

# Cultivating Foreign Language Professionals in Inner Mongolia's Universities Under the New Liberal Arts Initiative: A Case Study of the English-Law Joint Program in Inner Mongolia University of Finance and Economics

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## Abstract:

Driven by globalization and technological revolutions, the New Liberal Arts Initiative has emerged as a transformative force in higher education, presenting both opportunities and challenges. As China's northern gateway to international cooperation, Inner Mongolia's universities face urgent demands to innovate foreign language talent cultivation models. This case study focuses on the pioneering English-Law Joint Program at Inner Mongolia University of Finance and Economics (IMUFE), analyzing its significance and feasibility under the New Liberal Arts Initiative. Addressing longstanding issues in Inner Mongolia's foreign language education—such as rigid curricula, insufficient practical training, and weak faculty—the research employs questionnaires and interviews to gather student and expert feedback. Drawing on successful practices from domestic institutions, it proposes innovative strategies to establish a compound foreign language talent system, enhance faculty development, align with national strategies and regional development, and refine talent cultivation mechanisms. This initiative offers theoretical and practical guidance for reforming foreign language education in Inner Mongolia's universities. By fostering high-quality interdisciplinary talents, it aims to advance socioeconomic development and international exchanges in the region, contributing to China's broader engagement with globalization.

## Keywords:

New Liberal Arts, Inner Mongolia Universities, Foreign Language Majors, English-Law Joint Program

## 1. Introduction

Driven by globalization, international exchanges and cooperation have intensified, creating a growing demand for talents with international perspectives and cross-cultural communication skills. This trend requires foreign language professionals not only to possess solid linguistic foundations but also interdisciplinary knowledge structures and innovative capabilities to adapt to complex international environments. Meanwhile, the technological revolution and industrial transformation are reshaping traditional liberal arts education, giving rise to the New Liberal Arts Initiative, a critical direction for higher education reform.

The New Liberal Arts Initiative, a strategic deployment by the CPC Central Committee for advancing higher education in the new era, was explicitly proposed in 2018. The CPC Central Committee emphasized high-quality development, urging educational institutions to enhance service capabilities and contribute to societal progress. The launch of the “Six Excellences and One Elite” Initiative 2.0 in April 2019 provided comprehensive guidance for the Four New Disciplines, marking a new phase in China’s higher education reform. In November 2020, the National Conference on New Liberal Arts Development issued the Declaration on New Liberal Arts Development, further clarifying its core objectives: promoting deep integration between philosophy, social sciences, and the new technological revolution, and cultivating high-caliber talents with interdisciplinary backgrounds to meet diversified societal needs.

Inner Mongolia, a pivotal node connecting Europe and Asia, plays a strategic role in the Belt and Road Initiative. However, the region’s foreign language talent cultivation faces challenges: outdated curricula lack interdisciplinary integration, failing to meet demands for compound talents; insufficient practical training leaves students ill-prepared for professional settings; weak faculty with limited interdisciplinary teaching capabilities and low internationalization levels constrain students’ global competencies.

This study focuses on the pioneering English-Law Joint Program at Inner Mongolia University of Finance and Economics (IMUFE), analyzing its significance and feasibility under the New Liberal Arts framework. By integrating English and law, this program optimizes curricula, strengthens practical training, and elevates faculty quality, broadening students’ knowledge horizons while enhancing their comprehensive literacy and employment competitiveness. It offers valuable insights for reforming foreign language education in Inner Mongolia’s universities.

To evaluate the program’s effectiveness and challenges, this research employs surveys, interviews, and case studies, incorporating experiences from domestic institutions such as Shanghai University of Finance and Economics’ “Teacher-Student Community Model” and Jilin University’s “Innovative Foreign Language Curriculum”. These references provide theoretical and practical guidance for fostering innovative talent cultivation in Inner Mongolia.

Beyond analyzing IMUFE’s program, this study aims to inform reform efforts across Inner Mongolia’s universities. By promoting interdisciplinary models like English-Law integration, it seeks to cultivate high-quality compound talents aligned with national strategies, thereby contributing to regional socioeconomic development and international cooperation.

This paper conducts a case study of the English-Law Joint Program at IMUFE, examining its structural design, implementation mechanisms, and educational outcomes within the framework of the New Liberal Arts Initiative. By elucidating the program's pedagogical innovations, this study critically evaluates emerging challenges and formulates evidence-based recommendations to advance interdisciplinary talent cultivation in higher education. The findings contribute to the broader discourse on compound professional development under China's educational reform agenda, offering practical insights for optimizing cross-disciplinary talent cultivation models.

## 2. Literature Review

Under the framework of the New Liberal Arts Initiative, the cultivation of English majors in higher education institutions is undergoing profound transformation to meet the demands for interdisciplinary talents in the new era. Ping [12] proposes that college English teaching must be reformed in terms of teaching objectives, curriculum design, technological integration, and faculty development. Liu [11] analyzes the challenges confronting English teaching and suggests corresponding strategies. Chi and Huang [3] advocate for the construction of a “dual-qualified” faculty team combining “English proficiency + professional skills”. Other scholars have explored English teaching reforms under the New Liberal Arts from diverse perspectives, such as Hu (2023) on digital English teaching strategies within the “OBE + New Liberal Arts” paradigm, and Chen [1] on blended learning models in the AI era. These studies collectively indicate that English major cultivation is trending toward interdisciplinary integration, aiming to foster students' holistic competencies and innovative capacities.

Numerous universities nationwide have pioneered innovative practices in foreign language talent cultivation, yielding remarkable outcomes. Shanghai University of Finance and Economics has established a “trinity classroom” model integrating “first, second, and third classrooms”, blending online-offline and virtual-physical pedagogies to nurture students' knowledge, abilities, and emotional intelligence. As Lan and Zhao [9] note, the university prioritizes “moral education” as the core, constructing a collaborative ideological education system that strengthens teacher-student rapport. Jilin University's School of Foreign Studies has enhanced students' comprehensive quality through curricular innovations, process optimization, and assessment reforms. Its interdisciplinary course “A Panoramic View of Chinese Archaeology”, co-developed with the Archaeology Institute, exemplifies innovative “English + professional” education. Xi'an International Studies University has implemented a “foreign language + discipline” integration strategy, offering fully English-taught programs and bilingual courses to strengthen students' disciplinary expertise and cross-cultural competence. These practices confirm that interdisciplinary integration in foreign language education is both inevitable and effective.

In contrast, research on foreign language talent cultivation in Inner Mongolia remains fragmented and lacks systemic depth. Du [4] focuses on regional language talent strategies, while Fu [6] explores business English reforms in the e-commerce context. Driven by the “Belt and Road” Initiative, Guo [7] and Yao & Zhao [16] investigate vocational skill cultivation and foreign language talent strategies for the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor. Chen [2] analyze MTI talent adjustments for translation demands in the region. While these

studies provide valuable insights, interdisciplinary integration under the New Liberal Arts remains under-explored.

The “English + Law” interdisciplinary cultivation model has evolved from conceptual exploration to practical refinement. Early research, such as that by Wuhan Institute of Technology [14] and Feng [5] emphasized the urgent societal demand for professionals proficient in both legal knowledge and English. Subsequent studies, including Liu and Zhang [11], addressed issues like insufficient professional integration and rigid curricula. Recent works, such as Ye and Han (2023) and Xu [15], propose innovative strategies like interdisciplinary curriculum modules and application-oriented integration paths. Despite progress, further exploration is needed to align with evolving societal needs.

While interdisciplinary talent cultivation is widely recognized as theoretically essential, practical innovations remain scarce, particularly in Inner Mongolia, where explorations are still nascent. Nationwide, universities have experimented with “foreign language + discipline” curricula and dual-qualified faculty development, yet these efforts often reduce to superficial course additions rather than systemic integration. In Inner Mongolia, regional initiatives—such as aligning curricula with the “northward opening-ups” strategy—are still exploratory, highlighting the urgency for localized research.

A critical gap in current research is the absence of student and teacher perspectives. Existing student surveys predominantly focus on superficial metrics like course satisfaction, neglecting deeper insights into students’ cognitive engagement with interdisciplinary learning, curriculum relevance, and pedagogical effectiveness. This “supply-driven” approach risks misalignment between programs and actual needs. Similarly, teacher-centric studies often overlook cross-disciplinary teaching challenges, such as knowledge boundaries between language and legal faculty, curricular coordination, and evaluation mechanisms. These omissions risk reducing interdisciplinary efforts to nominal integration rather than substantive knowledge reconstruction.

To address these challenges, a multi-stakeholder dialogue mechanism involving “students, experts, and administrators” is imperative. Qualitative methods like interviews and focus groups can elucidate students’ learning experiences, career aspirations, and unmet needs, while expert consultations can refine faculty development and evaluation frameworks. This approach not only operationalizes the New Liberal Arts vision but also advances higher education quality.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Case selection**

This study employs an exploratory case study method focusing on the English-Law joint cultivation program at IMUFE. The case selection is based on the following considerations:

(1) Uniqueness: As the first and currently only approved English-Law Joint Program among higher education institutions in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, its innovative design holds regional benchmark significance.

(2) Practical Depth: The program has operated for three years, establishing a dual-track curriculum system integrating “foreign language education + legal education,” providing a foundation for empirical research.

(3) Policy Alignment: The program design responds to the requirements of New Liberal Arts initiative, emphasizing interdisciplinary knowledge reconfiguration and regional service capabilities. It aligns with the talent demands of Inner Mongolia’s “Northward Opening-up” strategy for compound professionals.

### **3.2. Data collection and analysis**

This study employs a quantitative and qualitative mixed-methods approach to systematically evaluate the implementation effectiveness of the English-Law joint cultivation program at Inner Mongolia University of Finance and Economics. During the data collection phase, a questionnaire survey was administered to all 54 enrolled students (49 valid questionnaires were returned, with a response validity rate of 90.74%), covering dimensions such as demographic information, perceptions of talent cultivation, curriculum design, teaching methods, and faculty evaluations. Data were anonymously collected via the Wenjuanxing platform.

Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were conducted with administrators from the Foreign Language Colleges of Inner Mongolian universities, focusing on the current state of foreign language education, and exploring core issues such as talent cultivation models and pathways. The data analysis phase adhered strictly to the principle of triangulation: quantitative data were processed using SPSS, with reliability analysis (Cronbach's  $\alpha=0.84$ ), validity verification (KMO=0.79), and significance testing ( $p<0.05$ ) ensuring data robustness.

## **4. Case Presentation**

Since the establishment of the English major in 2001, the School of Foreign Studies at IMUFE has progressively developed a composite talent cultivation system characterized by “solid foundation, broad scope, and strong practice”. In 2021, the college implemented a large-category enrollment model for foreign language studies, encompassing three specialized tracks: English, Business English, and the English-Law Joint Program. Among these, the English-Law Joint Program stands as the sole interdisciplinary composite talent cultivation initiative approved in the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. Leveraging the university’s strengths in economics and management, and aligning with the regional “northward opening-up” strategic demands, the program aims to nurture talents proficient in English proficiency, legal theory, and cross-cultural competence. Graduates are conferred a Bachelor of Arts (English) alongside a Law Minor Certificate through the “English + Law” dual-degree mechanism, emphasizing practical competencies in foreign-related legal services, translation, and international business operations.

The program’s curriculum adopts a “Four-in-One” Curriculum Module, integrating core English and law courses while prioritizing experiential learning; Legal Professional Courses include 14 foundational law subjects such as Civil Law, Criminal Law, International Law, and Procedural Law, employing case-based teaching and moot court simulations to cultivate legal reasoning and practical skills. Students also need to have English Professional Courses like Feature modules in Comprehensive English, English-Chinese Translation, Interpreting, and Cross-Cultural Communication, emphasizing linguistic application and intercultural

competency. General Education Courses cover ideological and political education, including Marxist Theory and Xi Jinping Thought on the Rule of Law. Interdisciplinary Courses develop specialized tracks like Legal English and Foreign-Related Legal Writing, facilitating deep integration through activities such as English Moot Court Debates” and Legal Document Translation Workshops”.

The program implements a “1+X” Phased Cultivation Model, i.e.: First-Year General Cultivation: Students receive foundational training in language skills and legal principles. Students select the English-Law Joint Program track, engaging in advanced coursework and University-Enterprise Cooperative Training Programs. Competitions like “Legal English Speech Contests” and “International Moot Court Competitions” enhance practical competencies.

The program enrolls students nationwide, with a current cohort of 54 undergraduates. Primarily sourced from the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, the student body spans northern and northwestern China, they have high entrance exam scores in English, with most students aspiring to careers in foreign-related legal services, international organizations, or foreign trade.

## 5. Results

### 5.1. Questionnaire

#### (1) Demographic Analysis

As indicated in Table 1, the grade distribution analysis reveals the following: Among the survey participants, 2021-Grade Students constitute 51.02%, while 2022-Grade Students account for 48.98%. This indicates a nearly balanced representation between the two cohorts, with no significant demographic bias observed in the sample.

**Table 1.** Grade Composition Analysis Summary.

| Item                | Frequency | Percentage | Cumulative Percentage |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------------|
| 2021-Grade Students | 25        | 51.02%     | 51.02%                |
| 2022-Grade Students | 24        | 48.98%     | 100.00%               |
| Total               | 49        | 100.00%    |                       |

#### (2) Reliability and Validity Analysis

##### (a) Reliability Analysis

The questionnaire underwent reliability testing, yielding a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient of 0.712. This value falls within the acceptable reliability range, indicating that the instrument consistently measures the variables of interest.

**Table 2.** Reliability Analysis.

| Cronbach's Alpha | Sample Size (N) | Number of Items |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 0.712            | 49              | 22              |

##### (b) Validity Analysis

As shown in Table 3, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.669, exceeding the conventional threshold of 0.5. This confirms the structural validity of the data, rendering it suitable for exploratory factor analysis. Additionally, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity yielded a statistically significant result ( $\chi^2 =$

342.11,  $df = 14$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), rejecting the null hypothesis of zero correlation among variables and corroborating the questionnaire's validity.

**Table 3.** *Validity Analysis.*

|                               | KMO and Bartlett |        |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--------|
| Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin            |                  | 0.669  |
| Bartlett's Test of Sphericity | $\chi^2$         | 342.11 |
|                               | df               | 14     |
|                               | Sig.             | 0.000  |

### 3) Descriptive, Differential, and Correlational Analyses of Questionnaire Dimensions

The questionnaire was structured into the following dimensions:

**Table 4.** *Dimensions of the Survey on Compound Talent Cultivation in Undergraduate English-Law Joint Programs Under the New Liberal Arts Context.*

| Dimension                        | Item No. | Question                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Demographic Background           | 1        | What is your current status?                                                                     |
| Perception of Talent Cultivation | 2        | How well do you understand the undergraduate English-Law joint program for compound talents?     |
|                                  | 3        | What is your opinion on the English-Law joint program for compound talents?                      |
|                                  | 8        | What interdisciplinary integration challenges have you encountered in the curriculum?            |
|                                  | 10       | Does the current curriculum design meet the requirements for compound talent cultivation?        |
| Curriculum & Pedagogy            | 7        | Should English and law courses be integrated or taught separately?                               |
|                                  | 9        | Which cultivation model is more effective for English-Law compound talents?                      |
| Faculty Competency               | 4        | How effective are the current instructors in supporting English-Law compound talent cultivation? |
|                                  | 5        | What improvements are needed in faculty expertise for this program?                              |
|                                  | 6        | Do you prefer dual-qualified faculty (English + Law) or single-discipline instructors?           |

#### (a) Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis summarizes the overall characteristics of the dataset through the calculation of mean or median values. As indicated in Table 5, the current dataset contains no outliers, allowing for a detailed interpretative analysis using mean values.

**Table 5.** *Descriptive Analysis of Survey Dimensions.*

| Dimension                               | Minimum | Maximum | Mean  | Standard Deviation | Median |
|-----------------------------------------|---------|---------|-------|--------------------|--------|
| Perception of English-Law Joint Program | 0.63    | 2       | 1.283 | 0.261              | 1.25   |
| Curriculum & Pedagogy                   | 0.33    | 1       | 0.591 | 0.213              | 0.5    |
| Faculty Competency                      | 0.43    | 1.14    | 0.847 | 0.174              | 0.86   |

The Perception of English-Law Joint Program dimension exhibits the highest mean value (1.283), reflecting respondents' generally positive attitudes toward this compound talent cultivation model. Faculty Competency also received a relatively high mean score (0.847), indicating satisfaction with the current instructors' expertise.

Conversely, the Curriculum & Pedagogy dimension scored the lowest mean (0.591), suggesting potential areas for improvement in course design and teaching methods. This finding holds significant implications for refining the English-Law joint program to better align with compound talent cultivation objectives.

### (b) Differential Analysis

To examine grade-level differences in perceptions of the English-Law joint program, curriculum design, and faculty competency, an independent-samples t-test was conducted. Given the binary nature of the grade variable (2021-Grade vs. 2022-Grade), the t-test was deemed appropriate for this analysis.

**Table 6.** *Differential Analysis Across Grades.*

|                                         | Grade (Mean $\pm$ SD) |                 | t-value | p-value |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|---------|---------|
|                                         | 2021                  | 2022            |         |         |
| Perception of English-Law Joint Program | 1.31 $\pm$ 0.29       | 1.25 $\pm$ 0.23 | 0.793   | 0.432   |
| Curriculum & Pedagogy                   | 0.56 $\pm$ 0.24       | 0.63 $\pm$ 0.19 | 1.081   | 0.005** |
| Faculty Competency                      | 0.86 $\pm$ 0.21       | 0.84 $\pm$ 0.13 | 0.322   | 0.749   |
| * p<0.05 ** p<0.01                      |                       |                 |         |         |

No significant grade-level differences were observed in Perception of English-Law Joint Program ( $p = 0.432$ ) or Faculty Competency ( $p = 0.749$ ), indicating consistency in evaluations across cohorts. However, a statistically significant difference emerged in Curriculum & Pedagogy ( $p = 0.005$ ), with 2022-Grade Students reporting higher satisfaction compared to 2021-Grade Students. This suggests a need for grade-specific pedagogical adjustments to address divergent preferences in course design and delivery.

### (c) Correlational Analysis

Based on the data in Table 7, this study employed correlational analysis to explore potential associations between Perception of English-Law Joint Program and two other dimensions: Curriculum & Pedagogy and Faculty Competency.

**Table 7.** *Correlational Analysis of Survey Dimensions.*

|                                         | Perception of English-Law Joint Program | Curriculum & Pedagogy | Faculty Competency |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Perception of English-Law Joint Program | 1                                       |                       |                    |
| Curriculum & Pedagogy                   | 0.227                                   | 1                     |                    |
| Faculty Competency                      | 0.601**                                 | 0.203                 | 1                  |
| * p<0.05 ** p<0.01                      |                                         |                       |                    |

The strength of these associations was quantified using Pearson correlation coefficients, with the following detailed results:

The correlation between Perception of English-Law Joint Program and Curriculum & Pedagogy yielded a coefficient of 0.227 ( $p = 0.116 > 0.05$ ), indicating no statistically significant relationship. In contrast, a strong positive correlation emerged between Perception of English-Law Joint Program and Faculty Competency, with a coefficient of 0.601 ( $p < 0.01$ ). This signifies that students with more positive attitudes toward the joint program also hold significantly higher evaluations of faculty expertise.

The study, through a survey analysis of English-French bilingual students at Inner Mongolia universities, unveils critical insights into the current status and optimization pathways for the English-Law joint program. Despite limited awareness among over 70% of students, 61.22% explicitly expressed support, underscoring broad recognition of the value in interdisciplinary talent cultivation. Regarding faculty, while 65.30% of students acknowledged teachers' contributions, 30.61% deemed their impact moderate, highlighting the need for targeted enhancements in pedagogical effectiveness.

Students emphasized that interdisciplinary instructors require strengthened cross-disciplinary teaching philosophies, integrated knowledge competencies, and practical guidance experience. In terms of program design, learners favored integrated curriculum models and identified deficiencies in course depth and practical components. Proposed improvements include deepening disciplinary convergence, expanding experiential courses, and exploring dual-degree mechanisms. Open-ended feedback revealed calls for early career counseling, accelerated interdisciplinary exposure, and heightened interest in international legal and public service careers, though overall career planning awareness requires reinforcement.

The research confirms foundational student approval for Inner Mongolia's interdisciplinary programs, advocating future advancements through five strategic dimensions: awareness campaigns, faculty development, curriculum innovation, practical expansion, and career guidance—collectively contributing to replicable models for New Liberal Arts development.

## 5.2. Interview

Interviews hold unique value in research, enabling the capture of nuanced perspectives that may not emerge fully through questionnaires, thereby revealing underlying complexities and validating data reliability. Through semi-structured interviews with deans of foreign language departments at Inner Mongolia universities, this study gains macro-strategic insights into the current status, challenges, and future trajectories of foreign language education. Conducted via WeChat/phone with eight experts, the interviews engaged scholars with profound administrative experience and academic expertise in foreign language education. As decision-makers shaping talent cultivation frameworks, their insights elucidate institutional priorities, obstacles, and developmental orientations. The interviews were guided by a structured protocol while allowing open discussion. This methodology ensures comprehensive, theory-informed support for innovating foreign language talent cultivation models in the New Liberal Arts Initiative.

The author compiled experts' perspectives and recommendations on talent cultivation models for foreign language majors in Inner Mongolian universities under the New Liberal Arts, as outlined below:

### (1) Interdisciplinary Integration

Leverage institutional disciplinary strengths to promote cross-disciplinary integration.

*Foreign language talent cultivation in Inner Mongolian universities must adhere to multidisciplinary integration, aligning language skills with professional competencies. Cross-disciplinary integration with law,*

*particularly in international law, can cultivate specialized expertise. (2024/01 Expert Interview)*

Implement “English + Professional” or “Professional + English” curricula to develop interdisciplinary competencies.

*Emphasize the integration of foreign languages with other disciplines to cultivate compound professionals with diversified knowledge backgrounds. Institutions may adopt models such as “English + Professional” (for English majors) or “Professional + English” (aligning with institutional specialties), updating talent cultivation plans and syllabi to enhance students' integrated application abilities. (2023/12 Expert Interview)*

Avoid forced integration; prioritize feasible interdisciplinary approaches. Experts cautioned against arbitrarily merging unrelated disciplines, advocating instead for operationally viable integration pathways. Excerpts from interviews illustrate this point:

*“Integration should not be forced. Practically, merging humanities-related fields (e.g., English + regional studies, English + international communication, English + foreign history, English + international law) is more feasible.” (2023/11 Expert Interview)*

## (2) Adapting to the Development Demands of the New Era

As China enters a new era and enhances its global presence, the cultivation of foreign language professionals must increasingly emphasize the application of new technologies and tools. Experts stress that foreign language talent in the new era should not only possess linguistic expertise and skills but also leverage technologies such as data analytics and language data science to address humanities-related challenges. Moreover, they must understand industry demands to better serve national and societal needs. Additionally, the cultivation of humanistic spirit should be concurrently strengthened. In response, experts recommend:

Integrating emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and big data to develop intelligent, personalized teaching tools and platforms, thereby enriching pedagogical resources and enhancing both teaching efficacy and learning experiences. Besides, joint efforts should be made to develop courses in language data science, data analytics, and related fields, aiming to cultivate students' technological application capabilities.

*The integration of information technology into curricula should also be intensified to cultivate students' proficiency in applying modern technologies, such as leveraging data analysis, mining, and language data science to address humanities-related challenges and effectively communicate China's perspectives and narratives. (2023/12 Expert Interview)*

Concurrently, the cultivation of students' humanistic spirit must remain a priority. Experts propose the following:

*The revision of talent cultivation programs should explicitly emphasize the nurturing and shaping of students' humanistic spirit, reflecting the intrinsic ethos of New Liberal Arts development. For English majors, this entails greater focus on the cultivation of emotional attitudes, ethical values, and global citizenship. (2023/12 Expert Interview)*

### (3) Enhancing Practical Training and International Exchange

During interviews, experts underscored the imperative of practical education, advocating for expanded experiential learning to enhance students' applied competencies. They proposed opportunities such as multidisciplinary integration and leveraging language proficiency through initiatives like international academic language training for diverse disciplines, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) programs, and preparation for postgraduate entrance exams.

*Externally, inter-institutional collaboration and participation in multilingual service projects were recommended. (2023/12 Expert Interview)*

Concurrently, the significance of international exchange in broadening students' global perspectives was emphasized. Specific recommendations included:

*Strengthening partnerships with domestic and international universities to cultivate cross-cultural competencies. (2023/12 Expert Interview)*

Increasing the proportion of experiential learning and launching industry-aligned courses/projects, such as Business English Practice and Global Exchange Programs.

### (4) Faculty Development

Elevating faculty expertise and pedagogical capabilities is critical to guiding student development.

*Strengthening faculty competencies: Enhancing teachers' professional proficiency, teaching innovation, and interdisciplinary research engagement to foster cross-disciplinary teaching abilities and practical experience.*

*Recruiting interdisciplinary talent: Introducing distinguished scholars and industry experts to enrich curriculum offerings with cutting-edge knowledge. (2023/12 Expert Interview)*

The interviews highlighted Inner Mongolia universities' proactive exploration of foreign language talent cultivation. On one hand, interdisciplinary integration strategies—such as English-Law joint programs and English-IT integration—have effectively enhanced students' composite skill sets, aligning with national demands for interdisciplinary talent. On the other hand, the infusion of AI and big data analytics into curricula has diversified teaching methodologies while equipping students to address humanities challenges through technology. Additionally, measures like practical training expansion, global exchange programs, and high-caliber faculty development have significantly bolstered talent quality. However, the interviews also identified areas for improvement, including deeper curriculum integration, balancing technological tools with humanistic cultivation, and sustaining iterative optimization efforts.

## 6. Conclusions

Based on the development needs of foreign language majors in Inner Mongolia's universities and the case study of the English-Law joint program at IMUFE, this study proposes the following optimization paths and implications:

The case of IMUFE demonstrates that taking regional strategic demands (such as the shortage of foreign-related legal talents for the Belt and Road Initiative) as the starting point, breaking down disciplinary barriers, and constructing a curriculum system that deeply integrates “foreign languages + law + practice” can effectively

enhance students' interdisciplinary competence. In the future, it is necessary to further strengthen the organic integration of language skills and professional knowledge, add technology-enabled modules, and develop distinctive courses based on regional advantages to achieve precise alignment between talent cultivation and industrial demands.

Additionally, an interdisciplinary faculty team is the core support for interdisciplinary talent cultivation. It is recommended to build a compound faculty team integrating "law + foreign languages + technology" by recruiting industry experts with foreign-related legal practice experience as part-time instructors, and encouraging teachers to participate in cross-border legal cooperation projects to enhance their interdisciplinary teaching abilities. Meanwhile, collaborating with law firms and international organizations to establish practice bases will broaden students' international practical pathways.

Finally, integrating value guidance into professional education through courses such as legal document translation and international law case studies cultivates students' ability to disseminate China's legal discourse in foreign languages. In the future, curriculum-based ideological and political education should be further strengthened, for example, by adding modules like "China's legal external communication" and "foreign-related legal governance and national security," and encouraging teachers to integrate patriotism and the rule of law into the entire teaching process through "demonstration courses for curriculum-based ideological and political education."

In summary, the practice of the English-Law joint program at IMUFE indicates that interdisciplinary integration must be anchored in regional demands, supported by faculty collaboration, and rooted in value leadership. Future reforms of foreign language majors should closely align with national strategies (such as the foreign-related legal demands of the "Northward Open-up" initiative), dynamically adjust talent cultivation programs, and simultaneously enhance technology empowerment and ideological-political integration to achieve sustainable development.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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