

Higher Student Success Rates at Delta State University

Students more likely to receive As, Bs, Cs, and CRs and less likely to receive Ds, Fs, NCs, and Ws when taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty

An analysis of 4,602 student grades from 314 course sections at Delta State University in Cleveland, Mississippi finds that sections taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty had significantly higher success rates and significantly lower DFW rates compared to course sections taught by matched faculty. In addition, students taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty in the spring 2018 semester reported a significantly greater growth mindset than students taught by the same faculty in the fall 2017 semester, on a widely accepted metric (Dweck, 2000).

Methodology

Delta State University identified a matched control faculty member for each faculty member who earned ACUE's Certificate in Effective College Instruction during the 2017-2018 academic year, based on courses taught during 2017-2018, rank, and years of experience. Grades and completion data were analyzed for all students enrolled in the 144 course sections taught by the 17 credentialed faculty and 170 course sections taught by the 17 matches for those faculty during the 2017-2018 academic year, representing a total of 4,602 student enrollments (2,375 in ACUE course sections and 2,227 in comparison sections).

The "success rate" is defined as students who received As, Bs, Cs, and CRs. The DFW rate is defined as students who received Ds, Fs, and NCs, and students who withdrew from courses.

In addition, faculty participating in ACUE's course distributed the ACUE student questionnaire to students in their courses at the end of the fall 2017 and spring 2018 semesters. We analyzed 868 responses from students of 11 ACUE-credentialed faculty who had responses for both the fall and spring semesters.

Key Findings

- **Students in course sections taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty had significantly higher success rates and lower DFW rates compared to the rates among students in course sections taught by matched faculty.**
 - Overall, the success rate for sections taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty was 86.5%, while the success rate for sections taught by matched faculty was 82.8%.
 - In other words, 88 more students received As, Bs, Cs, or CRs than would have if the success rate for the ACUE sections were the same as the success rate for the matched faculty.
 - Overall, the DFW rate for sections taught by ACUE-credentialed faculty was 11.8%, while the DFW rate for sections taught by matched faculty was 15.3%.
 - In other words, 82 fewer students failed, withdrew, or received Ds than would have if the DFW rate for the ACUE sections were the same as the DFW rate for the matched faculty.
- **In the spring 2018 semester, students of ACUE-credentialed faculty reported having a significantly greater growth mindset compared to students of the same faculty in the fall 2017 semester.**
 - Students in the spring semester reported greater disagreement with the statement "You can learn new things, but you can't really change your basic intelligence."

Reference

Dweck, C.S. (2000). *Self-theories: Their role in motivation, personality, and development*. Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.