Developmental Education in Community Colleges

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Developmental Education

• Coursework designed for students who are not at college-level upon entry

• Close to 60 percent of all community college students take at least one course

• Most developmental courses are sequential – students are referred to a level and work towards college-level
Developmental Sequence

R=3

GK
Math In-Order Completion and Enrollment

• Only 6 in 100 students complete every single level AND college algebra
• About 1 in 10 students complete college algebra overall, including those who skip levels

Referred to 3 levels below (100)

2 levels (34)

1 level (18)

GK (10)

PASS

3 levels (72)
Outcomes by Score Cutoff

**Outcome: Completion of First College-Level Course**
Estimated Discontinuity (Math ITT Table 4) = -0.061(0.013)

**Outcome: Fall-to-Fall Retention**
Estimated Discontinuity (Math ITT Table 4) = -0.021(0.011)

**Outcome: Fall-to-Fall Retention**
Estimated Discontinuity (Reading ITT Table 4) = -0.068(0.008)

**Outcome: Fall-to-Fall Retention**
Estimated Discontinuity (Reading ITT Table 4) = -0.009(0.008)
• Problems:
  – Students placed in lowest levels are unlikely to ever finish
  – Effectiveness of developmental education is questionable for students at margin

• Solutions:
  – Other course options for lowest-level students? Example of I-BEST in WA
  – Acceleration programs for higher-level students? Example of ALP in CC of Baltimore County
  – Course redesign? Example of Virginia
For more information:

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