

Research on Academic Early Warning and Support Mechanisms in Higher Education Institutions under the Framework of "Three-Dimensional Holistic Education" Research on Existing Issues and Countermeasures

Jiang Pengxin¹, Meng Lan^{2,*}

¹School of Computer Science and Technology, Anhui University, Hefei, 230031, China

²Anhui University Internet College, Hefei, 230031, China

*Corresponding author: 19205@ahu.edu.cn

Abstract: Within the framework of "Three-Dimensional Holistic Education," academic early warning systems in higher education institutions play a crucial role in supporting student academic development and enhancing talent cultivation quality. Addressing current challenges in academic early warning support, this paper identifies student difficulties such as weak adaptability, insufficient subject interest, and inadequate learning methods. It proposes countermeasures under the "Three-Pronged Holistic Education" framework, primarily: establishing holistic education to realise multidimensional academic support throughout the entire process; and implementing sustained education to achieve coordinated academic support across all dimensions.

Keywords: holistic education; academic early warning; support initiatives; countermeasure research

Introduction

The Opinions on Strengthening and Improving Ideological and Political Work in Higher Education Institutions under New Circumstances, issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council, explicitly states: "Adhere to the principle of educating students through all members, throughout the entire process, and across all dimensions"^[1]. Exploring the challenges and enhancement strategies for academic early warning support within the framework of "all-round education" in higher education institutions, in conjunction with their talent cultivation models, holds significant guiding importance for the quality of talent development and the advancement of higher education. Academic early warning mechanisms have become the primary approach for monitoring and managing academic performance in higher education institutions. How to enhance the educational effectiveness of academic early warning support work from the perspective of "all-staff, all-process, all-aspects education" is a pressing practical issue requiring resolution.

1. Current Status and Challenges of Academic Early Warning Support in Higher Education

To enhance academic management standards and strengthen students' self-management awareness, universities have adopted academic warning management mechanisms. Taking a "Double First-Class" institution in Anhui Province as an example, its academic warning support mechanism alerts and assists students facing academic difficulties. However, practical challenges persist in its implementation.

1.1 Examination-Centred Approach with Insufficient Process-Oriented Focus

Reviewing relevant literature reveals that "approximately 37 universities employ academic warning indicators oriented towards examination results"^[2]. Taking a Double First-Class university in Anhui Province as an example, according to undergraduate academic regulations, students accumulating 10 or more credits in failed courses per semester receive a "yellow card academic warning," while those exceeding 20 credits per semester face a "red card expulsion warning." This demonstrates that current academic warning indicators primarily rely on the total number of failed credits. However, examination

results merely represent summative assessments of a specific learning phase, influenced by numerous factors. Universities must therefore conduct formative evaluations considering students' family circumstances, physical and mental health, subject interests, and other relevant aspects. An exclusive reliance on examination outcomes as the sole criterion fails to achieve the fundamental goal of reducing academic warning incidents at their source.

1.2 Rigid reliance on warning interviews

Current academic warning procedures primarily involve the Academic Affairs Office reviewing students' failing grades through the academic management system each semester. Students are categorised based on the total credits of failed courses into either a "yellow card academic warning" or a "red card expulsion warning". From the student's perspective, a "yellow card academic warning" advises them to reflect on lessons learned, proactively identify causes, promptly make up the required course credits, and successfully complete their studies. For those receiving a "red card expulsion warning," students are advised to master effective study methods, rationally plan their academic schedule and time allocation, promptly make up for the credits in the failed courses, and successfully complete their studies. From the counsellor's perspective, the primary method for handling academic warnings is through formal discussions. Students are guided to complete a discussion record form, and both the student and their parents are required to sign the academic warning notice. This facilitates communication between home and school, enhancing parental awareness of the student's academic progress. For students repeatedly subject to academic warnings, facing the same counsellor each semester may foster fatigue or even resistance, indicating a lack of flexibility in the warning discussions.

1.3 Relying Primarily on Tutors, Lacking Systemic Approach

Currently, "counsellors are central to implementing the academic warning mechanism"^[3]. Academic warning notices issued by the Academic Affairs Office each semester are collected by counsellors, who then conduct warning discussions with academically struggling students, supported by academic class tutors. In practice, counsellors remain the primary agents for student warnings. However, their varying professional backgrounds mean they are often unfamiliar with students' specific degree programmes. This is particularly pronounced under broad-based admissions, where each counsellor oversees students from different disciplines. This necessitates counsellors mastering all degree programmes within their faculty, significantly increasing their guidance workload. The Faculty Academic Office treats academic warning procedures as a task to be completed, merely informing counsellors and submitting relevant documentation. Parents are required to sign the academic warning notification. However, some parents possess limited educational attainment and lack understanding of their child's specialised knowledge or graduation requirements. Consequently, they may harbour excessive confidence in their child's abilities, assuming "my child is exceptional; if they gained entry, they will graduate." These factors collectively heighten the complexity of academic support initiatives. Such assistance is not solely the responsibility of counsellors but necessitates systematic coordination among academic tutors, the Academic Affairs Office, and parents.

2. Analysis of Causes for Academic Difficulties Among University Students

Analysing the process-based evaluation of academic early warning systems reveals that such alerts reflect underlying academic difficulties. It is essential to "diagnose students experiencing academic challenges and identify the root causes"^[4], thereby implementing targeted support mechanisms. Multiple factors contribute to these difficulties, primarily including poor adaptability, insufficient interest in one's field of study, and inadequate learning methodologies.

2.1 Weak Adaptability

Through one-to-one interviews with academically struggling students, the primary cause of their failing grades was identified as fundamentally weak university adaptation skills. The current university cohort is predominantly comprised of post-2000s students. Having grown up in an era of relative material affluence, they have experienced strong parental care and affection. Many had never lived in halls of residence before entering university, lacking adaptability to campus life. Indeed, on the very day of enrolment, some students, upon seeing the dormitory environment, demanded their parents

"withdraw them from university and allow them to retake their entrance exams"-a scenario witnessed firsthand by the author in their capacity as a counsellor. Many students struggle to integrate into shared accommodation, find it difficult to communicate with roommates, and possess poor self-regulation skills. Some even exhibit behaviours that baffle their peers. These factors subtly undermine dormitory harmony and class cohesion. Such students expend considerable energy merely adapting to university life, leaving scant time for focused study, which inevitably affects their academic performance.

2.2 Insufficient Interest in Academic Disciplines

Prior to university admission, students' closest encounter with their chosen discipline was during university application selection. However, due to limited personal understanding of academic fields, coupled with parental fixation on so-called "popular majors" and compliance with counselling agencies' recommendations, students are often compelled to select certain disciplines. This process frequently disregards their genuine passion for preferred subjects. Although universities typically offer university-wide subject transfer examinations during the first semester of the second year, applicants must pass corresponding assessments. If a student's foundational knowledge in their original subject is weak, the chances of successfully transferring are slim. This often dampens their enthusiasm for their chosen field of study. As the saying goes: interest is the best teacher. Without genuine enthusiasm for their university major, students naturally lack initiative in their studies, approaching learning merely as a task assigned by their parents. Without establishing a proper learning mindset, they harbour a gambler's mentality towards mid-term and final examinations, attempting to secure results through last-minute cramming. The outcome is often disappointing.

2.3 Inappropriate Study Methods

"Educational guidance and support for academically struggling students must not only address root causes and identify effective intervention points"^[5], but also focus on mastering learning techniques, as the ultimate goal is to teach students how to learn. Given students' diverse regional backgrounds and family influences, individual differences exist, leading to variations in learning strategies and planning. Upon entering university, parents often remain fixated on their child's outstanding Gaokao results, mistakenly assuming that high school and university learning approaches are identical. When a student fails a course, the initial reaction is frequently that the student has not studied diligently enough. This is not the case. The university learning model itself differs fundamentally from that of secondary education. It employs a credit system, emphasising students' self-directed initiative and focusing on developing their capacity for independent learning. Students who persist with rote memorisation methods will not only struggle during the learning process but also achieve poor results. Therefore, failure to adjust learning methods in a timely manner will inevitably impact academic performance.

3. Strategic Research on Academic Early Warning Support in Higher Education Institutions under the Framework of "Three-Dimensional Education"

"Higher education institutions represent a critical period during which students' learning abilities gradually form and undergo substantial development"^[6]. Grounded in the existing challenges within universities' academic warning and support systems, and integrating the "Three-Dimensional Education" framework's mechanisms for holistic, continuous, and comprehensive nurturing, actively exploring countermeasures for academic warning and support within this educational paradigm holds significant value for enhancing the quality of talent cultivation in higher education.

3.1 Establishing Holistic Education: Leveraging Collaborative Academic Early Warning Support

The student academic early warning mechanism cannot rely solely on the efforts of counsellors. Instead, it requires the full collaboration of all stakeholders, including subject tutors, faculty teaching offices, and parents, to continuously build a holistic educational approach. Firstly, the coordinating role of counsellors must be leveraged. As the primary educators responsible for students' moral development during their university years, counsellors possess insights into students' family circumstances, academic performance, and daily conduct. They should proactively undertake academic support duties, initiating one-to-one discussions with underperforming students immediately upon the release of examination results. This enables timely identification of the causes of academic difficulties and the provision of

necessary support and guidance. Secondly, the academic guidance role of the faculty teaching office must be leveraged. The Academic Affairs Office holds the essential responsibility of interpreting the talent development programme. Prior to the enrolment of freshmen, it should conduct orientation sessions explaining the programme requirements, clearly outlining the modules students must complete. Guidance should be provided to ensure students select courses systematically and accurately according to the programme, enabling them to understand their compulsory and elective course requirements during university and to earn the corresponding credits for quality education. Finally, the educational guidance role of parents must be leveraged. Parents should actively engage with the faculty's educational activities, proactively familiarise themselves with the curriculum framework, strengthen academic communication with their children, and utilise holiday periods to provide timely guidance and support. Particular attention should be paid to students experiencing academic difficulties, rather than delegating educational responsibility solely to teaching staff. This approach fosters genuine collaborative education involving all stakeholders.

3.2 Establishing Holistic Education and Implementing Multi-dimensional Academic Early Warning Support

The four years of university constitute a pivotal period for students to form sound worldviews, outlooks on life, and values. From matriculation to graduation, each stage demands attention to educational methodologies, leveraging a multi-dimensional approach to academic early warning and support throughout the entire process. Upon student enrolment, counsellors should collect basic information through appropriate channels. By reviewing students' university entrance examination results, family circumstances, and place of origin, they can promptly ascertain their initial academic standing and provide appropriate attention during routine educational management. During regular studies, proactive liaison with subject tutors is essential. Prohibit proxy attendance practices to enhance class attendance rates, ensuring even students seated at the rear receive timely attention. Monitor performance through classroom assignments and extracurricular activities, initiating early intervention discussions with those requiring support. Prior to mid-term and final examinations, convene themed class meetings with academic form tutors to emphasise examination ethics and procedures. Simultaneously, urge students to prepare thoroughly for assessments to demonstrate their true capabilities. Remind underperforming students to attend examinations punctually, clarifying that absenteeism or cheating will result in forfeiture of resit eligibility, necessitating course re-enrolment. This serves as a preventive measure. In the year preceding graduation, the Faculty Academic Office shall extract student academic records and meticulously verify them against the curriculum framework. Should any student fall short of the required credits for graduation, this information shall be promptly relayed to the counsellor and form tutor. The counsellor shall undertake educational guidance and supervision, while the form tutor shall provide specialised academic direction.

3.3 Establishing Long-Term Educational Support: Leveraging Holistic Academic Early Warning and Assistance Mechanisms

Leverage the "Ten Major" educational framework to comprehensively implement academic early warning and support, establishing a proactive, long-term collaborative nurturing mechanism. Enhance the educational impact of courses by identifying ideological and political elements within specialised curricula, fostering students' learning interest and motivation. Strengthen research-based education by inviting students to join academic research teams, cultivating their spirit of scholarly inquiry and enhancing their capacity for independent problem-solving. Strengthen practice-based education by organising summer social practice and labour education programmes, encouraging students to integrate professional knowledge with practical experience, tempering themselves through hands-on engagement and cultivating a spirit of perseverance. Enhance cultural education by organising study groups within classes and holding regular learning salons, establishing a brand of excellent academic culture within the class and fostering a conducive learning atmosphere. Strengthen online education by fully utilising new media platforms (WeChat, Weibo, WeChat Moments, and mobile apps) to regularly publish and share learning insights. Promote the achievements of outstanding students to generate positive peer influence. Strengthen psychological education by promptly monitoring the psychological changes of students facing academic difficulties, preventing them from developing feelings of inferiority due to poor grades that could trigger psychological crises. Strengthen management-based education by establishing academic support mechanisms for students under academic warning. Advocate combining formative and summative assessments, ensuring flexibility and systematic implementation. Enhance service-based education by establishing a "one-stop" student community featuring study rooms and

reading corners, alongside integrated learning support management. Strengthen financial aid education by effectively supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds, integrating financial assistance with educational development. Utilise work-study programmes, voluntary service, and student loans as vehicles to cultivate their virtues of diligence, perseverance, and integrity. Strengthen organisational education by fully leveraging the pivotal role of Party and Youth League organisations in fostering academic culture, creating positive and effective incentives to ensure knowledge is truly applied.

4. Conclusion

In summary, academic early warning and support initiatives within the "Three-Dimensional Education" framework hold significant theoretical and practical value for enhancing talent cultivation quality in higher education institutions. Higher education institutions should be guided by both formative and summative assessments, actively expanding the development of educational platforms to establish holistic, comprehensive, and effective educational outcomes. They must fully leverage the collaborative, multidimensional, and interconnected nature of academic early warning and support systems, striving to cultivate a first-rate academic ethos aligned with the institution's talent development model. This will continuously enhance the inclusiveness, comprehensiveness, and sustainability of student academic support within the "Three-All Education" framework.

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