Public Abstract

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Title:A Freshman Seminar Course Evaluation: Short- and Long-Term Academic Impacts

Freshman seminar courses are designed to enhance a student's first year experience and help students succeed academically. Review of the literature found studies on seminar courses focused on short-term outcomes such as first year GPA, credit hour completion, or year one to year two retention. Studies looking long-term used graduation rates. No literature was found looking at GPA or credit hour completion past year one. Using propensity score matching to account for selection bias, t-tests, and regression analyses, this research attempted to find if enrolling in the SSC 1150 College Success course was associated with positive short- and long-term academic outcomes. Results from unmatched data found, students who took the course had lower cumulative GPA's and credit hour completion in all four years, a higher year one to year two retention rate, and lower four- and six-year graduation rates. For matched students, those who took the course had a higher first year cumulative GPA and credit hour completion, but lower numbers than course takers in other years. Seminar takers still had a higher year one to year two retention rate, and lower four-year graduation rate, but their six-year graduation rate was higher than takers.