

Achieving the Dream Report Series



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A Comparative Analysis on the Effect of Ethnicity on Course Completion Rates For Developmental and Gatekeeper Courses

This report is the first in a series that will examine a comparison of Fall 2006 and Fall 2007 course completion rates for developmental and “gatekeeper” courses. The impact of ethnicity on course completion rates is a key area of focus for NECC’s Achieving the Dream initiative. For the purposes of this analysis, the ethnicity groups are classified as Majority (White, non-Hispanic), Hispanic, and Minority (Asian, Black, non-Hispanic and American Indian). Students in Missing, Unknown and Non-Resident Alien ethnic groups have been excluded.

“Success” is defined as course completion with a grade of C or better (C- is excluded). The graphs and table on the following page provide Fall 2006 and Fall 2007 rates. Interestingly, there is substantial variation with this demographic depending on the course.

Minority students achieved the most substantial increase in course completion in Basic Writing (WRT010, 27%) and Developmental Math (MA022, 28%).

The most significant decrease in course completion was for Minority and Hispanic students in English 101 with a -23% decrease in their successful completion between Fall 2006 and Fall 2007. Hispanic students also show a significant decrease in College-level math (120/130) where course completion rates declined -21% in Fall 2007.

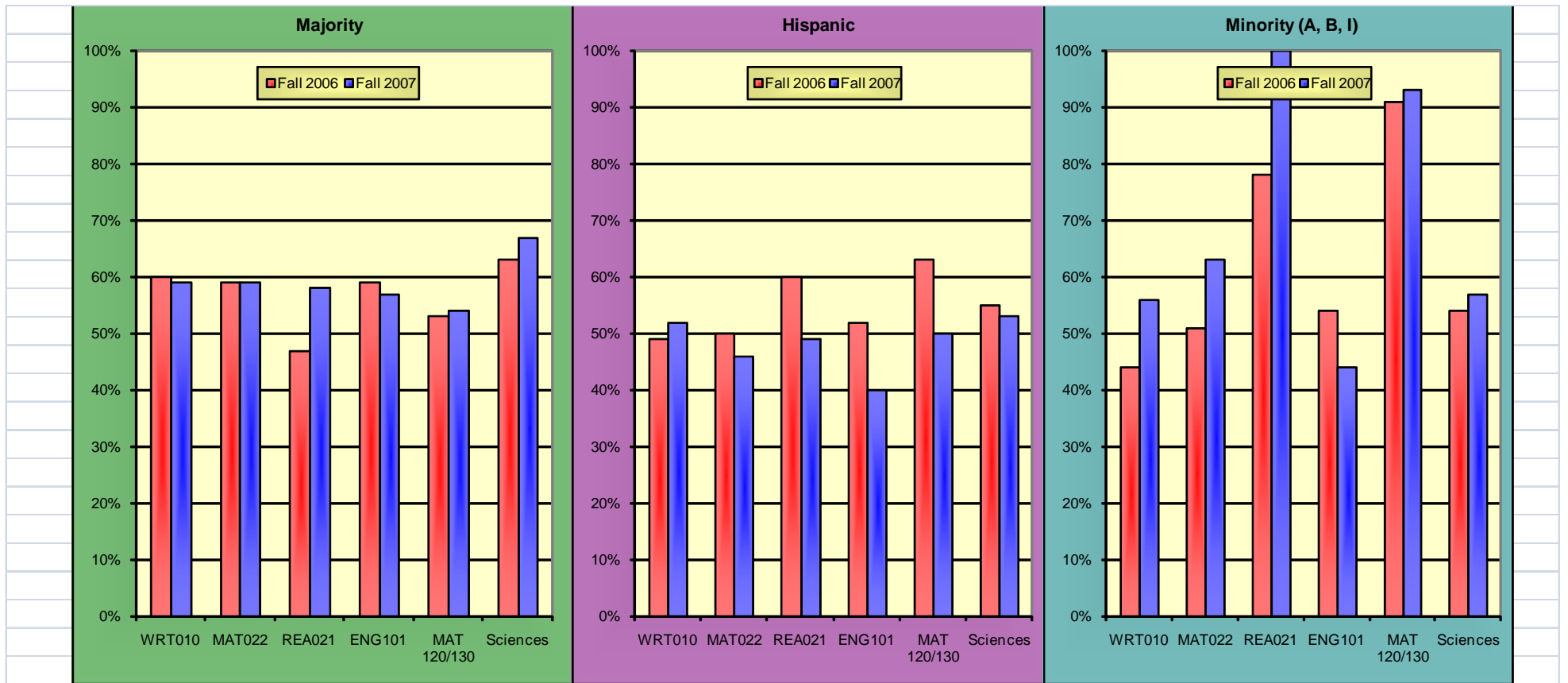
The only course area where Hispanic students experienced an increase between the two fall terms was in Basic Writing where successful course completion increased by 6% in Fall 2007.

Majority students show mostly increases and two small decreases in comparing the two semesters. The most substantial increase was observed in Developmental Reading (REA021) where the rate went up 23%. Increases also occurred in College Math (MAT120/130, 2%) and gatekeeper Sciences (BIO 103, 121 and 122, 8%). There were decreases in Basic Writing and English 101 (-2%, and -3% respectively). Students show the same outcomes in both Fall terms in Developmental Math (MAT022, 59%).

If we look at those students who successfully complete Basic Writing in the Fall and then go on to complete English 101 in the subsequent spring there is a 17% increase for Majority students, a 19% increase for Hispanic students, and a 11% increase in Minority between the 2 years of the study.

Interpretations of these findings as well as suggestions for further analysis are always welcome. Please direct questions and comments to Thomas Fallon, Dean of Institutional Research and Planning, via phone at 978-556-3866 or email at tfallon@necc.mass.edu.





	Majority					Hispanic					Minority (A, B, I)				
	Fall 2006		Fall 2007		1 Year	Fall 2006		Fall 2007		1 Year	Fall 2006		Fall 2007		1 Year
	# Enr	% Comp	# Enr	% Comp	Change	# Enr	% Comp	# Enr	% Comp	Change	# Enr	% Comp	# Enr	% Comp	Change
Basic Writing	175	60%	195	59%	-2%	148	49%	164	52%	6%	32	44%	34	56%	27%
Math (MAT 022)	611	59%	552	59%	0%	171	50%	211	46%	-8%	41	51%	48	63%	24%
Reading (REA 021)	153	47%	146	58%	23%	70	60%	99	49%	-18%	23	78%	13	100%	28%
English 101	717	59%	685	57%	-3%	170	52%	180	40%	-23%	41	54%	41	44%	-19%
College Math (120/130)	234	53%	260	54%	2%	48	63%	58	50%	-21%	11	91%	14	93%	2%
BIO 103, 121 & 122	527	63%	536	67%	6%	95	55%	128	53%	-4%	61	54%	47	57%	6%

*Students in Missing, Unknown & Non-resident Alien ethnicity categories are not included in this report.