Available on: https://gjefm.ep-journals.org/ E-ISSN: 3117-6771, P-ISSN: 3117-6763

Global Journal of Education, Finance and Management

Volume: 02 Issue: 06 June-2026

The Management Process of Teaching Activities in Higher Education Institutions: Integrating Planning, Organizing, Leading, And Controlling Functions

Nguyen Minh Giam
Faculty of Education, Thu Dau Mot University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, https://orcid.org/0009-0002-9895-2079

Published Date: June 04, 2026 **DOI: 10.65150/EP-gjefm/V2E6/2026-01**

ABSTRACT: In the context of higher education being significantly impacted by digital transformation and the demand for academic autonomy, optimizing teaching quality requires a flexible and synchronized management mechanism. However, current operational practices at many educational institutions are still heavily influenced by a static administrative management mindset. The lack of synchronization and the fragmented operations among functional departments have led to isolated and disconnected activities, disrupting information flows and significantly reducing the flexibility of the system.

This study was conducted to help address the aforementioned problem by restructuring the dialectical relationship among the four core functions: planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. Instead of approaching these functions through a traditional linear model, the study proposes an integrated process framework in the form of a Closed-loop Model. In this model, the evidence-based data flow on digital platforms serves as the central connecting foundation. The novelty of the model lies in altering the execution of the controlling function. Rather than merely inspecting after tasks are completed to handle arising issues, controlling is carried out continuously in real time. Feedback information is evaluated and immediately relayed back to the planning function, enabling the plan to be regularly adjusted and refined to better align with reality.

The results of the article provide a crucial theoretical foundation, assisting university administrators in shifting their management approach. Instead of solely focusing on strict compliance with regulations and procedures, management is oriented towards monitoring, adjusting, and improving processes based on actual outcomes. This approach helps minimize information barriers while fostering conditions for the academic environment to continually innovate and adapt to practical changes.

KEYWORDS: Management of teaching activities, System integration, Closed-loop model, Higher education, Educational digital transformation

1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching activities are always the central focus of any higher education institution, directly determining the achievement of Program Learning Outcomes (PLO) and affirming the university's academic reputation. For these activities to operate effectively, the management process requires the close and comprehensive integration of four fundamental functions: planning, organizing, leading, and controlling (Nurhikmah, 2024; Putri et al., 2024). Numerous studies have affirmed that continuously improving this cycle helps educational goals be implemented in a synchronized and effective manner. Furthermore, this is a crucial factor that helps educational institutions elevate their status, increase their competitiveness, and adapt to the increasingly high demands of practice (Francisco et al., 2013; Lysokon et al., 2024). Additionally, applying a comprehensive academic administrative management approach, combined with strategic management and total quality management, will create a solid foundation for the university to maintain operational efficiency and continuously improve educational outcomes (Villasmil & Romero, 2009). Moreover, in the context of educational digital transformation and the shift towards the Society 5.0 era, an integrated management process is a prerequisite for fostering a flexible and innovative educational environment capable of adapting quickly to new challenges (Uve et al., 2024; Putri et al., 2024).

Although the theoretical foundation has emphasized the inseparable connection of these four functions, management practices at many higher education institutions still exhibit numerous shortcomings. One of the most prominent issues is the fragmented operation among functional units; isolated and disconnected activities significantly reduce the flexibility of the system. In current practice, educational management remains administrative and quite rigid. The planning stage, such as developing teaching plans or defining objectives, is often executed quite comprehensively and in detail. However, resource allocation in the organizing stage often occurs slowly and lacks timeliness. In particular, the controlling stage primarily involves post-completion inspections to meet administrative requirements, rather than regular monitoring, measurement, and providing feedback to improve teaching quality. This imbalance was clearly demonstrated in a recent study on educational management systems. The results showed that the planning function was rated very highly with a score of 4.59/5, while the controlling function received the lowest score, below 3.0 points (Brito et al., 2016). This weakness in the controlling stage has disrupted the continuity of the process,

making it difficult for institutions to make adjustments and enhance educational performance.

Drawing from the existing practical issues and the gaps in previous studies, this article is conducted with the purpose of proposing a more flexible management model to replace the linear management approach that lacks adjustment. The study aims to clarify the relationship among the four management functions—planning, organizing, leading, and controlling—as well as how feedback information is exchanged among these functions. Thereby, the study focuses on answering the question of how to build a closed-loop management model to facilitate continuous improvement in the teaching process and enhance training quality in higher education institutions.

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND RESEARCH GAP

2.1. The Integration of the Four University Management Functions

In the higher education environment, the management process of teaching activities is defined as the close integration of four fundamental functions: planning, organizing, leading (actuating), and controlling (P-O-L-C). According to Nurhikmah (2024), the planning stage involves establishing educational objectives and strategies; organizing is the efficient allocation of resources to meet these objectives; leading focuses on motivating efforts to achieve goals; and controlling requires monitoring and evaluation to continuously improve the process. Effective management ensures that each of these processes does not operate in isolation but must function as a synchronized system to optimize the institution's competitiveness and flexibly meet social needs (Francisco et al., 2013; Tapia Claro et al., 2020). In particular, this systematic integration is not only significant in terms of administrative management but also has a direct impact, enhancing the core effectiveness of the teaching and learning process itself, thereby helping institutions successfully accomplish their set educational goals (Rad-Camayd & da Conceição Pereira-Inácio-José, 2023). In addition, within the specific context of pedagogy, professional management also implies creating an impact rather than just stopping at traditional interaction, thereby making the educational environment more dynamic (Norova, 2019).

However, in practical implementation, maintaining balance and synchronization among these four functions encounters numerous challenges. An analytical study of the management system at a higher education institution revealed a stark disparity: while the planning stage was rated very positively (achieving a score of 4.59/5), the controlling function consistently received the lowest score (below 3.0) (Brito et al., 2016). This imbalance reflects a state of static administrative management, where the controlling stage has not truly exerted its regulatory role but is primarily treated as a post-completion inspection.

2.2. The Context of Management Innovation in the Digital Era

Digital transformation and the emergence of the Society 5.0 era pose an urgent need to upgrade university management processes, moving towards the Education 4.0 Center model. Modern educational management requires a strong shift towards learner-centered approaches, fostering a favorable environment for cognitive and professional skill development (Torres et al., 2025). Recognizing that traditional lectures are no longer suitable for the diverse learning styles of students, educational institutions are compelled to apply innovative teaching strategies, focusing on skill-based learning to optimize knowledge absorption (Robert & Laura, 2024; Aithal, 2016).

To actualize this transition, integrating digital systems into the management process is a decisive factor. The advent of innovative digital platforms like StudentHub has helped streamline the process of providing information on courses, finances, and grades, thereby significantly enhancing organizational efficiency (Pintea, 2025). Simultaneously, the application of learning activity tracking systems, including modules for task creation, assessment, and feedback, has helped administrators optimize educational data flows (Shykula, 2023). These technological tools are key factors in developing digital literacy for students and ensuring teaching quality in the new era (Lysokon et al., 2024).

2.3. Research Gap

From reviewing traditional management theories combined with the current digital transformation context, a clear research gap in the management of teaching activities can still be identified. Many studies still approach the P-O-L-C model as a linear sequence among functions or have yet to closely link management activities with pedagogical activities. In reality, the low rating of the controlling function indicates that this stage has not been exploited effectively. Information collected from controlling activities has not truly become a crucial data source to support adjustments and enhance the quality of the teaching system.

To date, there are not many studies that have built a comprehensive theoretical framework to effectively organize and operate the feedback mechanism in teaching management. An important issue raised is how the data and evidence collected from digital platforms during the controlling process can be connected and utilized in a timely manner to adjust plans, strategies, and organizing activities right during the implementation process in each semester. This very gap establishes the foundation for the article to propose a closed-loop integrated management model, contributing to strengthening the connection among departments, limiting fragmented operations, and enhancing coordination efficiency across the entire system.

3. INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT PROCESS FRAMEWORK

3.1. The Integration Principle of the Closed-loop System

To overcome the current lack of connectivity in university management, it is necessary to shift from a linear management model to a closed-loop management model. Previously, many studies viewed the four management functions—planning, organizing, leading, and controlling—as steps executed sequentially in a specific order. This approach ensures that management activities are fully implemented to achieve educational goals. However, it inadvertently creates a separation among functional departments and units. Therefore, controlling activities are often only conducted at the end of the semester or the end of the course to evaluate results, rather than providing timely information to adjust and improve the implementation process.

Based on this reality, the study proposes replacing the linear approach with a closed-loop management model. In this model, the four functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling do not operate individually or in a rigid order but are closely linked and operate simultaneously. The results of each management activity will immediately become the basis for subsequent adjustments and improvements. As a result, units within

the institution can coordinate more effectively, limiting the state of isolated work and contributing to enhancing management quality.

In this closed-loop model, the crucial factor connecting the management functions together is the evidence-based information flow. To build a flexible and effective educational environment, monitoring and management activities need to be supported by modern information systems, where data regarding students' learning processes and lecturers' teaching activities are regularly collected, evaluated, and provided as feedback. Digital platforms help continuously update information on learning progress, assessment results, and operational performance, thereby creating a transparent and timely data source to serve management tasks.

Based on the data-driven management perspective, the author proposes using the evidence-based information flow as a central element to operate the closed-loop model. Accordingly, the controlling function does not merely stop at evaluating results after the activity has concluded but needs to become a source of continuous feedback information throughout the implementation process. The data collected from the controlling stage will be directly relayed back to the planning and organizing stages right within the semester, helping the institution to timely adjust plans and management activities. Consequently, teaching activities no longer operate under a fixed administrative management approach but shift to a flexible management model, capable of continuous adaptation and improvement to enhance educational quality.

3.2. Operating Process Matrix Structure

To actualize the aforementioned closed-loop principle, the management process of teaching activities needs to be concretized into a synchronized operating matrix. Inheriting the perspective that management functions are essential administrative practices that help create a competitive advantage for educational institutions (Francisco et al., 2013), this matrix not only lists individual tasks but also clearly defines the flow of information intersection among functional departments. The author's prominent contribution is building a multi-dimensional integrated matrix structure, in which digital technology plays a connecting role among management activities. According to this model, each management stage not only performs its specific function but also continuously receives and shares evidence-based data with other stages. As a result, information flows smoothly among units, contributing to overcoming fragmented operations and enhancing coordination throughout the entire management system.

The starting point of the system is the Planning function, focusing on designing the program structure, developing and updating detailed syllabi, and clearly defining learning objectives (CO) and Program Learning Outcomes (PLO). Traditionally, planning is merely understood as the top-down establishment of educational goals and strategies (Nurhikmah, 2024; Putri et al., 2024). The novelty in this matrix model is that the planning stage is built directly based on the evaluation results from the controlling stage of the previous phase. According to the author, educational planning should not be done once and kept unchanged throughout the implementation process; rather, it needs to be regularly adjusted and refined based on actual data and evidence. In particular, the results regarding the achievement level of program learning outcomes from the previous course will become a crucial basis for developing more appropriate plans and serve as a foundation for organizing training activities in the subsequent phase.

Following the plan, the Organizing function undertakes the efficient allocation of resources. The core content includes assigning the teaching staff, scheduling timetables, and particularly preparing smart classroom infrastructure along with learning material repositories on LMS (Learning Management System) platforms. The use of unified digital platforms helps streamline information, finances, and academic resources for the entire system (Pintea, 2025). The novelty in the author's approach to the organizing stage is shifting the focus from traditional physical facility management to building and developing a digital resource ecosystem. Accordingly, the organizing function does not merely stop at allocating resources but also serves as a technological foundation supporting the implementation of the objectives defined in the planning stage. Through digital tools and environments, these objectives are translated into specific activities, facilitating a more effective and favorable process of leading and implementing teaching activities.

Upon the organized resource foundation, the Leading function proceeds to coordinate the practical academic workflow. This stage focuses on guiding lecturers in implementing innovative, learner-centered pedagogical methods, thereby creating motivation and supporting continuous professional development to accommodate the diverse learning styles of students (Robert & Laura, 2024). The author's contribution in designing the Leading stage lies in closely linking individual pedagogical activities with the overall management system. The author proposes that the leading process is not merely an administrative urging, but rather the activation of pedagogical evidence right within the classroom and on digital systems. These data are continuously updated and directly transferred to the Controlling stage to serve the monitoring, evaluation, and improvement of teaching activities.

Finally, the Controlling function undertakes the evaluation of teaching progress and the measurement of the achievement rate of learning outcomes through learning data and feedback surveys. Practice shows that controlling is currently the weakest stage, often receiving very low ratings (below 3.0/5) in actual university management due to its passive nature (Brito et al., 2016). To overcome this, the system needs to apply learning activity tracking modules to optimize educational data management (Shykula, 2023). The core value that the author introduces into the matrix for the Controlling stage is redefining it as a real-time data filter. The author completely eliminates the compliance-driven post-inspection mechanism, instead designing the Controlling stage with the task of automatically comparing the collected data against the initial objectives, thereby making timely adjustments and pushing the data back to the Planning stage, thus closing the management cycle.

To visualize the above arguments, the author proposes a specific operating process matrix table as follows:

Table 1: Integrated teaching activity management process matrix

Function	Content of university teaching management	Integrated connectivity (Model's contribution)
Planning	Designing the program structure, developing and updating detailed syllabi, and defining learning objectives (CO) and Program Learning Outcomes (PLO).	Using the evaluation results of the Controlling stage from the previous semester as input; shaping standards for the Organizing stage.
Organizing	Assigning the teaching staff, structuring timetables, preparing smart	Concretizing the objectives of the Planning stage;

	classroom infrastructure, digital learning material repositories, and LMS platforms.	creating a technological resource foundation for the Leading stage.
Leading	Guiding the implementation of new pedagogical methods, coordinating the academic workflow, creating motivation, and supporting professional development for lecturers.	Operating based on the resource framework of the Organizing stage; providing continuous actual evidence for the Controlling stage.
Controlling	Evaluating teaching progress and measuring the achievement rate of students' learning outcomes through learning data and feedback surveys on digital systems.	Directly comparing against the objectives of the Planning stage; making immediate adjustment recommendations (eliminating the post-inspection mindset).

4. DISCUSSION

Applying the closed-loop integrated process matrix requires a fundamental shift in the mindset of university leaders. Traditionally, educational management has often focused on completing administrative procedures, ensuring that planning or organizing functions are executed properly to meet basic social needs (Tapia Claro et al., 2020). However, based on the proposed model, the author affirms the necessity of implementing a profound paradigm shift: moving from compliance-based administrative management to management based on actual pedagogical outcomes and effectiveness. The contribution of this article is to point out that planning documents or organizational mechanisms must not exist as static records merely to cope with accreditation, but must become flexible tools, capable of continuous adjustments to directly serve the enhancement of learners' output quality.

When the four management functions are no longer fragmented, the system will enhance overall efficiency. Previous studies have concurred that comprehensive integration will help components operate seamlessly, thereby enhancing overall educational performance and effectively utilizing learning data flows (Putri et al., 2024; Shykula, 2023). Building deeper upon this foundation, the author argues that the greatest value of the synergistic effect in the closed-loop model is the ability to minimize information latency among functional departments. Specifically, through the integrated system, if the Controlling stage detects that students are weak in a group of practical skills, this evidence-based information flow will immediately activate the Planning and Organizing stages to adjust learning materials and methods right within the current semester. The author posits that this is a crucial factor in overcoming the state of departments operating in isolation and lacking coordination. Thanks to this mechanism, arising issues can be detected and adjusted promptly, instead of having to wait for periodic program accreditations every 4–5 years as in the traditional approach.

Although the dynamic management model brings clear strategic advantages, the process of putting it into practice will undoubtedly face numerous challenges. The reality that the Controlling stage currently has the lowest rating score in practice at many educational institutions (often below 3.0/5) is evidence of the looseness in operational capacity and the lack of synchronization in the system (Brito et al., 2016). Innovation requires continuous improvement and maintaining open communication with all stakeholders, especially lecturers (Lysokon et al., 2024). According to the author, the biggest barrier in applying the integrated management model does not lie in the capacity of the digital technology system but primarily stems from the human factor. Specifically, the inertia in organizational culture along with the reluctance to change among the management team and lecturers can reduce implementation efficiency and hinder the innovation process. To effectively overcome this problem, the author proposes the need to enhance adaptive capacity and operational flexibility for the leadership team at the Faculty and Department levels. Accordingly, middle management officers need to be empowered with more autonomy in decision-making and task handling. This helps them quickly react to changes reflected through actual data, thereby making timely adjustments. Then, innovative activities are no longer viewed as an administrative pressure requirement but become a natural part of the management and operation process.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion and Theoretical Implications

In the context of higher education transforming robustly under the impact of the digital era and the demand for academic autonomy, the management process of teaching activities can no longer operate in the rut of a static administrative mindset. This article has successfully addressed the theoretical and practical problem by integrating the classical management theory (P-O-L-C) into the core activities of higher education, while simultaneously combining it with modern digital platforms.

The core contribution of the study is proposing a Closed-loop Model to overcome the one-way linear management approach and the situation of units operating in isolation, lacking connection. In this model, the four functions of Planning, Organizing, Leading, and Controlling are closely connected through a continuously updated evidence-based data flow. The highlight of the model is altering the role of the Controlling stage, from merely evaluating results after the activity concludes to providing timely feedback information to adjust and refine the Planning stage. Consequently, the study has provided a theoretical foundation helping higher education institutions shift from the traditional management approach to a more flexible and adaptive management model. This change not only contributes to supplementing the theoretical foundation for the field of Educational Management but also supports building an academic environment capable of continuous improvement, thereby enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

5.2. Practical Recommendations

From the proposed model framework, to actualize the integrated management process into operational practice, the study offers several recommendations for management levels at higher education institutions as follows:

For the strategic level (University Council, Board of Management): It is necessary to identify the investment in digital infrastructure and the Learning Management System (LMS) as a priority task in the university's development strategy. The objective is not only to store data but also to build an information system capable of effectively connecting and sharing data among units. Additionally, university leaders need to establish a

data interoperability mechanism, reducing information barriers among departments, especially between the Academic Affairs Department and the Quality Assurance Department. Data regarding student evaluations and teaching progress need to be regularly updated and monitored in real time to support the university in making appropriate adjustment decisions right during the implementation process within the semester.

For the executive level (Faculty Leaders, Department Heads, and Lecturers): It is necessary to follow the principle of flexibility in implementation and strictness in evidence collection. Accordingly, Lecturers should be empowered with more autonomy in the Leading stage so they can apply innovative teaching methods, suitable for learners' needs and oriented towards a learner-centered approach. However, along with that autonomy, the collection and storage of academic evidence in the Controlling stage must be carried out comprehensively and strictly. Besides, the middle management team, such as Deans and Department Heads, needs to be fostered with Administrative Agility, helping them proactively adapt to changes and be ready to utilize feedback data from the system to adjust course syllabi and appropriately allocate resources for subsequent phases.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of the teaching activity management process does not depend on having a perfect plan or possessing modern technological tools, but rather on the ability to connect and synchronously operate the management functions within a unified system. When these functions are closely linked and continuously improved based on actual data, the system will have the capacity to self-learn, adapt, and sustainably enhance quality.

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