

Developmental Courses and Student Success

What are Developmental Courses?

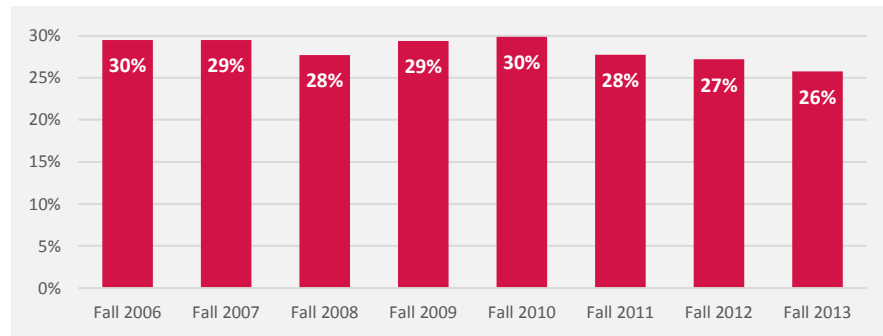
At St. Cloud State, new entering students may be placed into developmental courses based on ACT and/or Accuplacer scores. For this analysis, we are looking at three courses:

- **MATH 070 Basic Math**
- **COLL 120 Power Reading**
- **ENGL 190 Introduction to Analytical & Rhetorical Writing**

If placed into them, students are encouraged to take the courses during their first year at SCSU. We analyzed the results for students who took a developmental course during their first year versus those that did not. The graph to the right shows the percentage of our New Entering First-Year students that took at least one of these three developmental courses during their first year.

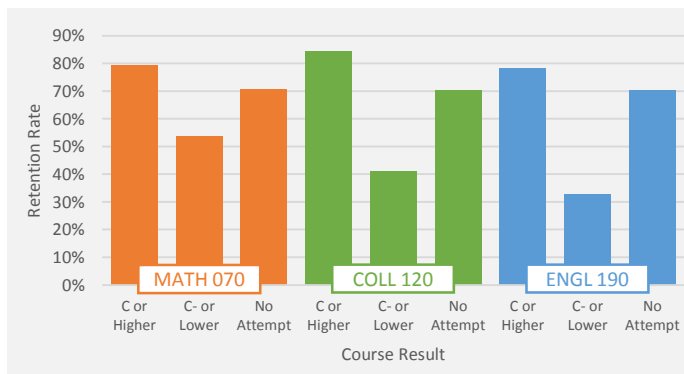
How many student take developmental courses?

Since fall 2010, the percentage of our first-time students taking at least one developmental course during their first year has decreased for each cohort.



Second Year Retention Rate

Students who are required to take developmental courses are less likely to succeed, right? It depends. When students take a developmental course in their first year and earn a “C” or better, they actually return for their second year at a higher rate compared to those students not required to take a developmental course. On the other hand, students who earn a “C-” or worse return at a much lower rate.



Note: Analysis includes first-time (NEF) student cohorts from Fall 2006 to Fall 2013.

Six Year Graduation Rate

However, it seems reasonable to think that taking developmental courses would delay graduation. Again, it depends. We find that the six-year graduation rate is higher for students who earn a “C” or better compared to students that are not required to take developmental courses. Similar to retention, earning a “C-” or lower considerably lowers a student’s chance of success. Six-year graduation data is not yet available for ENGL 190 since this course has only been offered since Fall 2010.

