

# Innovating Teaching Methods of Political Theory Subjects to Improve Students' Self-Study Ability on the Basis of Technology

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## Abstract

In the process of teaching political theory in recent times, many great results have been achieved. However, in the teaching and learning of political theory subjects, there are still limitations and shortcomings for lecturers and students. Therefore, continuing to innovate teaching methods of political theory subjects is an issue that needs to be thoroughly researched from many perspectives to contribute to improving students' self-study capacity. In this article, from the overview of the current situation of teaching political theory subjects, we clarify some solutions to improve the quality of teaching political theory subjects, contributing to improving students' self-study capacity in the present and the future.

**Keywords:** Teaching Methods, Political Theory, Self-Study Capacity.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In higher education in Vietnam, political theory subjects are taught and studied as compulsory. These are subjects that aim to provide worldviews, scientific methodologies, enhance political capacity for learners, help learners to be loyal to the revolutionary goals and ideals of the Party; properly implement the State's policies; contribute to preventing and repelling the degradation of political ideology, ethics, lifestyle, "self-evolution", "self-transformation". Innovation and improvement of the quality of teaching and learning political theory is an important task in the current period to realize Conclusion No. 94 - KL/TW of the Central Party Secretariat, "on continuing to innovate the study of political theory in the national education system". Especially the official dispatch 3056 on the implementation of teaching political theory at universities. In the process of teaching political theory in recent times, many great results have been achieved. However, the implementation process still has issues that need to be studied to improve the quality of teaching and learning political theory subjects according to the new program issued by the Ministry of Education and Training. Therefore, the authors focus on discussing the issue of improving the quality of teaching and learning political theory subjects under the condition that the

subject has been taught since the official curriculum was issued in 2021.

## 2. RESEARCH CONTENT

### 2.1. Current Status of Teaching Political Theory Subjects at Universities

#### 2.1.1. Some Achieved Results

The implementation of teaching new political theory subjects in the spirit of Official Dispatch 3056 at the School has been and is being implemented in accordance with the requirements of the directive documents of the superior management agencies, ensuring progress and especially ensuring the quality of teaching and learning. The national standard program and textbook show that the new political theory subjects have been restructured, supplemented, developed and updated with many highly practical contents, contributing to bringing the theoretical and abstract systems of the subject closer to practice, suitable for the domestic and international situation in many aspects. In the process of implementing teaching work, the collective of lecturers has gradually changed their approach and teaching methods of political theory subjects in the spirit of Official Dispatch 3056, contributing to ensuring that students can study and achieve certain results in the past time.

Student learning outcomes: Studying political theory subjects not only provides theoretical scientific knowledge about society, nature and human beings, but also helps learners correctly perceive the worldview, scientific legal methods in all aspects of life, and the revolutionary path that our Party and people have been striving to implement. However, besides a group of students who are interested in studying, actively acquiring knowledge and realizing the true value of political theory subjects for their own development, there are still groups of students who are indifferent to the subject, learning to cope, passively leading to low learning outcomes. By observing reality over the years of teaching. We found a fairly high differentiation in the scores of students each year. Specifically: preliminary statistics of the average score levels in each subject class: Score A accounts for about 4% to 5% of the total number of students in a class; Score B accounts for about 60% to 65%; Grade C accounts for about 20% to 25%; Grade D accounts for about 10% to 15%; Grade F accounts for about 1% to 2%. The proportion of students with grades A and B is the group of students who are hard-working, have a positive attitude, are proactive in studying and make efforts to accumulate points to have a good and fair score. The group of students with grades C, D, F are mainly students with a thin social knowledge foundation, low learning awareness and have not made efforts to accumulate points. This comes from many reasons, which are:

**Firstly:**

The negative impact from the negative aspects of political, economic and social life in the country and in the world and the sabotage of "hostile" forces have been negatively affecting the awareness and belief of the people (especially the young generation) in the socialist regime and the revolutionary path of our nation. That leads to the decline in the spirit of studying political theory subjects of students. Professor Hoang Chi Bao has commented that "it is necessary to promptly overcome a very distorted tendency today when integrating, which is to take lightly, to underestimate the training of knowledge in social sciences - humanities, ethics, political theory (ie subjects of Marxism - Leninism, Ho Chi Minh Thought), even to deny in an extreme way the presence of these sciences" [1].

**Secondly:**

Due to the characteristics of political theory subjects, which are dry, abstract, difficult to absorb, they

are often included in the first and second year programs. This is the stage when new students enter school and are getting used to university learning methods. Therefore, the teaching of lecturers as well as the learning of students encounter many obstacles, and some students develop a feeling of boredom with the subject.

**2.1.2. Some Difficulties**

*First*, the scale of knowledge in most subjects has not been reduced, many subjects have more knowledge such as Political Economy, some subjects have overlapping knowledge, teaching time is reduced quite a lot, this puts pressure on lecturers during the teaching process.

*Second*, lecturers of the political theory department still have to teach many classes, so separating into specialized subjects requires each lecturer to have in-depth qualifications in the subjects they are responsible for, according to Official Dispatch 3056 requiring lecturers to teach according to their training major, which the school currently cannot meet.

*Third*, the arrangement of political theory subjects in the first and second years when students have just entered university, are not yet mentally stable, do not yet have comprehensive and profound thinking, and have not yet mastered the methods for studying at university, so it is very difficult to absorb and comprehend knowledge of political theory subjects which are quite dry and abstract. Therefore, a part of students today are not proactive in studying, do not have the motivation to study political theory subjects well.

*Fourth*, the application of modern technology in teaching and learning activities is still limited. With the mission of equipping students with a worldview, outlook on life and scientific methodology, building civic awareness, and the ability to master social activities, the courses. However, the implementation of that mission is facing many difficulties and challenges due to the context of the 4.0 Industrial Revolution. In the context of integration, globalization and the emergence of the 4.0 Industrial Revolution, each lecturer and each student must always study, foster and improve awareness, cultivate political qualities, and be able to apply technological achievements in teaching and learning. Based on a survey of lecturers, we see the importance of digital transformation in teaching political theory.

<sup>1</sup> Hoang Chi Bao, (2011), Studying Ho Chi Minh's method, Political - Administrative Publishing House, Hanoi, p.57

**Table 1: Lecturers' assessment of the importance of applying technology in teaching political theory subjects**

No	Assessment of the importance of teaching political theory subjects on a technology platform	Number of opinions	Percentage (%)
1	Very necessary	18	100
2	Necessary	0	0
3	Normal	0	0
4	Not necessary	0	0

(Source: Survey data of the topic, Do Thi Thu Huong, 2025)

Nowadays, the strong development of information technology is considered a great driving force for general development and an important factor promoting the development of education and training. When information technology is applied scientifically and synchronously in teaching and learning, it will contribute to innovation in methods, improve the

efficiency and quality of teaching, promote creativity and positivity in learning and research of learners. In fact, both teachers and learners using electronic devices to access the Internet to search for information has become a habit and is very popular in universities. Through a survey of students, we can see the role of technology application in teaching political theory:

**Table 2: Students' attitudes and awareness towards using technology in learning political theory subjects**

STT	Students' attitudes and learning awareness	Number of opinions	Percentage (%)
1	Passionate, interested, more active than other lessons	144	59,01
2	Studying normally like any other lesson	54	22,13
3	Studying normally like any other lesson	29	11,88
4	Not interested, more passive than other lessons	17	6,98

(Source: Survey data of the topic, Do Thi Thu Huong, 2025)

However, the school's free Internet service to serve students in this activity sometimes does not meet actual needs. This also causes a significant obstacle to the requirement of innovating teaching methods according to the new program.

## 2.2. Some Innovative Solutions for Teaching Political Theory Subjects in the Direction of Developing Students' Self-Study Capacity on a Technology Platform

*First, lecturers need to apply technology to design lively, engaging lectures suitable for each student group*

The 4.0 industrial revolution has had and is having a strong impact on all areas of social life. In education, the 4.0 revolution has changed education, helping teachers in general and lecturers teaching political theory subjects in particular to apply many teaching methods. Lecturers can apply new technologies to create lively, attractive lectures, convey information accurately but intuitively, easily understood, concisely, increase interaction in class, etc. Therefore, lecturers in the 4.0 era must have an understanding of technology, regularly update their knowledge, and at the same time have pedagogical methods, must constantly study and be creative so that each lecturer becomes "a modern teacher and approaches the capacity of a 21st century teacher" [2]. The document of the 13th National Congress of Delegates clearly states: "Focus on synchronously innovating the goals, content, programs, methods, and

methods of education and training in the direction of modernity, international integration, comprehensive human development, meeting the new development requirements of the socio-economy, of the scientific and technological revolution and adapting to the Fourth Industrial Revolution" [3]. Therefore, unlike traditional lectures and "rigid" lesson plans, lecturers need to understand and apply technology, use supporting software to design and renew lectures with clear, beautiful and vivid layouts in each lesson. In order for lecturers to design accurate, intuitive and engaging lectures, they must clearly define the objectives of the chapters, sections and lessons that need to be taught. A particularly favorable point is that the textbooks for political theory subjects such as History of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh Thought... published by the Ministry of Education and Training at the beginning of each chapter clearly orient the objectives of knowledge, skills and ideology. Helping lecturers clearly define the goals to be achieved in teaching helps lecturers when designing lectures to easily convey the basic content in the textbook and at the same time refer to additional documents to expand the lecture content. In the era of technology 4.0, designing PowerPoint slides for lectures helps lecturers create a distinct impression, effectively implement digital transformation in education, create appropriate teaching methods to help students understand easily, grasp basic knowledge easily, and dispel the feeling of stiffness and

<sup>2</sup> Minh Pham: "Teachers in the 4.0 era, don't teach like a talking textbook", Vietnam Education, <https://giaoduc.net.vn/giao-vien-thoi-dai-40-dung-day-hoc-nhu-cuon-sach-giao-khoa-biet-noi-pos>

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<sup>3</sup> Communist Party of Vietnam: Documents of the 13th National Congress of Delegates, National Political Publishing House Truth, Hanoi, 2021, vol. I, p.136.

heaviness when studying political theory subjects. To design effective lectures, lecturers need to build a document repository for each chapter, section, and lesson by creating it themselves on software, searching on the internet to ensure quality, conveying full content, and high aesthetics. Currently, there are many software to support lecturers in creating suitable lecture designs for each student group such as: Classpoint, Articulate Storyline 360, MS Producer, Adobe Presenter, iSpring, etc. Among the above software, Classpoint supports PowerPoint integration and other software such as Kahoot, Quizizz, ClassDojo ... which are highly appreciated and widely used with the ability to be more friendly to lecturers. Using supporting software helps lecturers' lectures to be suitable for different types of students, from full-time students for both natural sciences and social sciences; to part-time students, distance learning students. For each different type of student, we have to design different lectures. For full-time students, they are often of the same age, with the same level of knowledge and experience, which is an advantage because their logical thinking is relatively clear, their learning is often focused, according to the regulations of the credit system, and easily follows the framework. Therefore, when designing lectures, knowledge can be expanded and clarified compared to the curriculum. For part-time students, there are rich and diverse characteristics in terms of age, different occupations, fields of expertise, knowledge and experience, different learning motivations, different levels of cognition and thinking. Therefore, the lectures mainly present basic and lighter knowledge.

*Second, lecturers should avoid citing too many ideas, viewpoints, and documents when teaching political theory subjects.*

In the process of teaching political theory subjects, quoting and appropriately using the ideas and arguments of Marx, Engels, Ho Chi Minh and the viewpoints of the Party is an inevitable requirement. This work helps students understand the essence and accuracy of the concepts, laws, categories... of Marxism-Leninism, the arguments of President Ho Chi Minh and the policies and guidelines of the Party. This is an important basis, a reliable and official source of documents for lecturers to research, compile and design lectures. Rational use of ideas, viewpoints, documents... helps students have correct perception of Marxist-Leninist sciences, Ho Chi Minh thought, firmly adhere to the goal of national independence associated with socialism, imbue with the viewpoints, policies, and guidelines of the Party, clearly identify the wrong and hostile viewpoints that sabotage the Party's ideological foundation today and apply them to the practice of building Vietnam with the current strong aspiration. In teaching political theory subjects, it is difficult to

correctly present the content and conditions for the working class to fulfill its historical mission if the lecturer does not read and study the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts, the Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx and F. Engels. To correctly understand the theoretical issues that still have many different opinions about the divergence of communist socio-economic forms, it is necessary to read Marx's Critique of the Gotha Program, Lenin's State and Revolution. In order for students to clearly understand the Party's consistent and consistent policy in the process of building and developing the country since promoting the implementation of comprehensive innovation, industrialization and modernization, it is impossible not to quote the content of Resolution No. 29-NQ/TW of the Party Central Committee, dated November 17, 2022 on continuing to promote industrialization and modernization of the country to 2030, with a vision to 2045. It is also difficult to convince students when proposing solutions to study and follow Ho Chi Minh's ideology and moral example when lacking President Ho Chi Minh's famous quotes on ethics in the work "Reforming the way of working and Revolutionary ethics". Thus, citing thoughts, viewpoints, and documents when teaching by lecturers plays an important role in increasing the persuasiveness and accuracy of the lecture. However, we should not use too many quotes. If we overuse quotes, it will make students vague and burdensome. In particular, when citing ideas, viewpoints, and documents, it must be in the right place, at the right time, and in the right place, appropriate to the issue. After citing a certain argument, it is necessary to analyze, explain, and prove it so that students can understand it, not just stop at citing it. Currently, many teachers still do not properly cite ideas, viewpoints, and documents. This somewhat affects the quality of the lecture.

*Third, combining many teaching methods to improve the quality of teaching political theory subjects*

Innovating teaching methods of political theory subjects is an urgent requirement for lecturers and an issue that receives deep attention from the Party. The document of the 13th National Congress of the Party clearly states the need to: "Innovate the content, program, and methods of political theory education in a scientific, creative, modern direction and link theory with practice" [4]. Combining and innovating teaching methods of political theory is a factor that significantly affects the quality of teaching political theory subjects. Traditional teaching methods focus on the teacher and students will directly acquire knowledge when coming to class. Lecturers in class lecture on the content in textbooks and books. Students passively acquire knowledge by listening, taking notes, and absorbing. Under the impact of the fourth industrial revolution, it is

<sup>4</sup> Communist Party of Vietnam: Documents of the 13th National Congress of Delegates, National Political Publishing House - Truth, Hanoi, 2021, vol. II, p. 235.



necessary to apply new teaching methods because with just an electronic device such as a computer, phone, tablet, with an internet connection, students can study anywhere, in any space and time, learn, look up, and grasp the content of events and key issues. Therefore, each lecturer needs to combine many different teaching methods to actively promote students' cognitive activities. However, the role of the lecturer is not to be downgraded, but on the contrary. Political theory subjects with many concepts, terms, categories, and laws must be clearly explained, and at the same time, many important contents about the guidelines, policies, and policies of the Party and State must be conveyed to students. Therefore, the role of the lecturer in guiding the ideology when lecturing is irreplaceable. However, we should not just use a single teaching method, because that will make students passive and not promote their creativity and initiative. Lecturers need to combine presentations (traditional teaching methods) with many other teaching methods such as: Project-based learning, flipped classrooms, group work, problem solving, information sharing, field surveys, etc. with the integration of modern technical means to increase the visibility and attractiveness of political theory lectures to increase student participation, promote the advantages and overcome the limitations of traditional methods. The combination of these methods forces students to focus on the lecture, to think and contribute ideas to build the lesson. Strengthening problem-based teaching, and dialogue requires lecturers to have extensive knowledge, to prepare lesson plans carefully, and to regularly update new knowledge and current information. In each chapter and each section, lecturers must create problematic situations. These are situations that require exploration, deep thinking, and the development of knowledge. Lecturers must clearly introduce the issues that need to be researched and related documents for students to refer to. In addition, teachers should organize seminars. The content must be carefully prepared, suggesting students a system of directional questions to help them research on their own. All seminar questions are not questions whose answers are completely in the learning materials, but must be expanded, increasing the creativity of the learner.

*Fourth, lecturers need to skillfully combine theory with practice, and connect with domestic and international practice.*

President Ho Chi Minh said: "Theory must be linked with practice. The unity between theory and practice is a fundamental principle of Marxism-Leninism. Practice without the guidance of theory becomes blind practice. Theory without connection with practice is empty theory" [5]. When teaching political theory subjects (non-specialized system) at universities today, lecturers' lectures focus on conveying general

knowledge about the Party's guidelines and viewpoints, policies and laws of the State, but some lecturers have not really conveyed the good, the new viewpoints and guidelines of the Party, the new policies and laws of the State; many political theory education contents are not attractive and have not been applied to life. The way lecturers solve problematic situations is not really thorough, so it does not promote the independence, critical thinking and creativity of learners. Meanwhile, the learning activities of students - the subjects of cognition, when studying subjects are mainly first-year and second-year students, who do not have much practical experience and theory. Therefore, if lecturers do not have solid professional knowledge, good teaching methods, pedagogical skills, especially rich practical knowledge, it is difficult to create lively lessons that attract students. Therefore, to improve the quality of teaching political theory subjects, in each lecture, lecturers need to constantly update and select sources of documents, information, and events taking place in the economic-political-social fields domestically and internationally that are timely and accurate, making lectures rich, helping students perceive the practicality of political theory subjects, becoming an active subject in the struggle to protect the Party's ideological foundation, and refuting the wrong views of hostile forces.

### 3. CONCLUSION

Innovating teaching methods of political theory subjects is an inevitable requirement for each lecturer to improve his/her capacity, qualifications, qualities, and communication and teaching skills. At the same time, it contributes significantly to creating interest in learning, mastering knowledge of political theory subjects, and helping students become well-rounded people. If lecturers are active, constantly innovating, creating, and applying new methods, the process of teaching and learning political theory subjects will no longer be a process of transferring rigid, one-way knowledge, but a process of creating organizations of activities for students to proactively seek scientific knowledge in political theory subjects to apply to solving practical problems. The article is also part of the scientific research topic of the group of authors with code HV 20.2024.

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<sup>5</sup> Ho Chi Minh: Complete Works, National Political Publishing House - Truth, Hanoi, 2011, vol.11, pp.94-95

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