



Enhancing Ideological and Cultural Initiatives for Youth Union Members at Hung Vuong University

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Abstract: This paper analyzes the role of ideological and cultural work in shaping a politically grounded, ethically sound, and culturally resilient generation of youth union members at Hung Vuong University. Drawing upon the guiding thoughts of General Secretary Nguyễn Phú Trọng on building an advanced Vietnamese culture deeply rooted in national identity, the article evaluates the current state of ideological work, identifies existing shortcomings, and proposes a set of practical solutions. Empirical data and real-life examples are used to demonstrate both the effectiveness and limitations of political and ideological education, while also affirming the central role of the Youth Union in guiding and orienting the younger generation.

Keywords: Ideological Work, Culture, Youth, Union Members, Hung Vuong University, Nguyễn Phú Trọng.

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1. Perspectives of the Late General Secretary Nguyễn Phú Trọng on Ideological and Cultural Work

The late General Secretary Nguyễn Phú Trọng consistently underscored the pivotal role of ideological and cultural work in consolidating the political resolve of both the Communist Party and the broader populace. He asserted that: *"Ideological work constitutes an indispensable pillar in the education and orientation of actions for all cadres, Party members, Youth Union members, and the masses."*

He frequently emphasized that the youth—serving as the vanguard force of society—must be thoroughly imbued with theoretical acumen, political consciousness, and revolutionary ethics. Young people must embody the ideal of being both *morally upright and professionally competent*, often encapsulated in the phrase "red and expert."

Amidst the context of deepening global integration and the vigorous development of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the task of ideological

and cultural education for Youth Union members has become more imperative than ever. Young people are not only a dynamic driving force in society but also the future stewards of the nation. Establishing a resilient ideological foundation, firm political conviction, and exemplary moral character among youth is a fundamental prerequisite for the sustainable development of society.

As a key institution for cultivating high-quality human resources for Vietnam's northern midland and mountainous regions, Hung Vuong University must further elevate the role of the Youth Union in spearheading ideological and cultural initiatives.

2. The State of Ideological and Cultural Work among Youth Union Members at Hung Vuong University

In relation to the implementation of Directive No. 05-CT/TW issued by the 12th Politburo on "Promoting the study and emulation of Hồ Chí Minh's thought, ethics, and style," the University's

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Youth Union has consistently prioritized ideological, moral, and legal education. This includes efforts to instill traditional values, cultivate ethical behavior and lifestyle norms, and promote awareness of and adherence to the principle of “Living and working in accordance with the Constitution and the law.” The Union has strategically mobilized its resources and energies to execute these initiatives effectively, integrating them into specific action plans and aligning them with performance indicators. Comprehensive communication efforts have been undertaken to raise awareness among Union members regarding their civic duties in the current socio-political context, while also reinforcing strict compliance with the Party’s directives, the State’s legal framework, and the university’s internal regulations.

In recent years, ideological and cultural work at Hung Vuong University has undergone notable progress, playing a pivotal role in enhancing the political consciousness, ethical standards, lifestyle orientation, and sense of social responsibility among students and Youth Union members. Nevertheless, despite these commendable achievements, several persistent challenges and limitations continue to hinder the full realization of desired outcomes. These issues must be thoroughly identified and critically assessed in order to develop and implement more robust and contextually responsive solutions.

2.1. Political and Ideological Education

The Executive Committee of the University’s Youth Union has consistently identified the education of revolutionary ideals, ethics, and lifestyle values as a core mission. Each year, the Union organizes between 15 to 20 thematic political sessions, such as “Studying and following Hồ Chí Minh’s thought, morality, and style” and “Youth and the aspiration to dedicate themselves to a prosperous and happy nation,” attracting the participation of over 3,000 students. These activities generally garner enthusiastic engagement from Union members, particularly first-year and final-year students.

According to the 2024 annual report of Hung Vuong University’s Youth Union, more than 85% of members regularly participate in Union activities, with 65% actively involved in programs focused on ideological and cultural education. Additionally, over 20 seminars, dialogues, and academic conferences on Hồ Chí Minh’s ideology and traditional cultural values are held annually.

However, internal survey data from the 2023–2024 academic year, conducted with a sample of 500 Union members, reveals several noteworthy concerns:

- 68% felt that the content of political education remained overly theoretical and lacked engagement;
- 23% admitted that their participation in political events was largely due to obligation;
- 12% were unaware of the specific topics they had studied regarding Hồ Chí Minh’s ideology.

These findings highlight a degree of formality and superficiality that persists in certain ideological education programs, which have yet to truly resonate with learners on a cognitive and emotional level.

2.2. Academic Learning and Scientific Research

Academic learning and scientific research have emerged as standout areas of achievement for the Youth Union at Hung Vuong University in recent years. Spearheaded by the Academic and Scientific Research Committee, along with affiliated student clubs, the Union has regularly organized a variety of academic events aimed at fostering a research-oriented mindset among its members. These include public speaking competitions, scientific seminars, and workshops on research methodologies. In addition, the Youth Union has actively collaborated with the Office of Science, Technology and International Cooperation, the Office of Academic Affairs and Student Management, and the Student Party Cell to facilitate student engagement in both internal and external research initiatives.

As a result, many Youth Union members have earned notable achievements in academic and scientific research. The promotion of student-led research has become a hallmark of the Union’s activities. In the 2024–2025 academic year alone, 32 student-led research projects were conducted. Of these, six received provincial-level awards, with one project advancing to the national final round of the Euréka Scientific Research Award for Students (academic year 2023–2024). The Young Scientists Club organized seven student scientific seminars, attracting nearly 400 student participants.

2.3. Cultural, Artistic, and Sports Activities

In the past year, the Youth Union has actively promoted a wide range of extracurricular activities, including volunteer work, cultural events, arts performances, and sports competitions. These initiatives are often integrated with national and institutional commemorations such as the Traditional Day of Vietnamese Students (January 9), the Founding Day of the Hồ Chí Minh Communist Youth Union (March 26), and Vietnamese Teachers’ Day (November 20). Many of these activities have reflected the unique identity and vibrant spirit of the Youth Union at Hung Vuong University.

Over the past year, the Union organized nearly 25 cultural and artistic events linked to major holidays and milestones. Notable examples include:

- “Melodies of Youth”, a musical showcase with over 500 student performers;
- An online contest entitled “Understanding the History of the Communist Party of Vietnam”, which drew nearly 1,000 participants;
- The University-wide Student Football Tournament, featuring 24 teams representing various academic departments.

2.4. Volunteer Activities and Social Engagement

The Youth Union has also made significant contributions through a variety of volunteer and community outreach programs. Signature initiatives include the Voluntary Blood Donation Drive, the Green Summer Campaign, and Winter of Giving. These programs are frequently implemented by the Volunteer Student Club and grassroots Union branches through meaningful and sustained efforts. Examples include:

- Memorial ceremonies and cemetery clean-up campaigns to honor fallen soldiers;
- Visits and gift-giving to Heroic Vietnamese Mothers in the local community;
- Donation drives for essential supplies to support residents affected by natural disasters, including the recent Typhoon Yagi (Storm No. 3).

These volunteer campaigns attracted the participation of over 500 Union members across the year.

The Union consistently fosters the pioneering role of its members in volunteerism. Prominent programs include:

- The 2024 Green Summer Campaign in Yên Lập District, involving 80 students engaged in community projects such as renovating local cultural centers, teaching children in highland areas, and planting trees;
- The Winter of Giving program, which distributed 250 gift packages worth over 60 million VND to underprivileged students in Tam Nông District;
- The 2025 Voluntary Blood Donation Campaign, which attracted over 300 Youth Union members and collected 270 blood units—exceeding the initial target.

2.5. Emerging Issues and Challenges

Despite achieving numerous positive outcomes, ideological and cultural work at the university still faces several limitations. A portion of students lack a clear sense of life purpose and are susceptible to negative and toxic content on social

media platforms. Some Youth Union officers have yet to fully demonstrate their role as exemplary leaders and remain passive in innovating communication methods. Additionally, the coordination among the Youth Union, Student Association, and university administration has not been sufficiently cohesive, resulting in a lack of unified direction in ideological education.

Furthermore, a number of Union members still exhibit weak political conviction, limited engagement in social and Union-related activities, and have yet to fully embody their pioneering role in academic performance and ethical development.

These shortcomings stem in part from the underutilization of modern media and communication tools, as well as the insufficient alignment between Youth Union activities and the personal development needs and aspirations of its members.

3. Strategic Solutions for Enhancing Ideological and Cultural Work in Accordance with the Thought and Vision of General Secretary Nguyễn Phú Trọng

To improve the effectiveness of ideological and cultural work in higher education, a comprehensive set of strategic measures must be adopted. These solutions should strike a balance between long-term educational orientation and flexible adaptation to the psychological characteristics, cognitive development, and holistic growth needs of youth in the modern era.

3.1. Innovating the Content and Methodology of Political and Ideological Education

Ideological and political education must move beyond the traditional, one-way, theory-heavy transmission. Instead, it should incorporate modern, interactive methods such as:

- Case-based discussions, political debates, and simulations of social scenarios (e.g., mock trials, parliamentary role-plays);
- Youth forums themed “*Young People and Life Ideals*”, featuring guest speakers such as experts, distinguished alumni, and exemplary Youth Union officials sharing real-world insights;
- Integration of Hồ Chí Minh’s ideology and national cultural values into core academic modules, especially courses on soft skills, civic education, and Marxist-Leninist philosophy.

In addition, the use of inspirational storytelling, historical documentaries, podcasts, and short-form video content (e.g., TikTok, Reels) can

help align educational delivery with the media consumption habits of today's youth.

3.2. Strengthening the Exemplary Role of Youth Union Officers and Grassroots Units

Youth Union officers—particularly branch secretaries—must serve as “igniters of passion,” demonstrating ideological clarity, strong communication skills, and creative leadership.

Key initiatives include:

- Developing a performance evaluation framework for Youth Union leaders based on ideological stance, ethics, academic performance, leadership skills, and civic engagement;
- Launching a leadership development program titled “*Resilient Young Leaders*”, focused on organizing ideological activities and managing complex ideological scenarios in student environments;
- Enhancing continuous training through regional workshops, experience-sharing forums, and cross-university exchange programs.

3.3. Fostering a Healthy Cultural Environment and Value Orientation

A healthy, friendly, and positive campus environment is a fundamental condition for effective ideological education. Universities should:

- Establish a *Code of Cultural Conduct for Students* as a guiding framework for behavior and attitudes in academics, group activities, and online spaces;
- Develop campus culture models such as “*Open Reading Spaces*,” “*Trash-Free Week*,” “*Cultural Heritage Corners*,” and “*Áo Dài Festival*” integrated with traditional celebrations;
- Encourage students to create positive media content, including posters, videos spotlighting exemplary individuals, and initiatives that nurture ethical and societal values within the academic community.

3.4. Leveraging Technology and Modern Media in Ideological Education

As today's youth are digital natives, ideological education must adapt to multimedia platforms and online ecosystems. Suggested actions include:

- Launching a Fanpage titled “*Young Ideals – Hung Vuong University*” featuring inspirational content, Hồ Chí Minh's quotes, and interviews with outstanding students;
- Implementing a “*Weekly Ideological Insight*” series using infographics, mini-games, and political knowledge quizzes;

- Organizing digital content creation contests on youth ethics and culture, encouraging students to express political ideals through videos, blogs, art, and podcasts.

Additionally, the development of an online political education app—featuring attendance tracking, quick assessments, and discussion forums—can enhance engagement and promote self-directed learning.

3.5. Linking Ideological Education with Revolutionary and Volunteer Movements

One of the most effective methods of ideological education is learning through practice and social contribution.

Initiatives should expand movements such as:

- “*Youth Volunteers for the Community*”, “*Green Summer Campaign – Journey for the Homeland*”, and the “*Five-Good Student*” program, which incorporates moral and ideological benchmarks;
- “*One Good Deed per Month*”, aimed at fostering a culture of positive, value-driven action.

Moreover, ideological efforts should be integrated into academic and personal development processes—such as awarding bonus points for participation in ideological activities or prioritizing politically conscious Union members for Party admission.

3.6. Strengthening Collaboration between Departments and Social Organizations

Ideological education is not solely the responsibility of the Youth Union—it requires interdisciplinary coordination.

Key partnerships should include:

- Collaboration among the Youth Union, Student Affairs Office, Science & International Cooperation Office, and academic departments;
- Engagement with provincial Youth Union organizations, Viet Tri City Youth Union, Phu Tho Provincial Youth Union, and local enterprises to expand ideological learning spaces.
- Involvement of psychologists, political science lecturers, and successful alumni in student mentoring and ideological orientation programs.

4. CONCLUSION

Building ideological and cultural work for youth union members is not only a political task but also a fundamental solution for shaping a generation

of youth with noble life ideals, political determination, and a sense of responsibility toward themselves, the community, and the nation. In this spirit, Hung Vuong University needs to continue innovating the content, methods, and tools of ideological education in order to maximize the role of the Youth Union in educating the younger generation according to the guiding principles of General Secretary Nguyễn Phú Trọng.

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