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Presented are the summary, conclusions, and recommendations after two years of the Experimental Freshman Year Program for underachieving high school graduates at Southern Illinois University. Findings are presented under four headings--(1) subjects' occupation or whereabouts in the year following their participation in the program, (2) retention of subjects during the freshman year and during their sophomore year when they were enrolled in the regular university curriculum, (3) quality of subjects' academic performance, and (4) prediction of subjects' academic performance. Recommendations include suggestions for additional research, curriculum changes, and admission and dismissal criteria. Appended is a special report which was prepared by a committee of Southern Illinois University personnel and which contains recommendations on the "re-direction of academically unsuccessful students". (For other chapters of this report, see UD 005309, UD 006858, UD 006859, UD 006860, and UD 006861.) (LB)

Southern Illinois University

A TWO-YEAR REPORT ON THE EXPERIMENTAL FRESHMAN YEAR PROGRAM

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONTENTS

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Experimental Freshman Year Program

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter includes a summary of the problem, procedures, and two-year results of the Experimental Freshman Year Program, a statement of the conclusions based on the study, and some recommendations for additional research, curriculum changes, and admission and dismissal criteria.

Summary

Problem

The Experimental Freshman Year Program was initiated in 1962 to explore methods for identifying high school students who have low grades but who can succeed in college and to determine whether high school low achievers would benefit from a special curriculum, or a remedial studies and counseling program in their freshman year.

Procedure

1. The subjects for the study were 475 freshmen who entered Southern Illinois University in 1962-63. Half of the sample had ACT composite scores of 20 or above, and the other half, 19 or below. Subjects from each of the two ACT categories were randomly assigned to six groups; two experimental, two control, and two norm. The 275 subjects in the two experimental and two control groups were

from the lowest one-third of their high school graduating classes. The 200 subjects in the two norm groups were from the higher two-thirds of their graduating classes.

2. Selection procedures were as follows: (a) subjects were recommended by high school counselors and selected through personal interviews, (b) subjects were notified by the Admissions Office, and (c) subjects who were to experience no experimental treatment were selected from registration lists.

3. Three control variables were examined to determine whether the six groups were equally matched at the beginning of the program.

First, an analysis of the subjects' ACT composite scores showed that (a) Group IV was significantly lower than Groups II, III, V and VI, (b) Group V was significantly higher than Group I, (c) there were no significant differences among the ACT High subgroups, (d) Group IV Low's were significantly lower than the other five Low subgroups, (e) within each of the six groups the High's were significantly higher than the Low's, and (f) the mean ACT score for all High's was significantly higher than the mean for all Low's.

Second, an analysis of the distribution of males and females among groups indicated that the number of females in Group V and in Group VI was significantly greater than the number of females in each of the other four groups. Correspondingly, the number of males in Groups I, II, III, and IV was, in general, significantly greater than the number of males in Groups V and VI. This difference was expected.

Third, an analysis of questionnaire data for Groups I, II, and III indicated the groups and subgroups were acceptably matched in regard to biographical, school-related, parent-related, and self-evaluation variables at the start of the program.

4. The treatments prescribed were: (a) Subjects in Group I experienced a specially designed core curricula program employing a variety of instructional procedures in which the total group was taught by laboratory, lecture, and discussion; (b) Subjects in Group II were restricted in the number of credit hours of regular general education courses they could carry each quarter, had a counseling program, and had special remedial instruction courses; (c) Subjects in Group III had only administrative contact with the EFY Program, received no special educational treatment, and were enrolled in regular general education courses; (d) Subjects in Groups IV, V, and VI received no treatment and had no contact with the EFY staff or program.

Results

Results from the Experimental Freshman Year Program at the end of two years are reported under the following five categories: (1) Second-Year Occupations, (2) Retention, (3) Quality of Academic Performance, (4) Prediction of Academic Performance, and (5) Student Attitudes.

1. Second-Year Occupations. Questionnaire returns from subjects in Groups I, II, III, and IV, two years after the EFY Program started, provided information about the subjects' occupations during the year following the treatment year. The responses indicated that

132 subjects attended Southern Illinois University, 14 subjects attended other schools, 34 were working full time, 7 subjects were in the military service, 4 subjects reported no major occupation, and 9 subjects did not return questionnaires. The subjects' responses, classified by EFY groups and subgroups, showed little difference in the distributions among groups.

2. Retention. The EFY groups and subgroups were compared to determine whether the number of subjects remaining in school during and after the treatment year was significantly different among groups. Retention data were statistically analyzed three ways; (a) on a quarter-by-quarter basis, (b) for the whole two-year period, and (c) for the second year, independent of the first year. Two separate analyses were made for each of the three above divisions; one analysis included only those subjects attending Southern Illinois University in the second year, the other included both the subjects at Southern Illinois University and those at other schools combined (all schools). The findings from the retention data analysis follow.

   a. In the quarter-by-quarter analysis the number of subjects enrolled in a given quarter was compared with the number completing the previous quarter. The only significant finding was that Group IV retained fewer subjects third quarter than did Groups V and VI. This finding was for subjects at Southern Illinois University only. There were no significant differences among groups for the subjects attending all schools.

   b. In the two-year analysis the number of subjects retained each quarter was compared with the number of subjects who started

the program. It was determined that Group IV retained fewer subjects than did the other five groups for the third quarter. For the fourth and fifth quarters, Group IV retained significantly fewer subjects than did Groups I, II, and VI. For the fifth and sixth quarters, Group VI retained significantly more subjects than did Group III.

During the fourth and fifth quarters the ACT High subgroups of both norm groups, Groups V and VI combined, retained significantly more subjects than the combined ACT Low subgroups in the norm groups.

The findings for subjects attending all schools were similar to those reported for subjects attending only Southern Illinois University.

c. For the second-year analysis the number of subjects completing fourth, fifth and sixth quarters was compared with the number of subjects who completed the first year. There were no significant differences among groups, subgroups or ACT High/Low comparisons. Neither were there any significant differences in comparisons of subjects at Southern Illinois University only and subjects at all schools.

3. Quality of Academic Performance. The EFY groups and subgroups were compared on the basis of subjects' cumulative grade point averages (GPA's), and scores on the General Culture Test (GCT). The findings from the statistical analysis of these data follow.

   a. At the end of the first year Groups I, V, and VI had significantly higher GPA's than did Groups II and III; the mean GPA

for all High's was significantly higher than that for all Low's; within Groups III, V, and VI, the High subgroups had significantly higher GPA's than did the Low subgroups.

b. At the end of the fourth quarter there were no significant differences on GPA among Groups I, II, III, and IV; Groups V and VI, the norm groups, had significantly higher GPA's than did Groups I, II, III, and IV.

c. At the end of the fifth quarter there were no significant differences on GPA among Groups I, II, III, and IV; Groups V and VI had significantly higher GPA's than Groups I, II, III, and IV; all High's combined were significantly higher on GPA than all Low's; within Groups V and VI, the High subgroups were significantly higher on GPA than the Low subgroups: within Groups I, II, III, and IV there were no significant differences between the High and Low subgroups.

d. At the end of the sixth quarter there were no significant differences on GPA among Groups I, II, and III; (Group IV was not considered;) Groups V and VI had significantly higher GPA's than did Groups I, II, and III; the High subgroups in Groups V and VI were significantly higher on GPA than the High subgroups in Groups I, II, and III but there were no significant differences among the Low subgroups for all five subgroups; all High's combined were significantly higher on GPA than all Low's; within Groups V and VI the High subgroups were significantly higher on GPA than the Low subgroups; within Groups I, II, and III there were no significant differences between the High and Low subgroups.

e. An analysis of the sixth quarter cumulative GPA data for subjects in Groups I, II, and III attending Southern Illinois University and for those attending other schools revealed no significant differences among groups or ACT subgroups.

f. A detailed analysis of GPA data classified by course area (science, social studies, humanities, communication) was conducted; it was not possible to report with confidence the findings on these data at the end of a two-year period.

g. An analysis of GPA data for work done only during the second year, by subjects at Southern Illinois University and by subjects at other schools, was conducted; there were no significant differences among Groups I, II, III, and IV, the only groups included in the analysis.

h. Significant findings from an analysis of GPA changes occurring between the end of the first year and the end of the second year revealed that Group I Low had a significantly lower GPA at the end of two years than at the end of the first year; the correlation for Group I Low between the end of the first year GPA and the end of the second year GPA was .94.

i. A representative sample of EFY subjects in Groups I, II, III, IV, V, and VI took the General Culture Test during their second year at Southern Illinois University; there were no significant differences among groups or ACT subgroups on any of the five area test scores (mathematics, fine arts, literature, science, and social studies) or on the composite test score. Within-group comparisons showed ACT High's scoring higher on GCT than ACT Low's in all groups.

4. Prediction of Academic Performance. Three potential predictors of GPA were investigated, first quarter GPA, an Interviewer's Rating, and ACT scores.

   a. First quarter GPA was found to be a highly accurate predictor of cumulative sixth quarter GPA for norm groups, Groups V and VI; a reasonably good predictor for the control groups, Groups III and IV; and an ineffective predictor for Group II, one of the experimental groups. Group I, the other experimental group, was not included in this analysis.

   b. An interviewer's predictions regarding the academic performance of students was not successful either in discriminating between subjects who remained in school for two years and those who dropped out or in discriminating between subjects who had high GPA's at the end of the second year and subjects who had lower GPA's.

   c. The ACT composite score was found to be a reasonably accurate predictor of second year GPA for students who graduated in the highest two-thirds of their high school graduating class, but ACT was not an accurate predictor of second year GPA for students who graduated in the lowest one-third of their high school graduating class, the latter finding being particularly evident for students who scored below the ACT mean score.

5. Student Attitudes. Data from two attitude questionnaires, one administered at the beginning of the treatment year and one at the end of the treatment year, were analyzed and reported in Chapter V of this report. Two important findings from the attitude questionnaire data analysis follow.

a. Group III, a control group which had some administrative attention, expressed attitudes indicating they felt less a part of the EFY Program during the first (treatment) year than did Groups I and II. It was hoped that the Group III subjects would readily identify themselves as a part of the EFY Program, so that any differences between them and Groups I and II, on the criterion measures, might be attributed to the effects of the treatments and not to the effects of feeling special. However, since Group III indicated they did not feel a part of the EFY Program, any criterion differences occurring between Group III and/or Groups I and II, might be attributed to the Group I and II subjects performing at a different level as a result of feeling special and not as a result of experiencing special treatment.

b. Group I expressed attitudes indicating both that they enjoyed their educational program and that they felt more academically improved by it than did Groups II and III.

Conclusions

The conclusions reported here are based on findings at the end of the second year of the EFY Program. The reader should remember that the conclusions are not based on the final results of the study but are based solely on two-year interim results. It is feasible that findings two or three years from the time this two-year report was completed may be entirely different from the findings reported here. It is also feasible that later findings may be quite similar to the two-year findings. It is this latter possibility that has prompted this detailed two-year data analysis and report.

Retention

1. About the same proportion of students from the lowest one-third of their high school graduating classes can be expected to remain in school for two years regardless of their ACT scores or of special educational treatments during their freshman year.
2. A higher proportion of students graduating in the highest two-thirds of their high school classes can be expected to remain in school for two years than the proportion of students graduating in the lowest one-third of their high school classes and experiencing no special educational treatment during their freshman year.
3. More students graduating in the highest two-thirds of their high school classes and making ACT scores above the mean can be expected to remain in school for two years than students graduating in similar class rank categories but having ACT scores below the mean; but for students graduating in the lowest one-third of their high school classes, the proportion remaining in school for two years can be expected to be about the same both for students scoring above the ACT mean and for those scoring below the ACT mean.
4. Students graduating in the lowest one-third of their high school classes, having ACT scores below the mean, entering during Winter Quarter, and experiencing no special treatment during their freshman year, can be expected to drop out of school more frequently than other students who enter during Fall Quarter, regardless of the other students' class ranks, ACT scores, or treatments during their freshman year.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

5. Students from the lowest one-third of their high school graduating classes can be expected to have about the same GPA's at the end of two years regardless of their ACT scores and regardless of whether or not they had special treatments during their freshman year.
6. Among students graduating in the upper two-thirds of their high school classes, those with ACT scores above the mean can be expected to have higher GPA's after two years than those with ACT scores below the mean; students from the lowest one-third of their high school class do not show this difference.
7. Students with ACT scores below the mean can be expected to have similar GPA's after two years regardless of whether they are from the highest two-thirds or the lowest one-third of their high school graduating classes.
8. Students with ACT scores above the mean can be expected to have higher GPA's at the end of two years than students with ACT scores below the mean, regardless of the high school rank in class of either group.

General Culture Test

9. Sophomores with ACT scores above the mean can be expected to score significantly higher on the General Culture Test than sophomores with ACT scores below the mean.
10. Sophomores can be expected to score about the same on the General Culture Test regardless of their rank in class or freshman treatment.

Prediction

11. First quarter GPA can be expected to be a highly accurate predictor of cumulative GPA at the end of two years for students graduating in the upper two-thirds of their high school classes, a reasonably good predictor for lowest third students experiencing no treatment, and an ineffective predictor for lowest third students experiencing a counseling and remedial instruction treatment.
12. The interviewer's system used in the EFY Program for predicting the academic performance of students cannot be expected to discriminate successfully between students who will remain in school for two years and those who will drop out, or to discriminate successfully between students who will attain high GPA's at the end of the second year and those who will attain lower GPA's.
13. The ACT composite score is a reasonably accurate predictor of second year GPA for students who graduate in the higher two-thirds of their high school graduating class; but ACT is not an accurate predictor of second year GPA for students who graduate in the lowest one-third of their high school graduating class.

Recommendations

Because only interim conclusions based on two-year findings are available, final recommendations specific to the EFY Program are not given at this time. It is essential that final conclusions from the EFY Program be delayed for at least another two years until the final data from the study are analyzed.

Some recommendations are offered here, however, because the experience of conducting and evaluating the program has provided a number of insights relative to the general nature of educating low achievers, insights independent of the empiric results of the study. The recommendations which follow are opinions of the researchers who have been closely involved for the past two years with problems of the higher education of low achievers. It should be clear that the recommendations are based on two years of study and experience, not based upon empiric two-year findings from the study.

It is important that the reader note that the following recommendations are based on the assumptions that the University will have space and faculty available for all students who wish to enter and that encouraging all students to enter the University will be consistent with the philosophy of the University, a philosophy which states that Southern Illinois University exists to serve the people of the state of Illinois.

Recommendations for Future Research on the EFY Data

1. Sufficient staff, including a coordinator, research assistant, and programmer, should be assigned to the project to ensure the ongoing collection of data necessary for any future analysis.
2. The unanalyzed 17 hour battery of tests, administered before and after the treatment year, should be examined to determine (a) whether or not significant changes occurred in the variables measured by the tests and (b) whether or not a reliable battery of tests can be developed to predict academic performance of students graduating in the lowest one-third of their high school graduating classes.

3. Students who completed the first year, the instructional phase of the project, should be contacted once each year to determine their occupational and/or educational status.
4. The EFY data should be analyzed again at the end of the 1965-66 school year and at the end of the 1967-68 school year.

Recommendations for Future Research Similar to EFY

5. Future experimental projects involving a variety of services and academic units on the campus should be planned well in advance, and relationships should be coordinated before the projects are started.
6. Future projects of the nature of the EFY Program should be conducted as demonstration projects, and experimental studies should be conducted under more controlled conditions in which the effects of a limited number of specific variables can be assessed independently.
7. Research should be initiated to determine whether on-campus or off-campus living affects the academic performance of low achievers.
8. A special research project should be developed to learn more about the occupations selected by students who do not attend college or who drop out of college.

Recommendations for Procedures to Assist Probationary Students

9. For probationary students, there should be established a special advisement center which would provide services in academic and vocational counseling.
10. Specially selected academic advisers should be assigned to students on probation in order to assist these students in adjusting to

academic life in the University; these selected advisers should be given sufficient time to work with the probation students on their academic problems.

11. Scholastic probation restrictions should not be placed on students who have low entrance examination scores and who are from the lowest one-third of their high school graduating class, until the end of their second quarter in school.

Presently there is a procedure at Southern Illinois University whereby students who are from the lowest one-third of their high school graduating class and who have ACT scores below the mean, are admitted "on probation" and are suspended from the University if they fail to make a "C" (3.0) average their first term in school. If Southern Illinois University is to continue to admit students whose chances for success in college are considered meager, due to low grades in high school and/or low scores on entrance examinations, it would seem reasonable that some attempt should be made to increase these students' chances for success, rather than to provide conditions which increase the probability of their failure. This system seems somewhat paradoxical. Why admit academic risk students and then require them to meet standards, their first quarter in school, which are higher than those required of students who have a much better chance for success in college? Students with ACT scores above the mean enter the University in "good standing" and are permitted to make 15 points below a "C" (3.0) average for two concurrent terms prior to being dropped for poor scholarship.

12. Special educational programs, curricula, remedial training, or counseling programs similar to the treatments administered in the EFY Program should not be established for lower third students until the final results of the EFY Program are assessed.

13. Students should be permitted to take courses for credit at the University, only after they have satisfactorily demonstrated through individual pre-course tests, that they have necessary skills prerequisite to successful completion of a given course of study. Possibly, instead of using the ACT and high school rank in class, each general studies area should specify the necessary background and skills students should have prior to taking courses in each particular area. Students would be required to demonstrate mastery of the criterion behaviors prior to being admitted to a course. The entry standards (pre-course behavioral objectives) might be well publicized and even sent to high school administrators, teachers, counselors, and students. Each general studies area and course instructor would determine whether a student should be accepted for beginning the first course.

14. Regular University non-credit courses in study skills and remedial reading should be offered. Furthermore, these and other remedial courses should offer a large part of the instruction through programmed instruction and other individualized instructional techniques. Regular University clinical facilities should be designed to deal with individual academic and personal problems and should be expanded in order to deal adequately with individual students' problems which cannot be managed in the proposed remedial courses.

15. A research project should be conducted to determine the effects on academic performance of using paid student aides to tutor peers in remedial course work.

16. The remedial instruction efforts on the campus should be coordinated by a single director who would work closely with departmental chairmen and faculty.

17. The ACT should <u>not</u> be used as an admission criterion or predictor for students graduating in the lowest third of their high school classes, and research should be conducted to find and/or develop a test battery which will identify successful academic performers among this groups of students.

<u>Recommendations in the Kolstoe Report and the EFY Report</u>

Some recommendations were presented in the <u>Report of the Committee to Study the Re-direction of Academically Unsuccessful Students</u> (1961), a report prepared by a committee composed of Southern Illinois University personnel and headed by Oliver Kolstoe, are similar to some of the recommendations made in this report. Ideas which are stated in Kolstoe's report, which seem related to some of the recommendations suggested above and which have the support of the EFY staff, are specified here. The appendix at the end of this chapter contains the statements from Kolstoe's report which are related to the recommendations mentioned here.

The recommendations for establishing a Bureau of Intra-University Research has enthusiastic support from the EFY staff. Such a unit, charged with the responsibility of conducting an ongoing audit and evaluation of all university programs, could provide an invaluable contribution to the University.

The remedial laboratory recommended in the committee report cited seems most worthy of consideration and development. The laboratory as proposed would offer both scheduled and non-scheduled instruction (standard and programmed) in English, mathematics, reading, and study skills. Also seemingly sound is the plan for routinely scheduling remedial laboratory instruction for those entering freshmen with proven deficiencies.

Another recommendation by Kolstoe's Committee that has merit is that all students should take English and mathematics achievement tests and a reading test during or before Freshman Orientation Week. The results of these tests would be available to advisers before a student could register for classes. Students would be placed in specific classes on the basis of the placement test scores.

APPENDIX

Selected Recommendations from a Report of the Committee to Study the Re-direction of Academically Unsuccessful Students

(Oliver P. Kolstoe, Chairman)

Selected Recommendations from a Report of the Committee to Study the Re-direction of Academically Unsuccessful Students

(Oliver P. Kolstoe, Chairman)*

Advisement

Since student advisement is a responsibility of the Dean of Academic Affairs, or the Dean of Instruction, they, or the Coordinators of Advisement and Programs, should have a general staff of individuals trained both as counselors and advisers to work with them. Each freshman and each sophomore who had not declared a major would be advised by this staff. All transfer students should also be advised by this staff during the first quarter of residence. No student may be advised unless his adviser has available to him the complete student record to guide him. Students who show great discrepancy between their achievement and their academic ability scores will be routinely scheduled into remedial laboratory classes for no credit. Likewise, all students who enter on probation should be routinely scheduled for remedial laboratory. At the discretion of these advisers, those students who exhibit bizarre or erratic personality profiles should be scheduled for counseling in the appropriate office dealing with such counseling referrals.

The advisement of all departmental majors should be the responsibility of the department or the academic unit involved, under the direction of the Coordinator of Advisement and Programs. The Coordinator, in consultation with the department, should have the authority for selection of the

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*The material in this appendix is quoted directly from the Kolstoe report.

departmental major advisers, the responsibility to coordinate their work, and, if necessary, should indicate to the appropriate department or division head unsatisfactory advisement and the need for the selection of a different departmental or division adviser.

During or before Freshman Orientation Week, all students must take English and mathematics achievement tests, a test of reading ability (such as the Iowa test), and a test of personality (such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Inventory). Results from these tests must be in the hands of the advisers before any student may register.

Remedial Laboratory

A remedial laboratory which offers programmed instruction in English, mathematics, reading, and study skills would be directed by the Coordinator of Advisement and Programs. The purpose of this laboratory would be to allow both scheduled and non-scheduled instruction in these fundamental areas. The fact that two-thirds of the students studied by this committee had adequate or superior ability and also had deficiencies in these fundamental skills simply reinforces the necessity of help. Entering students, especially at a freshman level, who show these deficiencies should be routinely scheduled for remedial laboratory work. Furthermore, during the Winter, Spring, and Summer quarters students with low multiple correlations predictive indices should be routinely scheduled for remedial laboratory work. Thus, students would be assigned this kind of help before they got into academic trouble. In this manner, the laboratory would act as a preventative to academic failure. A second bonus which would be expected from the remedial laboratory would be the close observation of students with

questionable abilities, skills, or motivation and the opportunity to secure counseling, without stigma, during the early part of the student's career. A close coordination of services between the general advisement, the student counseling service, and the remedial laboratory personnel could thus be effected, and feedback between the departments and these service units would be assured.

Any student who is admitted in good standing but who goes on probation for academic reasons should be assigned to the remedial laboratory automatically.

Bureau of Intra-University Research

In order to get information on the characteristics, abilities, and records of the students used in this sample, and because of the large numbers involved, it was first necessary to use the entire group and then to use a sampling procedure. With the new Data Processing Center all this information can be put on punchcards or stored in tape cores, and the information which took nearly four months for this committee to assemble could be gathered and processed in a very few minutes of computer time. Furthermore, various comparisons which took the committee hours to make can be made by the computer. It is recommended that a Bureau of Intra-University Research be established and charged with the responsibility of integrated study of the University. The chief functions of this bureau should be an on-going, continuous educational audit for the entire University. The evaluation of programs such as Plan A, all institutes, the Cooperative Clinical Center, Student Affairs, the graduate programs, faculty service loads, department and unit offerings, and the General Education sequences

could be accomplished by this bureau. These evaluations rest on data. Using the Data Processing Center facilities, these studies could be truly evaluative, not just status statistics. It is vital that this bureau be headed by a competent research individual who can use a valid experimental approach. There are a few individuals currently on the faculty at Southern Illinois University who might direct such studies, but it is quite possible that it would be necessary to go outside the institution to secure a competent director.

Although a great many different kinds of research can be carried on by this bureau, not the least important would be the study of specific questions such as the following:

a. What are the characteristics of failing students?

b. What are the characteristics of successful students?

c. What discriminates between moderately successful, successful, and unsuccessful students?

d. Which departmental units have the largest number of unsuccessful students, and what are the reasons for this notable lack of success?

e. Which departments have the largest number of successful students, and what are the factors which influence this success?

In considering these recommendations it should be kept in mind that many alternative methods of implementation could be considered. In any system, the committee feels that at a minimum the academic welfare of students can be improved by changing the admission procedures, by the system of automatic probation remediation and suspension suggested, and by placing

the responsibility for the academic welfare of students in the offices of the Dean of Academic Affairs on the Carbondale campus and the Dean of Instruction on the Edwardsville campus. Flexibility can be provided for students who are the victims of exceptional circumstances by providing a right of petition for continued probation, but the Office of Student Affairs should be relieved of the responsibility for acting on these petitions by assigning this task to the appropriate advisory unit..