Thinking and Practice on University Academic Warning System

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Abstract

With the implementation of credit system, it is much free for college students to choose their courses, but some of them become unaccommodated for their study because of their relaxation and the lure outside. Some undergraduates even have wicked academic problems such as underachievement. The implementation of the university academic warning system has played a significant role in monitoring the students' educational situation, and it has achieved specific results by helping students with academic difficulties. However, under the new era, we'd better to widely publish the detail of academic warning system and accelerate its modernization and information construction. We should also coordinate with other departments and deal with different kinds of undergraduates in different ways. Based on the above results, we may improve the effect of academic warning and achieve the education goal of modern university.

Keywords

Thinking and practice; academic warning system.

1. Introduction

At present, China's higher education has developed from elite education to popularization; the average admission rate of China's college entrance examination increases year by year, the average admission rate of Chinese universities reached 74.5% by 2015[1], and it shows an upward trend in recent years. The large-scale enrollment expansion puts forward severe challenges to quality of higher education, and the number of ''difficult students'' in colleges and universities increase year by year. Along with the deepening of the credit system reform, whether the students graduate or not is only based on their completion of required credits for the training program, and has nothing to do with resit or retake, whether the students obtain degree is only related to the GPA, it is not related to resit and retake. The implementation of this credit system provides students with a more diversified and personalized learning and growth environment. But moreover, it brings some negative psychology to students, which causes some students with weak self-control ability and self-learning ability not to complete their studies smoothly. Under the outside environment of the credit system operation, the corresponding academic warning mechanism emerges as the times require as well. Namely in the academic management work, all kinds of information and technical means are used to monitor and analyze the students' learning process, and students who fail to meet the academic requirements of the school are given timely academic warning hints and make corresponding student registration system[2]. At present, dozens of universities across the country have carried out corresponding academic warning work practices according to their own characteristics, and have achieved certain results, but there are also many practical problems [3~6].

2. Main Ways of Academic Early Warning

According to the class requirements of each school and the corresponding rules and regulations, there are mainly the following common early warning ways in China:

2.1. Early Warning of Credits (Courses) Achievement Condition

It mainly includes absolute value method and relative value method of credit. The absolute value method takes absolute value of the credits, grade point average, or courses of students in the semester or each academic year as indicators whether or not to trigger academic early warning. For example, Peking University provides that from the second semester of the first school year, the grade point average (GPA) of courses for two consecutive semesters is less than 1.5 (about 63 points in hundred-mark system), students who have failed more than 12 credits in two semester courses; during the school year, students who fail the exam with more than 20 credits will leave school (undergraduate four-year course is 140 credits). Northeastern University stipulates that for any reason, students who have failed more than 8 courses and no grades will be dropped out. (including 8). Xiamen University provides that students fail to obtain 8 credits for the professional teaching program in semester or fail to obtain the professional teaching plan 20 credits for two consecutive semester will be dropped out.

The relative value method takes the passing rate or the failure rate of the course of the students in each semester or each school year to determine whether to trigger the academic early warning. For example, Harbin Institute of Technology stipulates: if the number of qualified credits that have been completed in one academic year does not reach 60% of the required credits for the training plan, the school will order students to quit school. Northwestern Polytechnical University stipulates that: students who accumulate 30 credits for failing grades during the school (excluding passing exams after resit) (including 30 credits), (the total credits for four-year professional training plan are around 180 credits.), students' course credits during the semester do not reach 50% of the required total credits for the semester without approval, they will be dropped out.

2.2. Academic Probation System

The academic probation system can be divided into two types: probation after quit school and warning probation. Probation after quit school, namely the students meet the school's prescribed dropout standards in the school, however, the school does not immediately let the students drop out of school, instead, the students are given a probation opportunity, if they meet the school requirements during the probation period, they can continue to study at the school, otherwise, the dropout is executed.

Taking Northwest A&F University as an example, students who have dropped out of school for academic reasons can apply for probation. Students can only try it once during their studies, and the probation period is one year. During the probation period, all those who have passed the retake course will be converted to formal students; if fail one or more retake courses, it will be considered as unqualified. Students who fail to pass the probation will be dropped out.

Warning probation means that after the student reaches certain academic early warning conditions, the school gives the student warning, when the student fails to meet the conditions stipulated by the school, the students is classified into the probation state, If the students meet the requirements of the school, they will become normal students, otherwise drop out. For example, Fudan University stipulates that students who have failed more than 10 credits in one semester before the graduation year and cumulative grade point average is less than 2.0 (60-70 points in hundred-mark system), school will give academic warning; if the above situations do not occur again in the academic warning semester, the students will be released from the academic warning, otherwise they will be transferred to probation; if the above situations do not occur again in the probation semester, the students will be released from the academic probation, otherwise they will be dropped out of school; the academic warning and the probation are one semester, respectively.

2.3. Repetition and Dropout Warning System

Although higher education in China tends to develop the complete credit system year by year at present, the academic year system is still an existing system under the current national education system, according to the current situation, some colleges and universities have established their own academic repetition system. For example, the China Agricultural University stipulates: students who have completed the courses prescribed in training plan of school year, after pass the examination and get the credits; students can study in senior grade in the fall semester. Students who fail the required courses 25 credits (except make-up examination is qualifying) must not be enrolled in senior grade (The total credits of four years undergraduate are about 160). Students apply in person, or those who have obtained less than 12 credits twice in the spring and autumn semester, should be enrolled in the lower grade. Southeast University's student status management method stipulates that: Students who have obtained less than 30 credits in one academic year well be sent to a lower grade, Students who obtain less than 20 credits in the academic year will be dropped out [7].

In 2017, the Ministry of education began to implement ''Management Regulations Of General College Students'' (order 41), it clearly stipulates: "if the academic performance fails to meet the requirements of the school or fails to complete the study within the school's prescribed study period, the school can make the students quit school". All colleges and universities have made corresponding warning rules for dropping out. For example, Jilin University stipulates that students have one dropout warning when their credits are less than 15 credits in a long term, and two dropout warnings will be quit; Shanghai Jiaotong University stipulates that the school will give a dropout warning to students whose grade point average is less than or equal to 1.7 (62-65 points in hundred-mark system), and students reach the dropout warning standard second time, they should dropout rapidly; Zhejiang University stipulates that students who have obtained less than 12 credits in required course during a long semester((autumn and winter or spring and summer), give dropout warning, unless the accumulated credits reach the average 20 credits in a long term. During the probation period, students who have second dropout warning will be given the treatment of dropping out.

3. Significance of the University Academic Early Warning System

The connotation of academic warning system is based on effective cooperation among schools, parents, students and society. It is a teaching operation system which previously informs students' major problems and difficulties that will occur in their studies. It can warn them of their learning status, and urge and help students to strengthen learning ability, and complete their school study successfully in the end [8].

3.1. Academic Warning System Is A Powerful Assistant of College Teaching Management

With the deepening of the credit system reform, free course selection, personalized training, and customized training have gradually entered into the vision of students; higher education is no longer a single mode when schools arrange courses and students attend classes, but goes to teachers and students' double-selection, namely the teacher provides various courses they're good at, students select their favorite teachers or courses according to their own training plans, and arrange their own courses according to their time, interests and hobbies. This is a major advancement in teaching reform, however, since some students entered the university, their thoughts have become slack, their learning autonomy decreased, and academic difficulties gradually emerge. The teaching management of higher education is different from ordinary middle school teaching, university teaching management personnel often face hundreds, thousands or even tens of thousands of college students; it is impossible to understand each

student's studies in real time and help them effectively and avoid students lag behind. The emergence of academic warning mechanism can effectively monitor the various problems encountered by students in the self-study process, through the quantitative indicators such as credits, average grades point (GPA), it intuitively reflects the problems students encounter during the learning process, provides corresponding assistance to students who are lagging behind in study, and avoid them from dropping out of school before understanding that their study has lagged behind. Therefore, the teaching management of "problem students" is changed from the traditional "treatment afterward" to " reminder beforehand", which effectively helps students adjust their learning status and correct their learning direction in time, thus ensuring students complete their studies smoothly [9].

3.2. Academic Warning System Is An Effective Supervision of College Students' Self-Management

The study of middle school has the teacher's supervision at all times, parents' repeated advice. If students don't want to learn, they will automatically move forward under the impetus of external forces. However, after entering the university, the learning freedom degree increases, the independence of the economy and time makes it easy for students to gradually lose themselves under the temptation of the outside world, thus neglecting the study and making them walk toward the edge of dropping out of school step by step. The academic warning system provides students with a dynamic warning supervision, for some students with academic difficulties, it will reflect their academic problems in the first time, and then the teaching management will carry out relevant academic counseling, make students with academic problems return from the wrong path, and modify their learning plans in time to avoid the tragedy of dropping out of school.

3.3. Academic Warning System Is A Convenient Bridge for Parents to Understand Students' Studies

The participation of parents is reduced for university education, and some students do not tell their own learning condition to parents, which make some parents completely unaware of the students' school situation. Some parents may contact with counselors or teaching management teachers, but because of the large number of students, teachers cannot fully grasp the situation of students. The academic warning system will promptly report the results to each relative parents, so that parents can have a certain understanding of their children's learning, which leads a good communication between school and parents.

3.4. Academic Warning System Is A Solid Guarantee for Providing High-Level Talents to the Society

The pace of today's society is accelerating, the demand for high-quality, high-level talents is increasing, and the requirements are getting higher and higher. For family and individual students, the university is still a good place for their self-growth and self-improvement. Students who drop out of school due to not reach academic requirements are a pity for the society, the students themselves, and their families. The academic warning system can remind students to correct their own learning situation in time, improve their academic level, achieve their goal of successful graduation, and provide high-level talents for the society.

4. Exploration and Practice of Academic Warning

On the basis of the credit system, Southwest Petroleum University also carried out the corresponding practice of academic warning system. The university shall conduct warning, demotion and quitting treatment for students who fail to meet the minimum credit requirements every academic year (two semesters of schooling are considered as one academic

year) based on the actual effective credits obtained by them (by contrasting to the table below) depending on the circumstances and inform them in writing (for underage students, a copy of the notice will be sent to their guardian).

Table 1. Credit standard of academic warning

Period of Schooling (two semesters are considered as one academic year)	Accumulated effective credits		
	Warning	Demotion (downgrade)	Drop out
The first academic year	below 30	below 25	below 15
The second academic year	below 70	below 55	below 45
The third academic year	below 110	below 85	below 75
The fourth academic year	fail to meet graduation requirements	below 115	below 105
The fifth academic year	fail to meet graduation requirements	/	below 135

For students who reach the criteria for dropping out for the first time, the university may give one demotion and academic probation opportunity in line with the principle of "student-oriented education" on the premise of not exceeding the maximum accumulated period of schooling stipulated by the university. Any student who meets the criteria for dropping out for the first time may apply for demotion and academic probation voluntarily, and go through the academic probation procedures with the approval of his/her college and the examination and approval of the Office of Academic Affairs. The probation period shall be one year. The probation period for students who stay for demotion and academic probation shall not be included in the period of schooling for the liquidation of their studies in the future, but shall be included in the accumulated period of schooling; in case of any violation of discipline or cheating behavior during the probation period, they shall drop out. For students who are academically outstanding and apply for grade skipping, the accumulated valid credits obtained shall not be lower than the credit standard for warning for the grade they apply for skipping to in the normal period of schooling.

Moreover, according to the graduation requirements, the school also puts forward the procedures for entering the graduation grade, and formulates the corresponding requirements for entering graduation grade; which can ensure the seniors graduate smoothly.

The students as follows can not enter graduation grade:

(1) The effective total credits obtained are less than 115;

(2) There are 2 or more professional core courses that have been studied without obtaining credits;

(3) There are 10 or more compulsory and restricted courses (including professional core courses) that have been studied without obtaining credits.

The practice of academic warning has generally received good results in Southwest Petroleum University, effectively helping some students with academic difficulties, making them to adjust their learning arrangements in time, and successfully escape from academic difficulties and graduate through school. Some students after being warned, they recall the past with pangs in the heart, studied hard and successfully achieved the goal of grade skipping.

5. Thinking and Perfection of Academic Warning System

Since the implementation of the academic warning system, it has received significant results, but it also reflects some problems, mainly reflected in: (1) some students do not understand the purpose of academic warning, and believe that academic warning is school punishment to

them, so they resist it ideologically. (2) The academic warning work is still at the stage of artificial early warning, all warning data cannot achieve dynamic warning at all times, and the lack of technology and information has added a lot of work to the teaching management. (3) The academic warning of different subjects and grades is basically based on a set of evaluation criteria, and there are uneven difficulty problems, there are some resistances in the implementation process. (4) Some students with academic difficulties, after receiving the academic warning, do not take the initiative to adjust their own learning status, and refuse to accept the tutor's academic assistance. As a result, their learning is more and more backward, and eventually they drop out of school.

According to the practice and development of academic warning at present, the academic early warning system should also have corresponding development and improvement. Some problems encountered by Southwest Petroleum University in the practice of warning are integrated, and the author believes that the academic warning system should focus on improving the following aspects:

(1) Do a good job in the propaganda and guidance of academic warning, so that students can understand the purpose of academic warning. Academic warning is to help them with a better understanding of their learning status, rather than punishment for individual students. After receiving academic early warning, the students should work hard to improve their academic status and achieve a smooth graduation goal, instead of blaming themselves. Some students lose the learning motivation, even smash a pot to pieces just because it's cracked, which is contrary to the original intention of the academic warning system.

(2) In order to reduce the workload of teaching management, we should accelerate the modernization and information of academic warning means, invest more software and hardware resources, and realize the intelligence of academic early warning.

(3) Divide the academic warning standards for different subjects and grades, so that the major categories have the same academic warning, and the small categories have different targeted academic warning.

(4) To achieve efficient academic guidance, the dean's office should get closer to students' study and life, and realize the integration of academic support with relevant departments including student affairs office, teaching office, teaching and auxiliary department.

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