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Redesigned remediation system costs Tennessee community colleges much less for each successful student, new report finds

Corequisite remediation leads to major boost in pass rates in first college-level class

New York, NY (April 5, 2016) -- Corequisite remediation for academically underprepared students is significantly more cost-effective in Tennessee community colleges than the old model, according to a new research brief from the [Community College Research Center](#) (CCRC).

[Tennessee's 13 community colleges](#) implemented corequisite remediation for students placed into developmental education in fall 2015. Under the corequisite model, students take college-level math or writing and enroll simultaneously in a learning support class for extra academic help, instead of taking the remedial class first.

CCRC's research, part of the [Guided Pathways to Success](#) project led by [Complete College America](#) (CCA), found that the cost to get a student through the first college-level math class was cut in half under Tennessee's corequisite model, from \$7,720 to \$3,840. In writing, the cost was cut 11 percent, from \$3,750 to \$3,350. Read the [full report here](#).

"There is a growing body of evidence to indicate that integrating remedial support into college-level coursework leads to better academic outcomes," said Davis Jenkins, a senior research associate at CCRC and co-author of the brief. "This study shows that it produces a better return on investment for students and taxpayers definitely and probably for colleges as well."

Even though the cost per successful student was lower, the overall cost per student went up because of the growth in course enrollments. Those costs were offset by additional revenue. However, there were also additional costs related to implementing co-requisite remediation and a small change in the cost of courses.

The new model was significantly more cost-effective because a much larger number of students were successful in passing their first college-level math or writing course. In math, the pass rate increased from 12 percent over two semesters to 51 percent in one semester. In writing, the rate jumped from 31

percent to 59 percent. Corequisite remediation was only one key element of an integrated set of reforms that the two- and four-year institutions under the [Tennessee Board of Regents](#) implemented in the last several years, making it difficult to say for sure what caused the improvements in outcomes.

Because of the systemic nature of the reforms in Tennessee, other states implementing corequisite remediation may not achieve improvements of the same magnitude as Tennessee. But the model used in the research brief can be used to determine the cost-effectiveness of similar reforms in other institutions or states.

The Guided Pathways to Success project, in which CCRC and CCA are working with two- and four-year college leaders, faculty, and administrators in Georgia, Indiana and Tennessee to implement guided pathways reforms, is funded by [Lumina Foundation](#).

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[The Community College Research Center](#) (CCRC), Teachers College, Columbia University, conducts research on the major issues affecting community colleges in the United States and contributes to the development of practice and policy that expand access to higher education and promote success for all students.