is completed.

#### *3.2. Causes of Existing Problems*

From the perspective of educational objects, university students encounter diverse and sometimes competing narratives through digital media. Their reception of community-consciousness education should therefore be understood as an active process of interpretation rather than as the passive acceptance of educational content. Existing

research indicates that ethnic and national identifications are influenced by institutional settings, sociocultural environments, perceived group continuity, and individual agency. These findings suggest that participation in themed activities alone cannot be assumed to produce cognitive internalization or affective identification.

From the perspective of educational objects, today's university students have grown up in an all-media environment and obtain information through diverse channels. Competing social currents in cyberspace affect their perceptions. Some students regard community-consciousness education as abstract didactic instruction and lack the internal motivation to engage actively and reflect. Passive attendance at themed activities is unlikely to produce genuine internalization.

From the perspective of mediating elements, content provision lacks long-term systematic planning and no integrated system spans all four years of university study. Educational vehicles are not sufficiently innovative; some forms have become rigid and are disconnected from the language and communicative habits of young people. Process-oriented evaluation is also underdeveloped. Assessment tends to count the number of activities rather than examine substantive changes in students' identification and conduct.

From the perspective of the educational environment, campus culture does not yet provide sufficient sustained influence. Elements related to community-consciousness education are underrepresented in the physical environment and in campus cultural products. The online environment is complex, and misleading views on ethnic issues can spread rapidly; universities must therefore continue strengthening their online educational presence. Linkages between universities and society are also inadequate, and community-consciousness resources in society have not been fully transformed into educational resources for higher education.

#### **4. Constructing a Regularized Mechanism**

Constructing a regularized mechanism does not mean establishing a fixed model intended to work permanently without revision. It means building an operating system that can continue over time and adapt dynamically. Universities must clarify the principles of construction, improve the system's substantive components, and connect its implementation pathways so that the four educational elements can interact productively.

##### *4.1. Basic Principles*

First, universities should uphold correct political direction. They should maintain the Party's overall leadership, follow Xi Jinping Thought on Strengthening and Improving Ethnic Affairs as the fundamental guide, keep forging a strong community-consciousness education for the Chinese nation as the central thread, and maintain the correct value orientation. Publicity and education must remain aligned with the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education.

Second, universities should pursue systematic coordination. The concept of all-member, whole-process, and all-dimensional education requires institutions to break down departmental barriers and coordinate classroom teaching, campus culture, social practice, and online education. Different educational actors should work together to achieve comprehensive coverage across personnel, processes, and settings.

Third, universities should ensure dynamic adaptation. Regularization does not mean rigidity. Educational content and media should be adjusted in response to social developments, topical issues, and changes in students' thinking. Differences among grades, disciplines, and student groups should inform differentiated and tiered education instead of a one-size-fits-all approach.

Fourth, universities should integrate knowledge, conviction, and action. Education should not stop at transmitting theoretical knowledge. It should combine theoretical understanding, emotional cultivation, and behavioral guidance. Clear explanations of theory and policy should be linked with practical experience so that students can turn community-consciousness education into conscious everyday conduct.

#### *4.2. Core Components*

**Institutional safeguards.** Institutions form the foundation of regularized operation. Universities should incorporate education on forging a strong community-consciousness education for the Chinese nation into their overall talent-development programs. Under unified leadership by the university Party committee, responsibilities should be clearly assigned to publicity departments, student-affairs offices, Youth League committees, schools of Marxism, and other schools and departments, supported by a regular consultation mechanism. Curriculum-development rules should incorporate community-consciousness content into required ideological and political theory courses and encourage its integration across the curriculum. A faculty learning and training system should organize regular study of theories of community-consciousness education for all teachers. Supervision and assessment should include the effectiveness of community-consciousness education in evaluations of departments and educators, preventing the work from depending entirely on individual initiative.

**Tiered and progressive content provision.** A coherent content system should reflect students' developmental patterns across four years of university study. The first year should emphasize the history of the Chinese nation and the interaction, exchange, and integration of all ethnic groups, thereby establishing a cognitive foundation. During the second and third years, students should deepen their study of ethnic theories and policies. Ideological and political education integrated into disciplinary courses can help them understand how community-consciousness education relates to professional development and national development. In the fourth year, employment education and social practice should strengthen students' sense of mission and responsibility and guide them to practice ethnic unity in society. Content should combine theoretical knowledge, historical narratives, and contemporary cases. Resources from fine traditional Chinese culture and revolutionary culture should be developed into a coherent repository of materials.

**Integrated operation through multiple media.** Universities should coordinate the principal classroom channel with campus culture, social practice, and new media. In classroom teaching, courses such as Introduction to community-consciousness education should play a central role, while disciplinary courses should identify appropriate elements for values education. In campus culture, the theme of community should be integrated into student associations and the campus environment to create lasting cultural programs rather than temporary festival activities. In social practice, universities should establish stable practice bases and organize field research and volunteer service in ethnic minority regions. Online, university media platforms should produce articles, graphics, and short videos that appeal to young people and develop a constructive digital space for education.

**Feedback and adaptation.** A regularized system requires a closed feedback loop. Universities should establish multidimensional channels-including surveys, group discussions, and classroom feedback-to monitor continuing changes in students' cognition and emotional identification. Problems arising in educational practice should be reviewed regularly, and content and activities should be adjusted in response to student feedback. Assessment should avoid privileging documentary traces over substantive effects. The number of activities should carry less weight, while changes in students' identification should become an important reference point for the dynamic improvement of educational practice.

#### *4.3. Implementation Pathways*

First, universities should clarify the responsibilities of multiple actors and build an institution-wide educational community. The university Party committee should assume primary responsibility and coordinate the overall institutional plan. Schools of Marxism should play a central role in theoretical research and classroom teaching. Teachers of disciplinary courses should identify suitable elements for values education and integrate

community-consciousness education into professional teaching. Student counselors should incorporate themed education into class meetings, routine guidance, and individual conversations. Administrative and logistics personnel should communicate the value of ethnic unity through management and service. Together, these measures can overcome the narrow view that the work belongs only to ideological and political theory teachers and can create a collaborative pattern among diverse actors.

Second, universities should connect learning inside and outside the classroom to provide continuous influence throughout the educational process. Community-consciousness education should extend from orientation to graduation. Institutions should strengthen ideological and political theory courses and advance values education across the curriculum. At the same time, education should extend into the second classroom by making themed student-association activities and social practice regular components rather than occasional events. Content in the first and second classrooms should reinforce each other, allowing theoretical learning and practical experience to operate in a complementary manner.

Third, universities should coordinate online and offline settings to create an all-round educational environment. Offline, they can improve the physical campus by incorporating cultural elements of community-consciousness education into exhibition spaces, bulletin boards, and themed student associations, thereby creating a subtle and sustained cultural influence. Online, they should maintain a strong educational presence, actively produce high-quality cultural content, and respond promptly to problematic narratives. Students should be guided to safeguard ethnic unity consciously in cyberspace, allowing online and offline environments to reinforce each other.

Fourth, universities should improve resource and evaluation support. On-campus and off-campus resources should be integrated, local historical and cultural materials should be developed, and case banks and teaching-resource repositories should be established to reduce the burden on teachers seeking suitable materials. The orientation of evaluation should also be reformed. A system balancing process and outcomes should move beyond counting activities to examine students' ideological identification and conduct. Evaluation can then guide educational work away from an emphasis on visible activity and toward substantive educational effectiveness.

## 5. Conclusion

Education on forging a strong community-consciousness education for the Chinese nation is not a temporary special assignment. It is a long-term component of universities' fundamental task of fostering virtue through education. Campaign-style and fragmented approaches may generate short-term publicity, but they rarely achieve the deep internalization of ideas. The essential purpose of a regularized mechanism is to move beyond a short-term model driven by special activities. With institutions as safeguards and systematic content as the foundation, it connects classrooms, campus life, society, and cyberspace. It also sustains interaction among educational subjects, objects, media, and environments, creating a closed-loop educational system.

Universities should not mechanically copy mechanisms developed elsewhere. They should adapt their systems to their own educational missions and student populations. Regularization is not a static condition but a process of continuous improvement. Educators must monitor changes in students' thinking, refine institutional arrangements, renew content, and innovate mediating elements. Through regularized education, universities can guide students in the new era to develop sound views of the country, history, ethnicity, and culture; deepen their emotional identification with community-consciousness education; and consciously become defenders of ethnic unity and contributors to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

**Funding:** Geely University Three Campuses Teaching Reform Research Project (Grant No. 2025SGXYJG036). Sichuan Association of Higher Education Project, Digital Technology-Enabled

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