

# Research and Development of Dual Tutors in Chinese - Belarusian Art Education

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**Abstract:** This study examines the development, current practices, and reform needs of the dual tutoring system in art education in China and Belarus. Drawing on policy discussion, theoretical analysis, illustrative cases, and survey evidence, it first clarifies the concept and educational rationale of dual tutoring, understood as a collaborative training model that combines the guidance of on-campus and off-campus mentors in order to strengthen the integration of theoretical learning and practical training. On this basis, the study compares the present condition of art education in the two countries and argues that, although related practices have gradually emerged in China, the dual tutoring model in art education remains underdeveloped overall and is even less institutionalized in Belarus. The analysis identifies several major problems in current implementation, including weak teacher-student matching, unclear responsibilities for off-campus mentors, insufficient coordination between the two sides of supervision, and limited student initiative in seeking academic and practical guidance. The survey results further show that communication between students and mentors is often infrequent or irregular, while a considerable proportion of students tend to solve problems independently rather than actively consulting tutors. In response, the article proposes a set of reform measures, including standardizing the selection of off-campus mentors, improving institutional incentives and supervision mechanisms, clarifying the division of mentoring responsibilities, and strengthening cooperation between universities and external practice institutions. The study argues that a more systematic and better coordinated dual tutoring framework can improve practical competence, professional development, and the overall quality of art education in both China and Belarus.

**Keywords:** Art education; Dual tutoring system; Mentor collaboration; Practical training; China–Belarus comparison



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## Introduction

In 1999, the Steering Committee of Engineering Master of Professional Science Education in China issued the “Guiding Opinions on the Development of On-the-Job Training Programs for Engineering Master of Professional Science Graduates”, which gave rise to this dual-mentor cooperative learning model of “on-campus mentor and in-enterprise mentor” [1]. In order to better meet the urgent needs of the country and society for high-quality applied talents, the Ministry of Education issued the “Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Doing a Good Job in Full-Time Training of Master of Professional Science Graduates” in 2009, “establishing and improving the on-campus and off-campus dual-mentoring system,

with on-campus mentors being the main mentors, and off-campus mentors participating in the guidance of multiple relationships such as practice process, project research, courses and articles” [2].

In the field of teacher education, in order to focus on the development of ordinary students' teaching skills, in September 2012, the Ministry of Education of China issued a document entitled “Opinions on the Trial Implementation of the “Dual Tutoring System” for Education Courses in Chinese Higher Education Institutions”. The document clearly stated that “for students majoring in ordinary education in higher education institutions, the teaching staff should include both university teachers and primary and middle school teachers; for ordinary senior students who are undergoing educational

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internship, there should be both university mentor teachers and tutors from the primary and middle schools where they are undergoing internship", and detailed provisions on the implementation methods and management rules of the dual tutoring system [3].

However, in the management of art education, whether in China or Belarus, a dual tutoring system in art education remains lacking, especially in Belarus, which is still in its infancy and still uses the traditional teaching mode. However, the implementation of a dual tutoring system can effectively improve student learning outcomes and education quality. It is necessary to establish a dual tutoring system within and outside the school for undergraduate and graduate students, focusing on developing students' practical research and innovation abilities and increasing the practical work experience of ordinary students. This will ensure significant and practical value for the education and training of art students.

## Definition and Theoretical Justification of the Concept of Dual Mentoring in Art Education

"Dual mentor" refers to a student being under the joint guidance of two mentors during vocational training. This is a talent-based training model adopted by the school, based on the individual differences of students and teaching them according to their abilities. Art education is the core of aesthetic education and represents a type of theoretical and practical training for artists or artistic talents. Therefore, art education should also place greater emphasis on practical application, addressing professional needs and aiming to improve comprehensive literacy and applied knowledge and abilities.

While teaching artistic skills (such as musical instruments, dance steps, and acting), arts education must also focus on students' thinking, aesthetics, creativity, and communication skills. The "dual tutor" system aims to teach students to apply theoretical knowledge in practice. Therefore, during the course of study, we actively offer project-based learning, professional skills competitions, lectures, etc., integrating theoretical knowledge into textbooks for analysis, reinforcing professional foundations, and making professional learning more than just a formal activity.

## A combination of university faculty and extracurricular tutors

The extracurricular tutor is primarily responsible for teaching the vocational courses offered by the school; the co-curricular tutor is primarily responsible for developing students' vocational skills, practical abilities, employability, and entrepreneurial abilities outside the classroom. The two tutors divide the work and collaborate with each other, guiding students' vocational learning, each with their own focus and mutual cooperation.

For example, the School of Art Education at Fujian Provincial College of Preschool Education held an educational internship and demonstration educational internship for the 23rd cohort of regular education graduates to further im-

prove their educational internship and internship experience. Prior to the event, the college organized internships for students and recruited principals and senior teachers from provincial music colleges to lecture the students. First-level teachers were invited to conduct art classes for students, and demonstrations of the graduates' teaching segments were also held. During the course, teachers of the teaching methods courses also provided detailed instructions on how the trainees should observe and evaluate classes and how to implement teaching activities. At the same time, combined with lectures and Q&A sessions with educational experts, students were able to further develop their own pedagogical literacy and improve their art education and teaching abilities through listening, observing, memorizing, discerning, and thinking.

## The Current State of Dual Tutoring in the Field of Art Education between Belarus and China

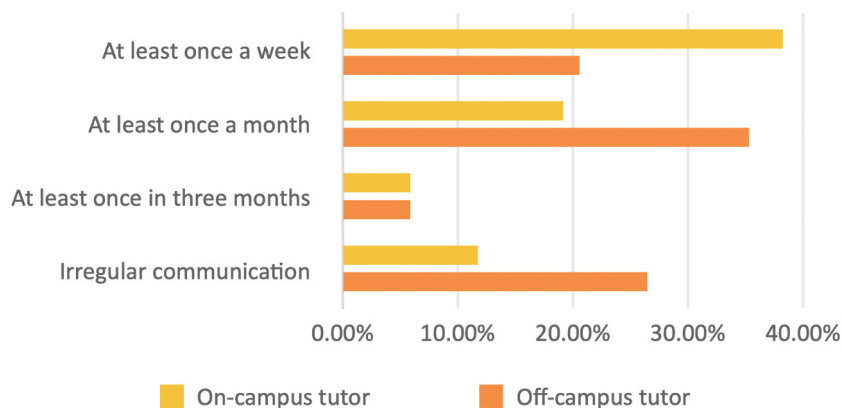
### The current state of dual education in art education in Belarus

The "dual system" originated in Germany and is a system that closely combines schools and enterprises, theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

Together, this is a vocational training system aimed at preparing professional and technical workers.[4] The source of teachers in the dual system is similar to that in the dual tutoring system. Students in the dual system receive education both in schools and in enterprises. Vocational schools are equipped with theoretical teachers, while enterprise-based training is equipped with practical training teachers. The dual tutoring system requires universities to provide students with theoretical teachers (on-campus teachers), and primary and secondary schools to provide practical guidance teachers (off-campus teachers). There are no specific requirements for the "dual tutoring system" at the national level. The essence is that students must have a teaching qualification. More detailed requirements depend on the local department of education and the implementing school. The federal government has created a special institute for vocational education, and each state has also created a corresponding management agency to handle issues related to the dual system.

For example, in 2022, in honor of the 75th anniversary of the Glebov Minsk Academy of Arts, the Okno Art Gallery hosted the grand opening of the scientific and practical conference "Problems and Prospects of Art Education in Belarus and the Russian Federation." Renowned artists and specialists from the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts visited the Glebovs. They not only shared their teaching experience but also presented an exhibition titled "Contemporary Pedagogical Works of the I. Ye. Repin St. Petersburg Academy of Arts." During the conference, a cooperation agreement was signed between the A. K. Glebov Minsk State Academy of Arts and the I. Ye. Repin St. Petersburg Academy of Arts [5].

A creative meeting and master class with graphic artist and illustrator O.R. Ionaitis on December 3, 2021. As part of



**Figure 1 | Statistics on the frequency of guidance provided by on-campus and off-campus mentors**

the project "Book Day for Children and Teenagers in Russia," organized by the Russian Cultural Foundation and the Minsk Russian House at the Moscow State Art Theater, Glebova held a creative meeting and master class with graphic artist and illustrator Olga Romualdovna Ionaitis [6].

### Current status of dual mentoring in chinese art education

Art education in China has undergone rapid development for over 50 years. Its school management system is generally sound, and all schools implement a credit system, which has had a good operational effect. Currently, the dual-teacher system is primarily used in postgraduate education at art colleges and universities in China. The dual-teacher system at other stages has not yet matured, and many issues remain that require in-depth study.

For example, the Henan Conservatory of Music at Zhengzhou University has a strong teaching team on campus and frequently holds master classes. This open class was personally taught by Dai Yuqiang, a world-renowned tenor and dean of the Conservatory of Music at Zhengzhou University, and attracted over a thousand vocal students from across the country. The students greatly benefited from the artists' rich artistic practice and profound academic achievements. A special performance of the Henan opera legacy of Chinese teacher Wang Hui was held at the Henan Conservatory of Music at Zhengzhou University. The performance was presented in the form of a small theater, exploring the true meaning of art in teaching and learning. Henan opened the first opera training class to help cultivate musical talent in all aspects, continuously promote the popularization of Chinese and Western opera and improve professional standards, and create a broader platform for the dissemination and promotion of opera. The first overseas opera performance class was held in Henan Province, China.

From the above general patterns, it can be concluded that China's current innovations in art education models mainly revolve around the construction of a teacher community, promoting cooperative relationships between colleges and universities, as well as beyond schools, hoping to promote the integration and interaction of art students' theory and practice

through effective cooperation between the two sides, and change the current situation of insufficient educational practice opportunities for art students.

### Problems of the Dual System of Art Education in Belarus and China

#### The dual tutoring system show a low degree of teacher-student compatibility

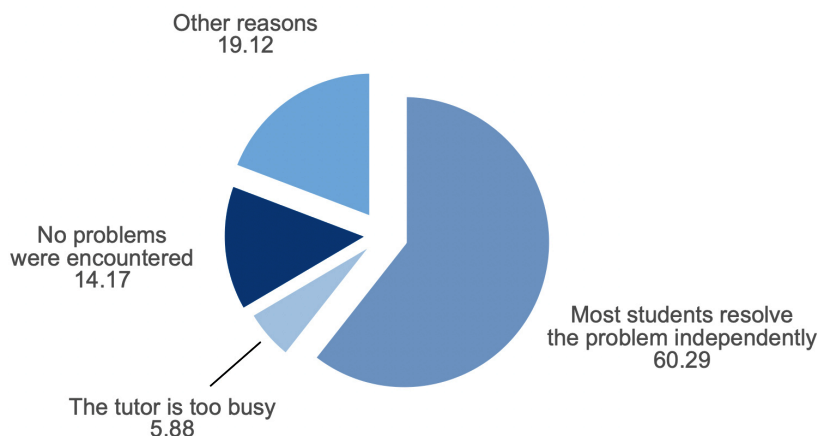
On-campus faculty are expected to possess deep professional knowledge and a high academic standard. Therefore, the role of university faculty in developing the educational and research capabilities of ordinary students is crucial. However, it's clear that some universities are understaffed, and excellent faculty members are overburdened with assignments to numerous students, making it difficult for them to provide individual attention. According to the survey, communication between students and faculty is insufficiently frequent, and in some cases, irregular reports tend to be "loose."

The majority of off-campus tutors are local faculty and researchers, as well as excellent frontline teachers with extensive teaching experience and network resources. However, the off-campus tutoring system is still underdeveloped, and there is no clear definition of off-campus tutor responsibilities.

Secondly, in terms of guidance content, most students still expect to receive writing guidance and help with social resources from off-campus tutors. However, in reality, off-campus tutor guidance typically focuses on teaching demonstrations and practical guidance, with other aspects still lacking. If off-campus tutors themselves are unwilling to provide guidance, they will be listed by name only, but will do nothing. Statistics on the frequency of guidance from off-campus and off-campus tutors are shown in [Figure 1](#).

#### Students show low levels of initiative

Students are not very active in their learning. 60.29% of students stated that "most problems can be solved independently, so there is no need to look for a tutor," 14.71% of stu-



**Figure 2 | Current proportion of problems associated with art education teachers**

dents selected "I haven't encountered any problems, so there is no need to look for a tutor;" and 5.88% of students selected "The tutor is very busy, and I can't get any feedback even if I contact them," as shown in [Figure 2](#). Students themselves lack awareness of professional development, lack the ability to identify and explore problems, and are not very proactive in seeking help from tutors when they encounter difficulties, so the tutor's guiding effect does not meet expectations.

## Efficient Development of the Dual Mentoring System

Selecting faculty on and off campus, clarifying responsibilities, and implementing guidelines require intelligent and sophisticated design of appropriate systems to ensure the dual faculty system can be effectively implemented. Current incentives for the dual faculty system are imperfect, and there is no adequate oversight system. Many faculty members are under intense research pressure, have demanding teaching responsibilities, and are limited in time and energy. The college's reward system is weak, and rewards and punishments are difficult to implement, leading some faculty to believe that "there's no difference between doing and not doing." This affects the enthusiasm of the faculty group.

## Proposals for Reforming the Dual-Study System in Art Education

### Proposals for reforming art education in Belarus

The Law of the Republic of Belarus "On Vocational Education" stipulates that the procedure for teachers to conduct educational work outside of school hours is determined by the Ministry of Education to ensure students master the general secondary education curriculum, the general secondary education curriculum, the higher education curriculum, etc. Similarly, the educational policy guarantee mechanism for the dual mentoring system is still imperfect. Therefore, some reference counter-

measures will be proposed to enhance the effectiveness of the dual mentoring system.

Standardize off-campus tutor selection criteria and improve the on-campus tutor deployment process. Fully understand the superior teacher resources at the local frontline of basic education, conduct a multifaceted analysis based on teacher attitudes toward tutoring, students' past tutoring experiences, available time and energy, etc., and finally select the appropriate off-campus tutor.

Establish an effective incentive system and a reasonable supervision system. Create a positive incentive environment to stimulate tutors' enthusiasm for their supervision. In addition to providing relatively generous compensation, external tutors can be provided with academic research facilities. For example, the college should prioritize providing platforms and resources for academic exchange for external tutors. Regularly monitor the implementation of the dual tutor system by reviewing relevant progress reports or conducting fieldwork.

### Suggestions for reforming art education in China

Jointly create tutors within and outside the school. The school should form a group of tutors from among the school's professional teachers. The selection of outside tutors should be communicated between the school and the enterprises or institutions, and corresponding contracts should be signed. The group of tutors should be formed by professional talents in the field of art education to guide students. At the same time, the school should also formulate a clear system and policy for selecting tutors. On this basis, the school should also strengthen cooperation between the school and employers and provide more training opportunities for students. For example, it should negotiate cooperation with professional opera houses to organize students for two-way theoretical and practical training.

The guidance of mentors within and outside the school must be clear. Within-school mentors are responsible for student career planning, career guidance, professional qualification examinations, and other related duties; outside-school

mentors are responsible for improving students' professional skills in the arts (such as singing, chanting, drawing, stage improvisation, etc.), as well as determining employment options and other related duties. They should improve students' skills in the practical application of professional knowledge in the arts, clarify students' career paths, and serve as a beacon of light during the confusing period of student employment.

## Conclusion

In short, art education essentially follows the path of "highest skill close to the Dao." Strengthening various skills training should enhance students' initiative. Appropriate incentives should also be provided to stimulate their enthusiasm for independent learning and inform them of favorable conditions. During internships, students should take the initiative to seize all practical opportunities, improve their teaching skills, actively consult with off-campus instructors, and exchange and discuss with classmates.

Thus, the dual-teacher system in art education not only provides students with a reliable learning system, satisfies their thirst for knowledge, and helps them master a wide range of practical skills. It can also reduce the time and cost of training talented students, integrate teacher-student theory, achieve a win-win situation for schools and employers, and facilitate students' smooth employment. Therefore, both Belarus and China need to implement educational reforms based on the dual-teacher system in art education.

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