An Internship Experience at the Office of International Student Services

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AN INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE
AT THE
OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

by
Chantra Nimityongskul

A Project Report
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in Partial Fulfillment
of the
Specialist in Education Degree

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
August 1978

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am very grateful to Dr. Edward Trembley, my advisor, for his time and assistance in preparing this report.

My Special thanks and appreciation to Mrs. Barbara Garland, my supervisor, for her effort to make my internship experience professionally and personally rewarding.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Mr. Prasit Minityongskul, M.D., my brother, for his encouragement and financial support all through my study.

I would also extend my special thanks to Mrs. Mark Ogden, my American host family, for her encouragement and for her final typing of this report.

Chantra Nimityongskul
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

The primary purpose of this Project Report is to provide an account of my internship experience at the Office of International Student Services at Western Michigan University and to show how this experience influenced my personal and professional growth. Internship efforts were directed to counseling foreign students with low academic achievement. The writer tried to determine causes and effects of the low achievement problem and to propose a program that can be helpful to those students.

Rationale for the Experience

Being a foreign student myself, I see many possible problems that could influence a student living away from his/her homeland. Being in a country whose people have a completely different culture, language, climate, food, and lifestyle, for example, one has to face both emotional and physical problems. Students from over sixty countries who come to Western Michigan University to pursue their education in different areas have, in fact, faced both emotional and academic problems.

Emotional problems can result in academic problems or low academic achievement, and vice versa. Having been away from home, students often need to turn to someone for help
with their problems. Counseling services provided by the Office of International Student Services have been functional in meeting this need.

To study the causes and effects of the students' problems and to understand how counseling can be helpful to them were my primary reasons for choosing the Office of International Student Services as my internship setting. In addition, as one of the foreign students myself, the experience could provide me with a better understanding of problems foreign students face and a realization of the need for communicating to these students.

Internship Goals

The writer felt that an experiential knowledge of the Office of International Student Services would not only be an enrichment of her counseling training, but would also add certain dimensions to her skill in the following ways:

1. To facilitate professional dialogue with the clients.
2. To obtain increased knowledge of the adjustment concern of foreign student clients through individual counseling.
3. To enhance the counseling skills of listening, understanding, and empathizing.
4. To understand the role and functions of the Office of International Student Services, especially the role of Foreign Student Counselor.
5. To try to develop an effective general method for counseling foreign students.

Method of Achieving Internship Goals

In order to reach those goals, the intern used the following strategies:

1. Observing as many counseling cases as possible.
2. Taking part in counseling sessions whenever possible.
3. Taking part as a student leader during the Foreign Student Orientation Program in the fall term to get acquainted with the students.
4. Actively participating in the International Hospitality Program by arranging American host families for the foreign students, which helps the students to better understand American culture.
5. Reviewing materials pertaining to the counseling process as they might apply to the counseling of foreign students, including various techniques, roles, and functions of the Foreign Student Counselor.
6. Meeting regularly with Mrs. Barbara Garland, my supervisor, to appraise my personal and professional growth.

Summary

The internship was designed to review the possible causes of low academic achievement in foreign students and
to study the approaches used by the Foreign Student Counselor to assist students to regain satisfactory academic standing. Although the Office of International Student Services assists foreign students to overcome many types of problems, i.e., emotional, academic, or immigration problems, the main concern of this internship project was to study low academic achievement of students, to review materials pertaining to counseling techniques for foreign students, and finally, to propose a model counseling program for foreign students.

I chose the Office of International Student Services internship to increase my ability to understand and to communicate with foreign students in a professional counseling setting. Undoubtedly, I felt that my background as a foreign student prepared me to maximize my learning from this experience.

In the next chapter, counseling techniques, styles, and methods relative to counseling foreign students with academic deficiency will be discussed. The third chapter will review types and causes of low academic achievement problems. Chapter IV will provide a summary and evaluation of my field experience including a proposed program developed to meet the students' needs.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Counselor Style, Techniques and Strategy

Each counselor has his/her own style, techniques, and strategies in handling each client's problems. Counseling strategies are differentiated by the goals of counseling and the characteristics of the client. The term "strategy" is used to refer to the planning process which includes the counselor's thinking through how he/she will behave with his/her client to attain those goals planned by the client with the counselor's assistance. This is not meant to imply that the counselor's verbal responses to the client should be planned in advance to the last detail. Nor is it suggested that the sequence of what happens in face-to-face counseling must be rigidly controlled. Nevertheless, the general trend of what happens in a counseling situation and how it proceeds are the professional responsibility of the counselor. Within the rubric of 'strategy' there is clearly plenty of room for counselor flexibility and spontaneity (Delaney and Eisenberg, 1972).

There are several action-related questions which counselors must ask themselves as they approach a helping relationship:
How am I to proceed to have the greatest chance in achieving the outcome goals we have mutually agreed upon? What strategies are most likely to result in the attainment of these outcome goals? What actions on my part might interfere in attaining these goals? Is there a sequence of techniques which must first occur if counseling is to be successful (Delaney and Eisenberg, 1972, p. 98)?

Since the attainment of counseling goals is directly related to the way counselors behave in the presence of their clients, counselor's styles and techniques in interacting with clients are critically important. In this chapter, the major concentration will be focused on the general style, techniques, and strategies about which counselors of foreign students should be aware in order to be effective. However, in order to be able to determine the techniques necessary in working with the students, the counselor has to know and understand the clients' nature. In other words, an effective counselor will have to understand the nature of the problem and the characteristics of the clients before the techniques can be determined.

In working with foreign students, there are several characteristics that should not be disregarded by counselors if they are to be successful in helping clients. First of all, the counselor has to realize the differences in culture, background, religion, and language of the clients from foreign countries. Without this understanding, the counselor will not be able to counsel clients with accurate understanding or with sufficient empathy. In short, the counselors of foreign
students should not let themselves fall into the situation which is called a "Seductivity of Stereotypes" by Dennis Peterson (1978), Iowa State University. Peterson discussed how stereotyping could be one of the barriers in helping foreign students with their problems. Most Americans, for example, develop a stereotyped view of students from different countries according to what is presented through mass-media. They tend to act and react to these foreigners according to these stereotypes. Peterson suggested that counselors of foreign students should not disregard the importance of this. He also suggested some techniques the counselor of foreign students may want to follow; these techniques will be discussed later in this chapter.

Secondly, the counselor should identify the subtleties of a foreign student's problems. Joan Hickey Polivka (1976) wrote that if the foreign student got deeply involved with a family, a peer group, or a boy-girl relationship, adjustment problems become risks. Some of the problems she mentioned in this article are: financial problems, loneliness, over-emphasis on social life, reaction of fear and withdrawal, the attitude of professors, problems of not being familiar with acceptable social standards, boy-girl problems, problems of time, and problems of people expecting too much of foreign students. All of these problems are generally true for most foreign students who are in the United States. Understanding the nature of these problems serves as a key to the coun-
sler in opening the door of communicating, sharing, and empathizing with the foreign student client. It is especially important for foreign students to feel accepted and the counselor can increase the probability of acceptance feelings by effective communication. The importance of realizing these adjustment problems will, in fact, serve the counselor's effort to communicate sensitively, thus facilitating the relationship with foreign student clients.

By being cognizant of the dangers of stereotyping and of the adjustment problems, the counselor should have a clearer idea of how to approach the interaction with foreign student clients. There are so many different styles, techniques, and strategies used by counselors to attain their ultimate goals in helping their clients, that it is not possible to identify specifically those most useful with foreign student clients. In other words, counselors may have the same or similar counseling goals to attain, but each counselor will use different techniques in order to reach such goals.

Since there are many different approaches to counseling, this chapter will suggest several techniques and strategies counselors of foreign students may find especially helpful. The later part of this chapter will draw heavily on Dennis Peterson's (1978) suggestions about counseling foreign student clients. Peterson stated that in communicating with individuals from other cultures, there are several points counselors might want to consider which are discussed below.
EMPATHY

Peterson (1978) suggested that counselors place themselves in the foreign student's situation to enhance understanding of their attempts to communicate, verbally and non-verbally, an idea emphasized by Carl Rogers (1951) years ago. In other words, Peterson is suggesting that an effective counselor will need skill in empathizing with a client's problem. The importance of 'empathy' has been emphasized by many therapists. Delaney and Eisenberg (1972) stated that to have empathic understanding is to know how another feels and what they are experiencing without feeling the same way. The counselor must be attentive to gain a realization of what the client is saying about self and world. Given what the client is currently communicating, the counselor must be aware of the potential implications of these notions for the client's future functioning. To be empathic means to be able to infer accurately about a client's feelings, attitudes, and beliefs (which are not objectively observable), from what is being said and done in the interview (which is observable).

The counselor must attempt to assume the position of the client, to enhance the quality of inferences with respect to client decision making, unhappiness, frustration, and environmental pressures. However, it is not sufficient for counselors to be aware of feelings, beliefs, values, and future implications; counselors must also clearly communicate these observations, inferences, and awarenesses to the foreign student client.
Counselor empathy requires two basic and interrelated abilities. First, the counselor must identify, recognize, and become aware of certain important feelings, attitudes, beliefs, and values which underlie what the client is saying. Second, the counselor must communicate to the client that there is an awareness and understanding of not only the overt but the covert aspects of client statements. Since words are used to communicate feelings, the counselor can, then, attend to client feelings by listening carefully to how the client describes his/her feelings and their intensity, frequency, duration, and history.

Egan (1975) stated that the first task of the helper is to respond to the person who comes for help. He added that the helper should try to understand the client and communicate this understanding as genuinely, caringly, and concretely as possible. Learning to understand another is not an easy process. It involves the capacity to switch from the counselor set of experiences to the experiences of the client, seen through his/her eyes, not the counselor's. Hackney and Nye (1973) noted that empathic understanding involves two primary steps: 1) "Accurate sensing of the client's world; being able to see things the way he does;" 2) "verbal sharing of the counselor understandings with the client" (p. 49).

Carkhuff (1969) also distinguished two levels of accurate empathic understanding; at an "interchangeable" level, the helper communicates his understanding of the client's experiences and feelings that are more or less readily avail-
able to the client's perception; and at the "additive" level where the helper probes more deeply, communicating understanding of feelings, experiences, and motivations that the client expresses in implicit ways and that are not so readily available to the client's awareness.

In summary, the first basic step in communicating with the foreign student client, is that the counselor works directly to achieve an understanding of the point of view, expressed verbally and non-verbally, and to share this understanding with the client.

**TIMING AND LANGUAGE FACILITY**

Peterson (1978) suggested if the counselors do not understand clients, they should ask questions, making certain to give the client time to respond. In counseling foreign students, carefully used and timed language is critical for successful communications. Since language is a tool to communicate, the counselor has to make sure that there is mutual understanding between the client and the counselor. A counselor for foreign students has to attend closely to what the student says because of the difficulty the student has in expressing his/her intention. The counselor needs to understand the words used by the foreign student clients because they tell the counselor about the client's experiences. The client in attempting to describe anger, depression, nervousness, and guilt, for example, has to translate these feelings from one native
language to another. The sensitive counselor is one who listens for difficulties with these translations and when he/she hears them, he/she responds so as to indicate he/she is trying to understand the emotions being communicated.

An effective counselor does ask questions when he/she feels that the client does not express him/herself clearly. In making sure that the communication exists in the client-counselor relationship, the counselor uses different techniques in so doing. Some of those techniques are: questioning, paraphrasing or restating, clarifying, reflecting, and recapitulating.

It is in the initial interview that the counselor must communicate sensitivity, acceptance, and understanding of the counselee's feelings. If the counselor is unable to do this, client resistance based on fear, hostility, and anxiety, will probably be encountered (Perez, 1970).

Communication is the essence of any interactive process, including counseling; regardless of a counselor's school, orientation, or personality, few counselors would quarrel with the validity of this statement (Perez, 1970). Every counselor feels the need to communicate with the client. Thorne (1960), for example, said, "One of the first adaptive reactions required of the counselor is to establish communication with the client on the level of the client's emotional and intellectual status" (p. 78). And according to Wolberg (1964), the counselor can
bring about an effective working relationship by "communicating an understanding of the problem, communicating interest, communicating tolerance and acceptance, communicating objectivity, and communicating empathy" (p. 64).

In counseling foreign students, as mentioned above, the language difficulties can be a major part of the problem in the client communicating with the counselor. The counselor needs to learn some techniques to check and recheck whether what was heard is what the student tried to communicate. Several techniques seem useful:

**Questioning**

Perez (1970) said: "whether questions are appropriate or inappropriate....will be largely dependent on the personalities of the participants" (p. 95). Some clients feel threatened by questions while others respond well. There are times when clients are too frustrated to talk and sometimes they ramble around points they want to express. Through systematic questions and guiding statements, counselors help clients learn to express their problems in a clearer and more complete way. The use of questioning helps to reduce the client's confusion and leads to problem definitions and greater depth statements. Questions also help the counselor to better understand a particular culture.
Reiterating

Reiterating is rewording a client's statements to alleviate his/her confusion, thereby helping the client clarify the cognitive and emotional content of the statement. It serves to put into words what the client is too afraid, too guilty, or too angry to say. By reiterating, the counselor can help the client to focus, sharpen, and delineate his/her thinking (Perez, 1970). Reiterating can also help the client to consider his/her problems from a different viewpoint.

Clarifying

In using clarification techniques, the counselor deals with the cognitive, intellectual side of the client's word. The counselor explains or seeks common meanings which the counselee's words have for both participants. In clarification, the counselor has to be careful not to explain too much too quickly or to push his/her own meanings.

Reflecting

Reflection is another technique that can be used to reduce confusion in counseling. In reflection, the counselor deals with the emotional or feeling side of the counselee's words. The counselor "reads between the lines" or "listens with the third ear" and responds to unexpressed feelings associated with thought content.
Recapitulating

Recapitulating refers to the simple technique of tying together and connecting unorganized and ill-arranged material from the client's statement. By recapitulating, the counselor helps the client to focus on the basic theme or topic of his/her discourse. Whenever possible, the counselor uses the counselee's words and phrases. Under no circumstances does the counselor introduce a new topic or theme (Perez, 1970).

Another technique similar to reflecting and recapitulating is called paraphrasing. This technique is used when the counselor relates what the client has said to let him/her know "I am with you; I understand; please go on" (Gilmore, 1973). It is important that a paraphrase captures both the facts and the feelings contained in the client's statements. It is not enough to echo or parrot the content of what the client has said. Hackney and Nye (1973) called this technique "restatement."

Each of those techniques described above is very valuable for the counselor to check his/her understanding of what his/her client has just said. Asking questions, as Peterson said, is one of the most simple techniques to use because the counselor will be able to gain more information about his/her client. However, Peterson did warn the counselor of foreign students that when asking questions, give the student time to answer.
COUNSELOR ATTITUDE

Peterson (1978) stated that if possible, counselors should leave their emotions outside of the interview and concentrate on the clients' statements. Reacting to the individual can influence the counselor's interpretation of what the student says. And if the counselor argues with the client mentally, he will probably set-up a barrier to open communication with the client.

There are some techniques that the counselor can use in focusing on the client. Since some clients are afraid to talk, they may be hiding problems which are too frightening or too embarrassing to discuss because they are with a stranger. Or perhaps they have learned to be suspicious and they need time to conclude that they can trust the counselor.

Trust, respect, non-possessive warmth, unconditional positive regards, acceptance, genuineness, caring, are the terms frequently used in counseling as characteristics of behavior which reduce barriers to open communication between counselor and client. A study by Pohlman and Robinson (1960) showed that the behavior which most displeased counselees was that "which would indicate a lack of respect for them" (p. 98). The counselor's respect for the client may be viewed as the catalyst which precipitates a more productive, rewarding interaction, since respect for the client means accepting that person as a human being who can grow, develop, and either achieve or regain ability to cope with reality (Perez, 1970). The
respectful counselor is careful not to threaten or criticize the client, and to recognize the right of the client to express personal values, Williamson (1959) wrote, "... conversing about optimal value orientations in search of clarification of the student's questions and confusion... is the basic content of counseling" (p. 103).

Since a counseling relationship is basically a verbal helping relationship, the client should feel secure enough to express self to the counselor. Some conditions to create such an atmosphere can be arranged by the counselor. A study by Grigg (1961) indicated that only acceptance of the client was not enough; the counselor must also demonstrate an active interest in that person. The counselor can do this only if he/she is sincere and is aware of the client's frustrations. Perez (1970) said that frustrated needs made the client exquisitely sensitive to sincerity or the lack of it. He continued that the counselor can communicate cues of insincerity by a) boasting b) inappropriate reassurance, or c) making promises which cannot be kept.

In supporting Peterson's statement about counselor attitude, the following will present how some therapists view the particular point of view. Rogers (1961, 1967) called it "unconditional positive regard". Delaney and Eisenberg (1972) stated that:

"...... since the guilt usually involves another party, the act of atonement would also, of necessity, involves that other party. In
order to implement the strategy, the counselor must not evaluate the client's guilt, but rather accept it non-judgmentally. The counselor can serve as a facilitator in helping the client evaluate the situation, but the counselor cannot make the judgment for the counselee" (p. 98).

Egan (1975) in *The Skilled Helper* said that in working with the client, the counselor should "suspend his critical judgment". In Stage I, he continued, respect took the form of suspending critical judgment of the client. Carl Rogers (1967) called this kind of respect "unconditional positive regard," meaning that "the therapist communicates to his client a deep and genuine caring for him as a person with potentialities, a caring uncontaminated by evaluations of his thoughts, feelings, or behaviors" (p. 102).

**FOLLOWING CLIENT LEADS**

Peterson (1978) said, "Since you can listen faster than someone can talk, work at staying with the student's train of thought. Anticipate what he is going to say or think back on what was said. Listen for what was not said as well" (p. 6).

Listening to how something is said also can be informative. Frequently the importance of the related emotional reactions and attitudes is missed. By antagonizing the client, the counselor may cause the client to conceal his/her ideas, emotions, or attitudes. There are a number of ways of doing this—arguing, criticizing, taking notes, not taking notes, asking
questions or not asking questions.

What all this means is that the counselor should be aware of his/her effect on the other person or the client and to adapt to him/her. Avoid jumping to erroneous conclusions which may result, for example, from assuming that the client uses words the same way the counselor does or that the client distorts the truth because he/she presents personal views enthusiastically. Counselor conclusions like these may not be true and often they impede understanding the client and reaching an agreement or comprise as to purposes of counseling.

AVOIDING STEREOTYPES

Peterson (1978) stated, "To avoid classifying the client, too frequently, we categorize a person as one type and then try to fit everything he says into what make sense coming from that kind of person" (p.7). At times, it helps to understand people, to know their politics, their religious beliefs, and their backgrounds. But people have a way of being unpredictable and not fitting into neat classifications.

It is appropriate to quote Peterson's conclusion in concluding this chapter. Peterson concluded, "Ideally, this means not making hasty judgments about 'individuals' and waiting for the facts. Stereotypes are, after all, easy short-cuts, but more often than not, they have nothing to do with the person with whom you happen to communicate" (p. 7). A counselor for foreign students should be aware of the useful-
ness of the particular techniques mentioned above. Emphasis has been put on the skills of listening and empathic understanding because of the realization that students come from different parts of the world where language, culture, politics, social and religious backgrounds are so different.
CHAPTER III

TYPES AND CAUSES OF LOW ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT PROBLEM

The following chapter will examine the types and causes of low academic achievement in foreign students. Counseling techniques used for assisting low achieving foreign student clients and some case studies regarding these clients will be included in this chapter.

Student with low academic achievement problems can be divided into two major groups. The first group, termed On Probation, is comprised of those students who, for the first time, cannot maintain their overall Grade Point Average (GPA) at 2.00. The second group, termed Countinued Academic Probation, is comprised of students who continue to achieve at a less than 2.00 level.

The counselor will send a letter to each student On Probation asking him/her to come for an interview. The students are assumed to carry the responsibility for making an appointment with the counselor to talk about their problem. If for any reason, the students fail to respond to the letter sent by the counselor, they will get another letter urging them to see the counselor. If again they fail to do so, the students are expected to handle the problem in their own way. If the students are On Academic Probation, they will have to
bring their GPA up to Good Academic Standing again. That is, in the following semester, the students have to achieve the minimum overall GPA of 2.00. If the students fail to do so, they will be put on Continued Academic Probation which means that the students will get a second chance to bring the overall GPA back to a Good Academic Standing level. In case the student cannot achieve Good Academic Standing during Continued Academic Probation, he/she will be dismissed from the University.

The role of the counselor is to act as 'helper' by finding out the causes of the problem, deciding on and using an appropriate technique to assist the student to manage the problem. In helping the student to achieve Good Academic Standing, the counselor will have to do a thorough study of the background and the environment of the students. The Foreign Student Counselor's skill in 'empathic understanding' will be the first requirement. In addition to understanding and accepting the students' culture, the counselor should be skillful enough to understand how the students feel. Once the students feel accepted, they will be more comfortable in revealing themselves to the counselor. Through the student's self-disclosure, the counselor and the client find possible techniques of managing the problems successfully.

Every foreign student living in the United States is facing various kinds of adjustment problems. These problems can be the causes of more serious difficulties if the student cannot cope with them. One of the problems concerning the University is the problem of the foreign student who has low
academic achievement. The University has a policy of helping the foreign students to good academic achievement while they are here.

During my internship period at the Office of International Student Services, I found some factors that cause low academic achievement of foreign students.

From my case observations and from analysis of case with Mrs. Garland, I found several major causes for the problem:
- Lack of goal
- Lack of motivation
- Indecisiveness
- Disorganization
- Language problems
- Lack of knowledge of University regulations
- Lack of interest in academic study
- Conflict between self expectation and parents' expectation
- Adjustment to environment and peers
- Low self-understanding
- Poor relationship with academic advisor and instructors
- Financial problems
- Homesickness
- Health problems

Foreign students who came to study in the United States may seem to have a goal for their future. Ironically, a lack of a goal is one of the major problems of foreign students on
low academic standing. They do not have any plans about what they want to study or what subject they are interested in. In short, most students with such a problem did not realize why they came to the United States and have not developed goal-directed behavior.

Most people tend to think that language is the major problem for foreign students here. Surprisingly, language is a minor problem for low achieving foreign students. Lack of understanding of some technical terms used in a course may confuse the students. However, it is not the language itself that causes the problem. Language is only part of it.

My observations have suggested that it is cultural differences and background that bring the student to face such a problem as academic deficiency. Some students are "too shy" to ask questions, either in class or after class. In some cultures teachers or instructors are regarded as an 'idol' or 'image' for the students. Some students think that they should listen only to the teacher and they will learn everything from that. Some students revealed that they did not feel that the instructor had explained the subject clearly. As foreign students they were too frustrated and reluctant to ask the instructor in class for they thought that it would delay the class. Also, they would not want their classmates to think of them as 'stupid'. Some students solved such a problem by asking a friend or someone from their own country for the answer. This turns out to be of little value in most
cases because the foreign students will have difficulty in translating from their native language to English. However, in many cases, I found that once a student did not understand the subject matter, he tended to lose interest for that class, or get bored in class because of the feeling of being left behind, and finally he/she gave up altogether. In addition to this, most foreign students, especially those who just arrived here, do not realize the University regulations for 'drop and add'. Some of them do not know that once they found that the course is too much for them to handle, he may drop that class and either add other courses or not. Lack of such knowledge is a disadvantage for foreign students because they could avoid the problem of low academic standing if they understand the regulations and know what they should have done if they feel like that course is too difficult for them to handle.

I also found it true in most cases that those students who have low academic achievement problems tended to have poor relationships with their academic advisor. They ignore the importance of having an academic advisor to help them with their program of study. These students tended to choose courses for themselves without seeing their advisor for approval and advice. In some cases it turned out that the students did not need some of the courses they selected to graduate. It was even worse when the students chose the courses they did not need and it turned out that this lowered their overall GPA. The students, in other words, can easily waste their
time and money without consulting their academic advisor about courses they planned to enroll for. Also, students may develop nervous strain from overwork when they enrolled for too many courses within one semester. The result of the overload or overwork was an unexpected severe effect on the student (see Case Study No. 2).

Lack of motivation is another major cause of the low academic achievement problem. Lack of goals and low motivation usually go hand in hand. Because the students have no specific plan for what they want to do in the future, they tend to neglect any study. A specific goal in life can motivate a person to do things in an effective manner. As a matter of fact, a lack of goals and motivations can bring about many other problems. Students may face problems concerning loss of direction, indecisiveness, and disorganization. Low academic achievement can be caused by the lack of self understanding. The student have to find out what they are looking for, set a goal and find the means to that goal.

Inability to adjust oneself to the American campus life can also give the student emotional problems which may prevent effective studying. Homesickness can be another emotional problem for the student. To adjust to the new environment usually takes time and ability to cope and get used to it. Homesickness, for example, can be the cause of severe depressions (see Case Study No. 1). In some cases the conflict between a student's self-expectation and the parent's expecta-
tion is the cause of the student's academic deficiency. The student, on one hand, expects to join extracurricula on an American campus. In that case scheduling time to study and time for other activities must be done carefully because foreign students must realize that they have to spend twice the time the American students do on their studying. For those who enjoy extracurricula activities more than their study will have to face a problem later. The parents, on the other hand, expect their children to perform well and to be able to graduate from an American University. This parental pressure can have some severe effects on students as is shown in Case Study No. 2.

Finally, financial problems can be another concern for the students. The University has tried to prevent this problem by having each student get a sponsor to sign a financial statement that they will be able to pay for the student's staying in the United States before the student is admitted. Financial problems occur when the student or the sponsor faces an unexpected or unforeseen situation. For example, death of the sponsor or his inability to work any more, will cause the student to find another source of financial support. The student will have to ask the United States Immigration Services for a permit to work to support him/herself. Once the student works, he has to arrange for sufficient time to study or will face the problem of being put on probation if the overall GPA of 2.00 cannot be maintained.
To support some causes of the problems discussed above, it is felt essential to present the following three case studies provided by the Foreign Student Counselor:

Case Study 1
A Case of Low Academic Achievement Primarily Caused by Adjustment and Homesickness

Student A enrolled at the University in May 1976. He was 18 years old and had just finished high school in Iran. His parents are well to do, his father is a medical doctor. There was apparently a close and harmonious family life. Student A has an older brother who received a Ph.D. from a U.S. university and now works in Iran. He also has a sister. Student A passed the Michigan Language Test (MTELP) with a comfortable score of 86 and was permitted to enroll for courses in his major curriculum, Electrical Engineering. During the first two enrollment periods, Spring Session and Fall Semester 1976, Student A performed well. At the end of Winter Semester 1977 it became apparent that the student was in academic trouble. He received an Academic Warning with his cumulative GPA still above the required minimum of 2.00. Student A did not enroll for Spring and Summer sessions 1977. I learned later that he "just sat around" during those months, mostly alone in his apartment feeling miserable. During Fall Semester 1977, Student A failed all his courses. He finished the semester with a zero GPA and his cumulative GPA dropped to 1.22. Student A was placed On Academic Probation.
As a student on an academically deficient status, Student A was asked to report to me in order to initiate a series of counseling sessions at the beginning of Winter Semester 1978. This type of service is provided by the Office of International Student Services to help foreign students overcome their academic deficiencies and to rehabilitate them to Good Standing. The program has proved successful.

During several sessions of thorough counseling it became evident that Student A is suffering from severe depressions caused mainly by homesickness and his inability to adjust to U.S. campus life and to successfully communicate with others. His depressed state of mind has caused a serious decrease in his academic achievement, and to become a virtual recluse. Depression has also been manifested in a general loss of energy and motivation for continuation of his studies; a general listlessness and apathy toward his surrounding; a physical decline which manifests itself in severe overeating (the student is about 70 pounds overweight at present), in nervous exhaustion (the student is not able to sleep) and in having to resort to taking tranquilizer drugs which, in turn, depress him even more. In my opinion, the student is on the brink of a complete nervous collapse. He is unable to continue his enrollment at present. I recommend his immediate withdrawal from Winter Semester 1978 enrollment and his return to Iran to be with his family for
an extended period of time before he makes future plans regarding an eventual return to this University. The student is willing and eager to discontinue his enrollment and to return home immediately to the care of his parents. He did not want to consider any kind of therapy we are able to offer him here.

The student was allowed to withdraw from enrollment and to return home to Iran.

Case Study 2
A Case of Low Academic Achievement Primarily Caused by Conflict between Self Expectation and Parents' Expectation

Student B is the second of three brothers coming from a very wealthy Saudi Arabian family. The father is in private business, and the family is now living in Kuwait. The oldest brother completed his M.A. degree in Economics at this University three years ago. He was a brilliant student and a very successful young man socially and now has an excellent job with his government in Kuwait. The youngest of the three brothers, is presently enrolled at this University as an undergraduate student and seems to be developing just as well as the oldest brother. The second brother, Student B, is obviously the problem child in this very close-knitted Arabian family. The father apparently puts much importance in his sons' American education and academic degrees and obviously applies a great deal of pressure and has expectancy of excellence in his sons'
academic and personal performance in this country. The oldest and the youngest brothers apparently could and can handle that parental pressure; the middle brother collapsed under that pressure when he became aware of the fact that it was not in his nature to copy the example of his successful brothers. The following development of Student B's story is mainly taken from file notations that were written over a period of time by the Foreign Student Counselor who dealt with Student B throughout his troubled time at this University. The notes are meant for internal office use.

Student B's younger brother came to my office to inform me that his brother, Student B, had fallen ill a few weeks ago. He thinks that Student B has some serious psychological problem. He seems to have gone into a decline during summer and needs medical help, in the youngest brother's opinion. He had talked long distance with his father in Kuwait about Student B. The father demanded that Student B come home immediately for treatment there. Student B's brother asked that Student B be allowed to withdraw from Fall Semester enrollment. I wrote a letter to the Record Office and sent Student B's brother there. The letter requested permission to withdraw Student B from enrollment for medical reasons. Student B's brother expects that Student B will return to the University for re-enrollment this coming Winter Semester after he has received medical treatment at home. Obviously, the brother was very anxious about Student B.
The next day, the brother again appeared in my office shortly after 11 a.m., crying and obviously very upset. He said that his brother, Student B, had tried to kill himself last night; he found Student B unconscious in the bathroom of their apartment—Student B had 'taken pills'. The brother had immediately called his father in Kuwait long distance who had ordered that he bring Student B home immediately. The brother made flight reservations for a flight to London where he would take Student B. The oldest brother would await Student B in London and take him on to Kuwait. The youngest brother would return here immediately after placing Student B in the eldest brother's care. They were scheduled to leave that same evening for London. There is a trained psychiatrist in the family who would treat Student B. The youngest brother stated that Student B was at present in no condition to even move and was not at all responding to the plan of leaving for London that night. The youngest brother was at a complete loss as to what to do with Student B. I went to the apartment with the youngest brother and found Student B lying on a couch covered with a blanket, his head stuck underneath the blanket. Student B was dressed in his long, white Thope.

I removed the blanket from Student B’s head and he took hold of my hands. I started to tell him of the necessity of his returning home to get well. I said that I would withdraw him from his courses and talk to his instructor, for whom Stu-
dent B was in the process of making up an Incomplete from last summer. I gather that Student B suffered from a severe loss of self-confidence, that he felt himself to be worthless and despised by others; he was terribly afraid what others would think and talk about him - in short, Student B was acutely miserable and in very poor mental and physical condition. After a while I had him convinced of the benefits of a return home to his family for a while. I expressed hope that he would return to the University the coming winter semester, a hope in which Student B eagerly joined. I promised to discuss his problem with the instructor to whom he owed an Incomplete make-up. Student B promised me on his honor to cooperate with his brother and to willingly leave for London that night and to go on willingly to Kuwait from there. I promised to write a detailed letter to his father for which both brothers seemed grateful. Student B responded very well to my suggestions and to me. All the time I talked to him, he clung to me like a child. - I think Student B is a sick man at present and needs extended psychological treatment. I think such treatment would be more effective in his home environment and that the presence and care of his obviously very concerned family would do him good. I think that Student B's disturbed mental state was brought on by a severe loss of self confidence caused by the fear that he was not achieving as high as his brothers, also, by complete nervous strain and overwork (he had been enrolled without a break for the previous fall, winter
spring and summer, each time for heavy course loads).

I subsequently informed the Records Office to withdraw the student from enrollment for medical reasons. I wrote a detailed letter to Student B's father about Student B's condition. I talked to Student B's instructor who gladly and understandingly extended the period on which Student B could make up his Incomplete grade. The instructor recommended books Student B could read in Kuwait which would help him in completing those course requirements upon return. I wrote to Student B and recommended the reading of those books to him.

Later in the semester, the youngest brother came into my office to request the issuance of a Form I-20 and sent it to Student B. (end of file notes).

January: Student B breezed into my office today, looking relaxed and refreshed and reporting that he was back and already enrolled for winter semester and that he felt much better. He stated that he had enrolled for a sufficient course load which would enable to graduate at the end of this semester. He stated that he also would make up the Incomplete for his General Studies Science course which dated back to last summer and that he would be in close contact with his instructor in that regard. Student B appeared a bit too carefree and a bit too breezy for comfort, almost arrogant, and very sure that he would "make it". Student B is an extremely elegant man, tall, slim, goodlooking, who dresses impeccably in the best clothes, drives an expensive sport car and lives in a beautifully furnished and expensive apartment. His manner is ex-
tremely charming and if one would know of his problems, one could assume that he had not a care in the world.

I did not hear from Student B during the semester. After the semester had ended I met his brother who told me that Student B had 'finished his courses and had graduated and left for home'. I was surprised because Student B's name had not appeared on the graduation list and I was surprised that Student B had not come to say goodbye to me.

A few weeks later I received a call from Student B from Kuwait. He asked me to see whether his degree diploma could be sent to him as soon as possible because he had found an excellent job with an oil company and needed proof of his degree. I told Student B that I would check into the matter with Records Office. I did, and found out that Student B had not completed his graduation requirements and had, thus, left without having graduated. I was informed that he lacked four credits of Incomplete which were still not made up. As soon as a grade and credits had been assigned on that course, he would receive his degree at the end of that enrollment period. I contacted the General Studies Science instructor mentioned earlier in this report and learned that Student B had left a paper with him which he had sent to him by mail, obviously believing that this was all that was needed to make up the Incomplete. The instructor not only had never told Student B that a paper was all that was necessary to complete the course, but also had he never had any opportunity to talk to Student
B about what actually was required of him and what amounted to re-enrolling in the course in question. According to the instructor, Student B had attended just a few weeks of the course and had taken only two tests in the course both of which he had failed. The instructor reported that he had had endless discussions and arguments with Student B at the beginning of the course during which Student B tried to persuade and charm the instructor into practically letting him get away with murder, that is, doing "independent" work Student B thought to be sufficient for receiving a grade in the course. The instructor insisted on Student B's attendance of the classes and when Student B initially did attend classes, the instructor came to the conclusion that Student B did not seem to understand a thing about the subject of the course, general science. The instructor went on reporting rather bizarre classroom behavior on Student B's part. He reported that, for instance, several times it happened that Student B jumped up from his seat and rushed out of the classroom and down into the adjacent parking lot which was for faculty cars only. Obviously he had observed through the window that a tow truck was about to tow his own car away which he had parked in the lot without paying attention that it was not for student parking. Student B was observed in persuasively trying to talk the tow-truck man out of towing his car away. This same incident was repeated two more times during the following two weeks. The instructor reported also that Student B showed up several times in his office hours with books and gifts which he offered to the
instructor and which were completely unsolicited and unwanted by the instructor. Obviously, Student B wanted to obtain the special favor of the instructor. The instructor stated that he was "extremely nice and tolerant" with Student B but that he could not go "beyond his rules". The instructor insisted on Student B's re-enrollment in the course and completing it satisfactorily before he would be willing to give Student B a grade for the Course. This decision I communicated to Student B in a letter to Kuwait. Consequently, the younger brother approached me twice in my office, pleading with me whether something could not be done to "let Student B graduate". The younger brother reported that Student B was continuously calling him from Kuwait and sending him to speak to me and to the instructor. I told the younger brother about the instructor's unwavering decision. The younger brother reported that his father was not willing to let Student B return to the university for the re-enrollment in this one course and that he expected Student B to be able to graduate somehow without having to complete the course. Also, the oil company insisted on Student B's showing of his degree diploma before they were willing to give him the coveted job. Student B called from Kuwait several more times either to me or to the instructor. I had several more personal meetings with the instructor during which we tried all permissible angles to accommodate Student B and his need to graduate short of breaking our regulations and convictions. The instructor still insists on Student B
returning and making up the course and Student B seemingly still insists on getting a course grade without doing so. The case is unresolved as of this date. Student B still calls from Kuwait - we still stick to our ruling....I recently wrote to Student B again making clear our point and asking him to show the letter to his father in the hopes that the father will tell Student B to get back here and finish the course........

Postscript: I just received a phone call from Student B from Kuwait asking me to issue a form I-20 and send it immediately. Student B reported that his father had now permitted him to return here and finish whatever was necessary for him to get his degree and his diploma. I told Student B that I was pleased about the decision and that I would send the I-20 immediately. I also told Student B that I would inform the General Science instructor for whom he would have to make up the Incomplete grade of his return.

I hope that this turn of events will spell a happy ending to this complicated case.

Case Study 3
A Case of Low Academic Achievement Primarily Caused by Indecisiveness and Disorganization

This text is largely taken from interview notes written by the Foreign Student Counselor during a series of sessions with the student which were held because of the student's low academic standing.
February 7: Student C began academic classes after completing two terms in our Career English Program last Fall semester. He registered for 9 credits only (instead of the required 12) - 3 classes. He received one X (failure for not completing course), one D, and he withdraw (W) from one of the three classes. He finished the semester with a GPA of 0.56!

I thoroughly explained to the student all he had done in violation to regulations, e.g. withdraw without permission, taking too few credits, etc.. Questioned why he thought he had performed so poorly, he said that he had not attended his English 210 class at all (X), had withdrawn from his Biology 101 class (W) and had not at all understood his Psychology 152 class (D). He said that he felt that his chosen major, Psychology, was completely wrong for him. He has no interest in it; he does not understand it at all. Moreover, he does not know what he wants to study here nor does he know what he is even interested in.

The student seems to be a perfect example of confusion and non-directedness. He is 22 years old. He says he wants to study in America and wants a degree. I discussed with him at length what he would have to do in order to succeed academically here, namely, find a curriculum he likes and finds worthwhile, and then perform satisfactorily.

This winter semester he is enrolled for 11 credits: Philosophy 200, Economics 201, and English 107. He thinks that so far he is performing acceptably in these three courses.
I asked him to bring me all his tests' scores to date at our next interview. I explained to him that I wanted him to consult immediately with our Counseling Center for direction and curriculum/career advice. I went with him to the Counseling Center offices and made an appointment for him to see Mrs. M., an academic counselor in the Center, tomorrow. I urged him to talk openly to her and to report to me on the result of the interview. I also explained to him that it would be worthwhile for him to take some aptitude tests in our Testing Center. I suggested he discuss this with Mrs. M.

March 25: Student C did not show up at the appointed date. I had to send him another letter of "invitation" to come and see me, on March 21. He appeared reluctantly it seemed, and excused himself for not showing at the appointed time with "having to take too many tests". I pointed out to him the weakness of this excuse and the necessity to appear punctually for appointments. Our following discussion revealed that he is not doing well at all in his Winter semester courses: In Philosophy 200, he scored a D in the test; two more tests are to come. In Economics 201, he scored C, C, and D in three tests. Two more tests are to come. In English 107, he scored a C and a D in two tests. He has to write a paper for this course. I told him that I did not see much hope for him to achieve the minimum 2.00 GPA this semester, and that I foresee his being put on Continued Probation standing for next term. Again, we discussed at length the problem of deciding
"what he wants to do". He still seems to be entirely vague on this point. He admits he does not know why he is in America nor what he wants from life in general.

The referral to Counseling Center, Mrs. M., last month did not have any use at all. He saw Mrs. M. once and then no more. She did not make any concrete suggestions to him but said that he has enough time to decide what he wants to do. I told him that "time to decide" won't help him at all if he fails all the courses he is experimenting with, as he will be dismissed from the University before he has had enough time to find out what he wants. I have no idea whether I made any impact on him at all. He is extremely vague in his behavior, smiles vacantly, looks into space, does not say much, seems depressed and seems not to care whether he is drifting. I asked him several times what he really would like to do to occupy his time. He said, "Nothing". Finally I brought out of him that he rather enjoyed writing and reading. I suggested to him to enroll in an English reading and writing course this Spring term. He seemed to show some slight interest in the idea. I also suggested that he enroll for a Physical Education course in Spring term which would get him out into the open air, either tennis or track and field, perhaps swimming. I asked him to see me once more before the end of this Winter semester and that I wanted to see further test scores he had achieved.

April 18: Student C came and showed me further test
scores he had taken in the meantime: Philosophy: D and E; English: D, C and B; Economics: D, C, D, and C. It is obvious from these grades that Student C will not achieve Good Standing this semester. He has yet two final exams to take. Whatever he scores won't save him.

Again, I went deeply into the student's conscience probing to find what he really wanted to do with his life and what he wanted to be in life. He continues to be as vague as he was on our first meeting. He admits that he still does not know what he wants to do, what he likes to do. He has no likes and no dislikes, etc., etc. There still seems to be a flicker of interest in writing and reading. I again suggested to him to take an English reading and writing course during Spring terms plus one Physical Education course. He said that he would enroll for such courses. I told him again that he would certainly be placed on Continued Probation for Spring term, if he is not dismissed at the end of this Winter semester. I again explained the implications of his low standing with him. He said he understood. I asked him, and he said again, that he "likes to be in this country to study" but again, could not state any reason why. I again suggested to him to try and search himself and find out what he really wants to do here. I told him that it was fine to take some time and find out, by taking varied courses, what curriculum he would be interested in, but that he would have to perform well in those courses, or bear the consequences for low standing.
May 31: Student C finished Winter semester with a 0.75 overall GPA and was placed on Continued Probation, as expected. He enrolled for Economics 202 and for PhysEd (Bowling) this Spring session. Even if he were to get A's in both of these courses, his overall GPA would still be under 2.00 at the end of this Session. I therefore told him that he is facing a Dismissal from the University at the end of this Spring session.

We explored possibilities what he could do after that. Student C seems to want to stay in this country and in this location. I suggested that it might be a good idea for him to enroll in our local Community College for a while. Not only would a change of place and pace and of location be beneficial to him but also would probably be a condition for eventual Re-Admission to this University should he want to return later. I described facts of the local Community College to Student C and he seemed to accept the idea that it would not be a bad solution to go there. He said that he expected a visit from his mother from Iran and that he will discuss further plans with her.

June 25: Student C was, indeed, dismissed at the end of Spring session. He received a 3 in his Bowling course and a C in his Economic course. His Semester GPA was at 2.00, but his overall GPA was only at 1.00 at the point of Dismissal. I asked both Student C and a cousin of his, also a student from Iran enrolled at this University, to see me. They came. I asked Student C whether I could explain freely to his
cousin some of the problems Student C is facing. Student C had no objection, in fact he again sat in his chair, staring into space as though he were not of this world and not taking any interest in what the cousin and I discussed. I explained to the cousin some of Student C's problems and the need for Student C to come to a decision of what he wanted to do. I recommended an enrollment at least for spring and summer at the local Community College. I recommended that the cousin talk with Student C's mother during her intended visit here in the summer. I further suggested that the cousin write to Student C's parents about Student C's condition, as I doubted that Student C himself had done so. I invited Student C and his cousin to see me again if they felt I could be of any further help to them.

August 23: (Entry by Office of International Student Services Director): 'Student C's mother and two sisters came to campus to see him. They spoke no English but were fluent in French. I asked an interpreter to translate. Student C's whereabouts are unknown. Information in his file indicates that he had been dismissed at the end of Spring session. I called the FSA of our local Community College who confirmed that Student C had been admitted for the coming Fall Semester there. Several calls were made to campus residence halls in an effort to locate Student C to no avail. Accommodations were secured for the family in a local motel. While making these arrangements, Student C's cousin happened to come into
the office. It is assumed that the cousin knows where to reach Student C." Nothing further has been learned on this case since this date, except for a notation in Student C's file that re-admission for Student C had been denied by Admission Committee for Readmissions for the coming Winter Semester. Reason given: Too soon for re-admission to this University in view of student's very low GPA when dismissed. N.B. In these three case studies, students' actual names are changed to Student A, B, and C respectively to maintain confidentiality.

Having studied those three cases, we will now summarize the techniques used in handling those problems. After all those sessions I participated in, I concluded that in counseling a foreign student with low academic achievement, the foreign student counselor does:

a. Use simple terms to explain his/her situation. The sentences being used by the counselor should be simple and clear. No sophisticated terms or slang should be used because it will cause more confusion to the student. The counselor uses precise sentences. Examples are used to clarify the term, for example: what does it mean to be put on 'Probation'?

b. Give the student alternatives of what he/she can do. The counselor gives advice and suggestions as she thinks necessary. She must remember that the right of making decisions belong to the student. The counselor does not make any decision for the student.
c. Maintain eye-contact to make sure whether or not the student understands what the counselor has said. Through eye-contact the student also feels that the counselor is with him/her and that she is sincerely willing to help.

d. Make the student feel at ease to facilitate self-disclosure. The effect of having a relaxing atmosphere in a counseling setting has a lot to do with whether or not the student wants to come back for another session. It is necessary that the counselor creates a relaxing atmosphere in the counseling setting so that the student does not view the counselor as another authoritative figure who is against him/her. If the student feels welcome and accepted by the counselor, he/she can be relaxed. This relaxed atmosphere can lead to the student's open communication.

e. Encourage self-commitment of the student. The counselor has to make the student realize that it is the student, and the student alone, who can really help solve the problem.

f. Make referrals. When the foreign Student Counselor feels that the student she counsels is unorganized or undecided about career plans, the counselor will refer the student to academic or vocational counseling for assistance.

g. Give the student time to think and make sure that he/she is following what the counselor has said. 'Pause' is supposed to be very helpful in this setting.

h. Show sincerity. The counselor is presenting to the student her understanding. She shows her concern about the
student's problem.

i. Ask direct questions whenever possible to gain as much information as possible. Respect or use other techniques to make sure that she is communicating with the student. However, repeating what the student has said should be limited because too much repeating may embarrass the student and result in silence. The important is having a difficult time communicating with the student.

j. Help the student with self-exploration in a step by step process, to decide on interests and goals and the possible ways to reach the ultimate goals.

Consequently, the Foreign Student Counselor, in dealing with the students from different countries, should study and understand the causes of the student's problems so that she can approach the problem with particular techniques. The Foreign Student Counselor, to be effective, should be able to determine the uniqueness of the problem and deal with it appropriately. Stereotyping should not have any role in counseling of foreign students because of the uniqueness of each individual in terms of culture and background.
CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION

This final chapter will provide an evaluation of the counseling program provided by the office of International Student Services for foreign students who have low academic achievement problems. Recommendations regarding future development of this program will be made.

The style and techniques of counseling foreign students with low academic achievement and types and causes of low achievement problems have been reviewed; the evaluation of a counselor's success in using those techniques will now be discussed. The tabulation of changes in academic standing of foreign students for Fall Semester 1977 and Winter Semester 1978 showed that at the end of Fall Semester 1977, over 50 per cent of the foreign students who received counseling services from the Office of International Student Services changed their standing from Academic Review, Probation, or Continued Probation to Good Academic Standing (see Appendix A). Another 13 per cent changed from Probation to Continued Probation and 33 per cent changed from Probation to Continued Probation to Dismissal. For Winter Semester 1978, 50 per cent of the foreign students who had interviews with the Foreign Student Counselor about their low academic achievement changed from Probation or Continued Probation to Good Academic Standing, 8 per
cent changed from Academic Review to Continued Academic Review, 26 per cent changed from Probation to Continued Probation, and 16 per cent changed from Probation or Continued Probation to Dismissal (see Appendix B). The analysis of these changes in academic standing of foreign students for both semesters suggested that the counseling services seem to be helpful to the students. Although only 57 per cent of low academic achievement students in Fall Semester 1977 and 50 per cent in Winter Semester 1978 changed to Good Academic Standing, the total number of students has changed to a better academic standing. For Fall Semester 1977, 83 per cent changed to a better standing and 88 per cent in Winter Semester 1978.

An analysis of individual changes in academic standing of foreign students in Fall and Winter Semesters indicated that many students successfully improved their academic standing after they received counseling services provided by the Foreign Student Counselor. However, quite a few foreign students were put on Continued Probation or even dismissed from the University for reasons summarized below.

Counseling services are provided by the Office of International Student Services to assist foreign students who have adjustment problems while studying here at the University. Counseling services can be helpful to the students only if the students use them. From the analysis of individual changes in academic standing, it was found that many foreign students who are dismissed from the University are having 'permanent resi-
dent' status. Such students did not appear for an interview despite the two letters of invitation sent by the Foreign Student Counselor or they indicate that they did not want the assistance of the Office of International Student Services. In some cases, the foreign students visited the counselor once; but they made no follow-up visits even when appointments were scheduled. They did not show up for the appointment. In short, most of the foreign students in academic difficulty who do not seek help from the University's Foreign Student Counselor appear to leave the University; not seeking counseling assistance may contribute to their dismissal. They apparently thought that counseling services could not be helpful to them. While it is recognized that only clients can help themselves to change, they may forget the fact that the counselor can offer them some valuable additional guidelines and professional help with their concerns. As a result of counseling, many students have seemed to improve their overall GPA and overcame their achievement problems. In many cases, when foreign students came to the United States to study, lack of academic goals and defined academic interests cause problems in achievement. Such students often get bored and do not study effectively to pass their courses. Consequently, they face the problem of low academic achievement.

There is still the question of how the counselor can be successful in helping foreign students overcome their academic achievement problems. To achieve success, the counselor's
efforts to give professional assistance to foreign student clients must be coupled with serious efforts by the student client to improve their academic performance. A method of assistance offered by the counselor will never be successful without the students' own effort to help themselves. The counseling of foreign students can be effective only when the students cooperate with the counselor. Without such cooperation, it is not likely that the student client will show improved academic performance and the counselor is confronted with a serious counseling problem.

The factors that make it possible for the counselor to be successful in helping foreign student clients with their achievement problems can be categorized in three ways:

1. The overall GPA of the student is not so low that improvement is impossible;

2. The students realize their situation can improve and they are willing to put their effort into the appropriate remedial efforts; i.e., they know what they have to do in order to regain Good Academic Standing;

3. The counselor realizes the students' problems of indecisiveness and disorganization. The counselor's assistance with their self-exploration and self-understanding will help them overcome those academic problems. Curriculum change often seems to help students to improve their academic performance. That is, once the students find out what their interests are and begin to establish life goals, they are often
able to show improvement in their academic work. Thus, enhanced understanding of one's career and life goals is often the key for those students with low academic achievement problem to improve their performance.

By interviewing foreign students on a regular basis, the counselor manages to see foreign student clients at least once a month. For students with severe problems, the counselor will follow the case more closely. Each foreign student client is responsible for making an appointment to see the counselor on the final week of each month. The counselor will therefore usually see the students three or four times per semester. Before the end of each interview, the counselor asks the student clients to report to her about how they are doing in their tests. The counselor will suggest to the students necessary action that might help them improve their performance. Students who see the counselor throughout the semester, found that counseling service is helpful to them and they were able to improve their overall GPA and make important changes in their academic standing. On the other hand, those who are finally dismissed from the University for academic problems more frequently do not seek help from the counseling services provided by the Office of International Student Services. As we have already discussed above, some are holding the 'permanent resident' status here. They probably do not care much about their study, as long as they can work and are able to support themselves. School seems to be
a lower priority for these students.

In conclusion, the Foreign Student Counselor appears to do an effective job in professionally assisting foreign students who experience low academic achievement. Through her assistance, the students seem to improve their academic standing; but those students who decided not to receive any counseling assistance were frequently dismissed.

In chapter II, the style and techniques recommended for foreign student counselors were discussed. Having done my internship at the Office of International Student Services, I worked specifically with the Foreign Student Counselor to help foreign students with low academic achievement. It should also be reported that I participated in the International Hospitality Program to provide the students with American host families while the students stay in the United States. The Hospitality Program is provided to help the students learn more about American culture through American host families.

Recommendations of Counseling Services for Foreign Students

The goal of counseling in the Office of International Student Services is to help foreign students with their adjustment to the American culture and to be successful in their academic endeavors. Several specific counseling techniques of counseling seem effective in working with foreign students:

1. Information gathering techniques.
   a. Provide the client with a relaxing atmosphere so that
the clients feel comfortable in counseling and are more willing to engage in self-disclosure.

b. Be sincere with the students which encourages them to talk about their problems in depth. In most cases, the students will trust the counselor as a person who can help them with their problem. They dare to talk about almost anything to the counselor. The counselor then will have a better understanding of the foreign student clients.

c. Listen carefully and with empathic understanding. The counselor has to convince clients that he/she is with them and can understand how they feel.

d. Avoid stereotyping because this is a barrier that prevents the counselor from working effectively with each individual client as a 'unique' person. The counselor will be able to avoid making any erroneous conclusion about clients.

e. Ask direct questions as: What is the cause of your low academic achievement? Why? or How? These questions will be best for those students who have difficulties describing directly what difficulties they encountered. In other words, these questions will help clients to concentrate more on themselves and to stop "talking around" the point of their problem.

2. Accuracy of communication techniques.

a. Repeat or paraphrase what is heard for the clients to see whether the client confirms counselor understanding. Repeating must, of course, be used with skill or the foreign student client will get the feeling that his/her counselor is
not communicating with him/her at all.

b. Summarize the content of the interview to ensure that mutual understanding exists. The counselor not only has to make sure that the client is understood, but also that client understands the counselor. Counseling can be effective only when both parties accurately understand each other. The counselor's understanding of the client is not enough; the students have to understand what the counselor advises them to do. The counselor can either do the summary him/herself or ask the student to do so in order to check whether the student clients understand what has been said.

c. Use simple terms and avoid slang for a better understanding of the students.

d. Talk slowly and/or ask the students to talk slowly. Some students tend to talk fast when they are frustrated and calming them down will help them to work more effectively on their problems in counseling.

e. Keep good eye-contact with the students. Eye-contact can show the counselor's concern for the client and allows the counselor to check whether the client understands what the counselor said. Also, the students can feel the sincerity of the counselor while the counselor acknowledges him/herself the client's feelings at the moment.

f. Check physical reactions of the student clients as non-verbal communications.

3. Information giving techniques.
a. Help the student to acknowledge and understand University regulations, such as the drop/add procedure. Such information will help the students to avoid unnecessary problems which stem from lack of understanding of University policies, deadlines, etc..

b. Make the students aware of the importance of having a close relationship with their academic advisor and to see their instructor when needed. Consultation with one's academic advisor before taking courses will save the students time and money lost by inappropriate course registrations.

4. To help students feel more comfortable about the courses they are taking, the counselor might suggest tutoring for foreign students so that they can help each other in their study. The cooperation of the students themselves will be necessary.

5. To help students with a better adjustment to the American culture, the counselor might suggest that the students have an American host family to help them learn more about the American way of living. The International Hospitality Program is available for the students to take the opportunity to do so. Contact with a host family can reduce their frustration to live with people in a different culture.

Internship experience was both enjoyable and informative and provided a valuable basis for understanding the counseling process with low achieving foreign student clients.
I. Tabulation of Changes in Academic Standing of Foreign Students at the End of Fall Semester 1977.

a) Total number of students interviewed on a regular basis throughout the semester: 15

b) Changes:

- from Academic Warning to Good Standing: --
- from Academic Review to Good Standing: 2
- From Probation to Good Standing: 1
- from Continued Probation to Good Standing: 5
- from Probation to Continued Probation: 2
- from Academic Review to Continued Academic Review: --
- from Probation to Dismissal: 1
- from Continued Probation to Dismissal: 4

Total 15

c) Changes - Total:

- to Good Standing: 8
- to Academic Review: --
- to Continued Probation: 2
- to Dismissal: 5*

Total 15

* Two of the Dismissal had a 1.99 Acc.GPA, and will most likely be re-admitted immediately for Winter Semester 1978.
## II. Tabulation of Changes in Academic Standing of Foreign Students at the End of Fall Semester 1977

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Winter Sem 1977</th>
<th>Fall Sem 1977</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ac. Rev.</td>
<td>1.71 Good</td>
<td>3.29 2.05</td>
<td>Was dismissed after Winter '77. Achieved Good Standing after curriculum changed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.00 Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.36 1.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.98 Good</td>
<td>2.07 2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.75 Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>2.00 1.89</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.84 Dismissal</td>
<td>1.00 1.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.31 Dismissal</td>
<td>1.29 1.30</td>
<td>This is his third Dismissal from WMU, despite change of curriculum this Fall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.90 Dismissal</td>
<td>2.42 1.99</td>
<td>With 1.99 Ac.GPA, she will probably be re-admitted for Winter'78.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.54 Good</td>
<td>2.25 2.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.92 Good</td>
<td>4.00 2.53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.56 Good</td>
<td>3.08 2.45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Part II, cont'd.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>STANDING</th>
<th>AC.GPA</th>
<th>STANDING</th>
<th>SEM.GPA</th>
<th>AC.GPA</th>
<th>REMARKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>Will attend KVCC for Winter. Upon later admission to WMU, will change curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>With 1.99 Ac.GPA, he will probably be re-admitted for Winter'78.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ac.Rev.</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
III. List of Students who did not appear for an interview despite two letters of invitation, or who indicated that they did not wish for assistance by Office of International Student Services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>STANDING</th>
<th>AC.GPA</th>
<th>STANDING</th>
<th>SEM.GPA</th>
<th>AC.GPA</th>
<th>REMARKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td></td>
<td>Is Permanent Resident and did not avail himself of OISS assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td></td>
<td>Is Permanent Resident and did not avail himself of OISS assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ac.Rev.</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td></td>
<td>Visited once; made no follow-up visits despite making appointments on four different occasions. Never showed for appointment. Is Permanent Resident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>
I. Tabulation of Changes in Academic Standing of Foreign Students at the End of Winter Semester 1978.

a) Total number of students interviewed on a regular basis throughout the semester 26

b) Changes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>from Academic Warning to Good Standing:</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from Academic Review to Good Standing:</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from Probation to Good Standing:</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from Continued Probation to Good Standing:</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from Probation to Continued Probation:</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from Academic Review to Continued Academic Review:</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from Probation to Dismissal:</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>from Continued Probation to Dismissal:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
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</table>

c) Changes - Total:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>to Good Standing:</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>to Academic Review:</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to Continued Probation:</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to Dismissal:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
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</table>
II. Tabulation of Changes in Academic Standing of Foreign Students at the End of Winter Semester 1978

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>FALL SEM.1977</th>
<th>WINTER SEM.1978</th>
<th>REMARKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>STANDING</td>
<td>CUM.GPA</td>
<td>STANDING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>Dismissal 1.27</td>
<td>1.65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>Cont.Prob. 1.91</td>
<td>1.77</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>Good 2.55</td>
<td>2.09</td>
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<td>1.86</td>
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<td>1.84</td>
<td>Good 2.62</td>
<td>2.12</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Good 3.00</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>Good 2.50</td>
<td>2.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>FALL SEM. 1977</td>
<td>WINTER SEM. 1978</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>STANDING</td>
<td>CUM.GPA</td>
<td>STANDING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>2.67</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2.23</td>
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<td>Good</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
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<td>Good</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Good</td>
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<td>Acad. rev.</td>
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<td>Prob.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Good</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### III. List of Students who did not appear for an interview despite two letters of invitation, or who indicated that they did not wish for assistance by Office of International Student Services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>FALL SEM. 1977</th>
<th>WINTER SEM. 1978</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>STANDING</td>
<td>CUM.GPA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Prob.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acad.Rev.</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>Acad.Rev.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont.Prob.</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>Cont. Prob.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Part III, Cont'd.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>FALL SEM. 1977</th>
<th>WINTER SEM. 1978</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>Cont.Prob. 1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>Cont.Prob. 1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prob.</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>Dismissal 2.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CUM.GPA | SEM.GPA | CUM.GPA | REMARKS
----------|---------|---------|-------
1.31      | 1.36    | 1.33    |
0.00      | 1.25    | 0.31    |
1.97      | 2.00    | 1.97    |

NOTE: Students on this list are not included in Part I: Tabulation of Changes, of this Report.
Note: Actual names of students on the reports had to be blocked out in order to maintain the confidentiality of the report.
REFERENCES


Williamson, E.G. The meaning of communication in counseling, Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1959, 38, 7-10.