Persistence of Developmental Sequences

Institutions where reform practices are in process or at scale still report using multi-semester developmental education course sequences.

Percentage of Respondents Reporting DevEd Reform Change at their Institution

Source: Tyton Partners authored “Hitting Their Stride: Shifting the Developmental Education Reform Movement from Policy to Practice” Notes. The data used to create this chart came from Figures 2 and 4 of the report.

Research shows that developmental education (DevEd) course sequences hinder a student’s ability to access college-level math and English courses. While these sequences are intended to help students prepare for success in gateway courses, in reality, few students make it out successfully to enroll in a gateway course. Reform practices such as corequisite supports have decreased the use of these sequences, but they still persist even in institutions engaged in reform efforts. A recent survey by Tyton Partners illustrates this point.

In February 2020, Tyton Partners surveyed 2,737 faculty, administrators, and other DevEd professionals at public 2-year and 4-year institutions on the adoption and awareness of DevEd reforms at their institutions. Sixty percent of the respondents reported that changes were underway on their campuses (35% implementation in progress and 25% at scale). Within this group, however, 24% of the institutions still use DevEd sequences in more than half of their DevEd math courses. In English, the number is 14%. This Points of Interest shows that institutions where reform practices are in process or at scale still use multi-semester developmental education course sequences on their campuses.

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