

Remedial Education at Higher Education Institutions in Fall 1995 Statistical Analysis Report NCES 97-584

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For purposes of this study, remedial education courses were defined as courses in reading, writing, or mathematics for college students lacking those skills necessary to perform college-level work at the level required by the institution. Study skill courses or remedial courses in other academic disciplines (e.g, science) were not included in this study.

1. About three-quarters of higher education institutions that enrolled freshmen offered at least one remedial reading, writing, or mathematics course in Fall 1995. All public two-year institutions and 81 percent of public four-year institutions offered remedial courses. The percent drops to 63 percent of private two-year and private four-year institutions. The lower the mean SES of student body and the more open the admissions standards of the institution, the higher the percent of institutions of a specific type offering remedial courses.

2. Twenty-nine percent of first-time freshmen enrolled in at least one remedial reading, writing, or mathematics course in Fall 1995. Of the 2,128,000 first-time freshmen, 445,220 freshmen enroll in one or more developmental courses. This does NOT include:

- (a) sophomores, juniors, seniors or graduate students who enroll in remedial courses;
- (b) students who participate in non-credit academic enrichment activities such as tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, learning strategy workshops, or similar activities;
- (c) students of any classification who enroll in remedial courses in science and other content areas not covered by the survey; and
- (d) students of any classification who enroll in study strategy courses.

3. Twenty-five percent of institutions offering remedial reading, writing, or mathematics also offered remedial courses in other subjects (e.g., science [general science, biology, chemistry, and physics], English as a second language, and study skills.).

4. All ESL courses were considered remedial at 38 percent of institutions, and an additional 38 percent of institutions considered none of their ESL courses to be remedial.
5. In general, about three-quarters of the students enrolled in remedial courses pass or successfully complete those courses.
6. About half of institutions offering remedial courses indicated that the number of students enrolled in remedial courses at their institution had stayed about the same in the last five years, 39 percent said enrollments had increased, and 14 percent said they had decreased.
7. Two-thirds of institutions indicated that the average time a student takes remedial courses was less than one year, and 28 percent indicated that the average time was one year.
8. Full-time entering Freshmen who enrolled in remedial courses continued at their institution to the start of their second year at a somewhat lower rate than all full-time entering freshmen at institutions offering remedial courses.
9. Among the 22 percent of institutions that did not offer remedial courses in Fall 1995, about a quarter indicated that students take remedial courses at another institution.
10. About three-quarters of institutions offer only institutional credit for remedial courses. Approximately 15 percent offer degree credit.
11. About three-quarters of institutions require students to enroll in remedial courses based on entry level testing. About sixty percent of institutions offer entry level testing of all entering students.
12. About two-thirds of institutions placed some restrictions on the regular academic courses that students could take while they were enrolled in remedial courses. Only two percent prohibited enrollment in regular college courses concurrent with remedial courses.
13. A traditional academic department was the most frequent provider of remedial courses (approximately 55 to 70 percent depending upon the remedial course), with a separate remedial division the second most frequent provider. Learning centers were less frequently used, with 7 to 12 percent providing remedial courses.
14. Remedial education services/courses were provided to local business and industry by half of public two-year institutions, compared with only about five percent of other types of institutions. Of the institutions that provided services to local business and industry: 87 percent offered remedial reading, 93 percent offered remedial writing, 94 percent offered remedial mathematics, 18 percent offered help in English as a second language and basic computer skills. Most of the institutions offered their services at the business site (89 percent) and also on the campus of the institution (74

percent).

15. About a quarter of institutions reported that there was a limit on the length of time a student may take remedial courses at their institution. These time limits were set by the institution 75 percent of the time and by state policy or law at 21 percent of the institutions.

16. A third of institutions offering remedial courses reported that there were state policies or laws that affected the remedial education offerings of their institutions. The major impact of these laws were to require or encourage institutions to offer remedial education. About twice as many public two-year as public four-year institutions were required to offer remedial courses, while more public four-year than public two-year institutions were discouraged from offering remedial education.

17. In comparing trends in remedial courses since 1983 and 1995, there were no significant changes in the percentage of institutions offering such courses. The percentage of institutions offering remedial reading courses showed a significant decrease from 1983 to 1995.

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