



A Data-Informed Approach to Improve Course Completion Rates

Navigating GoToWebinar

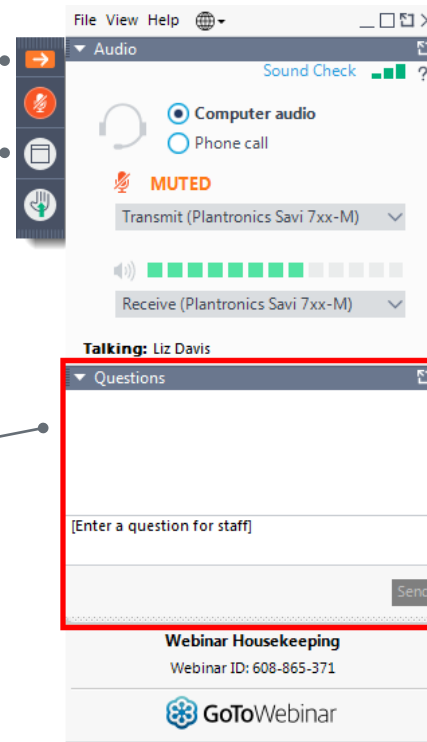
Basic Logistics

Click the orange button to open or hide the control panel.

Click the gray button with the screen icon to make the presentation full screen.

To Ask a Question

Enter questions or comments in the question box and click "Send."





▶ Start with best practices research

- › Research Forums for presidents, provosts, chief business officers, and key academic and administrative leaders
- › At the core of all we do
- › Peer-tested best practices research
- › Answers to the most pressing issues

▶ Then hardwire those insights into your organization using our technology & services

Enrollment Management

Our **Enrollment Services** division provides data-driven undergraduate and graduate solutions that target qualified prospective students; build relationships throughout the search, application, and yield process; and optimize financial aid resources.

Student Success

Members of the **Student Success Collaborative** use research, consulting, and an enterprise-wide student success management system to help students persist, graduate, and succeed.

Growth and Academic Operations

Our **Academic Performance Solutions** group partners with university academic and business leaders to help make smart resource trade-offs, improve academic efficiency, and grow academic program revenues.

1.2B⁺

Student interactions annually

1M⁺

Individuals on our student success management system

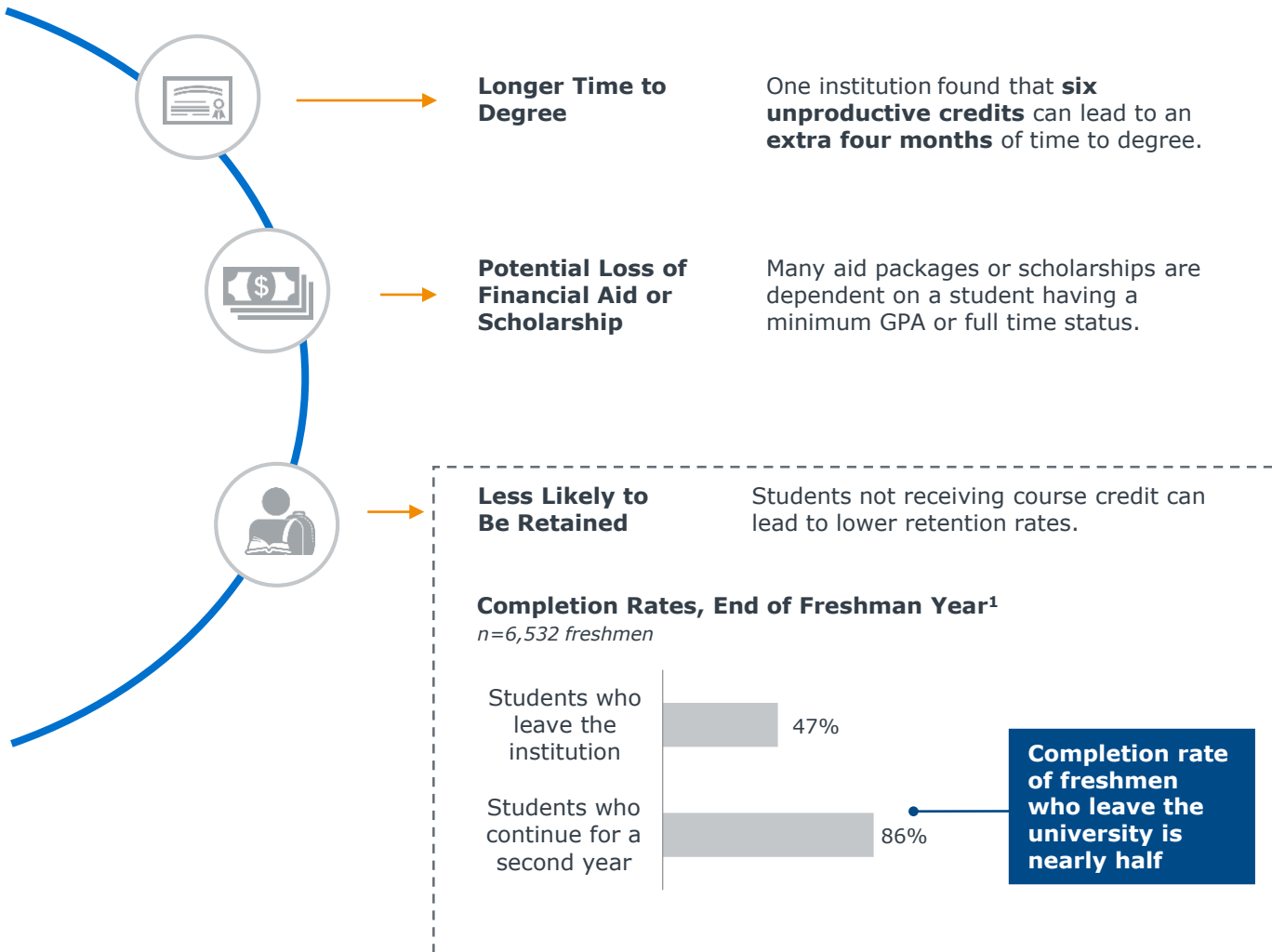
1,200⁺

Institutions we are proud to serve

1

Goal: Make education smarter

The High Cost of Credits Taken But Not Earned



Source: University of Wisconsin-Madison, Predictors of Time-to-Degree for Recent UW-Madison Undergraduates, December 2014:
https://apir.wisc.edu/timetodegree/Predictors_TimetoDegree_2014.pdf;
Academic Performance Solutions research and analysis.

1) Average end-of-freshman-year completion rate at one regional comprehensive university.

Common Root Causes of Low Course Completion Rates

Challenging to know where to begin....

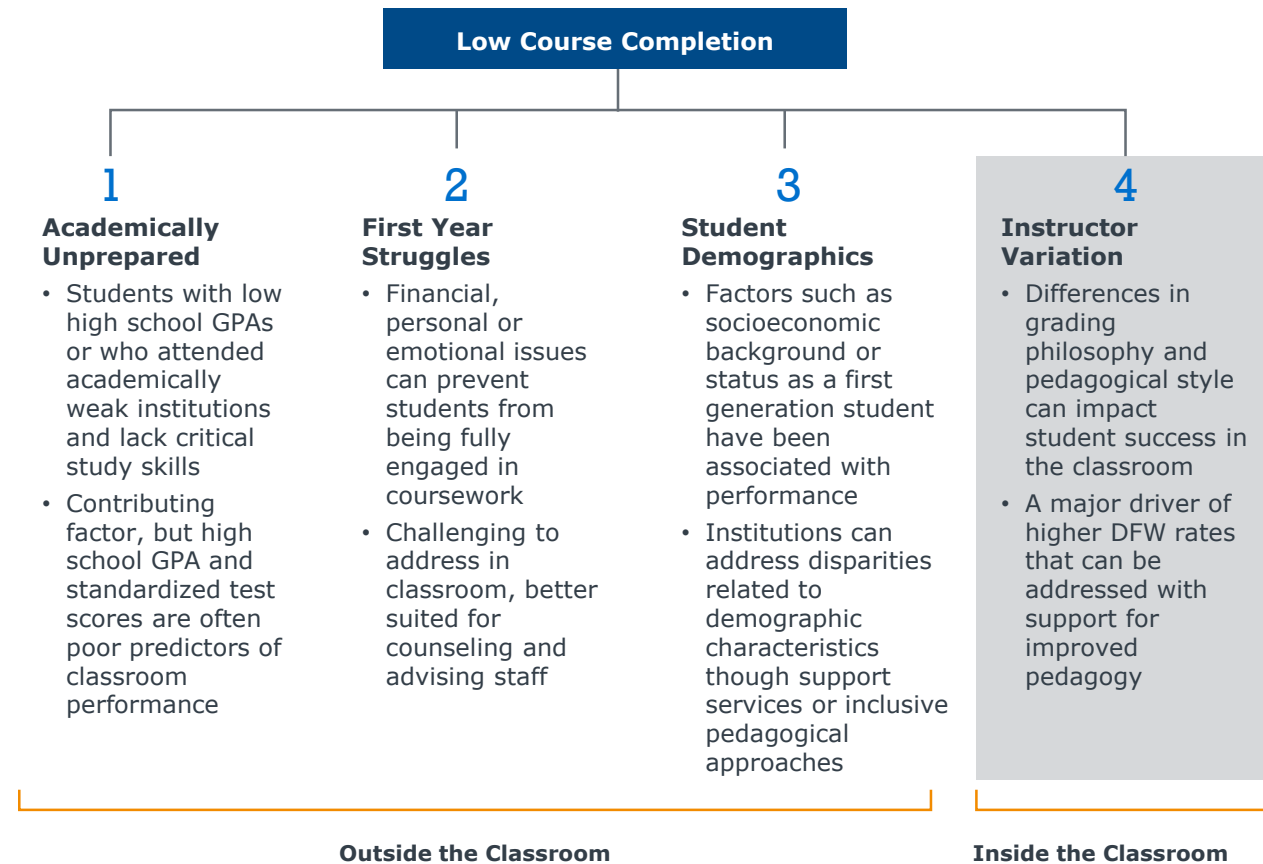
?

Contextual Black Hole

Difficult to determine what constitutes high and low levels of performance

"Boiling the Ocean"

Tough to prioritize efforts amid hundreds and thousands of courses and sections



Improvement efforts often met with skepticism by faculty, citing quality concerns or use of gateway courses to screen students

Three Steps to Determine Your Improvement Strategy

1 Size the Opportunity

Quantify unproductive credits, examining both the rate and absolute number; compare to benchmark

Critical analyses:



Course Completion Rates v. Peer Benchmarks



Completion Rates v. Attempted Student Credit Hours



D,F, and W Grade Distributions¹

2 Identify Root Causes

Analyze specific courses with low completion rates and drill into section-level variation

Critical analyses:



Median Course Completion Trends by Instructor



Completion Rate Analyses with Drilldown to Course Reference Number



Intercurricular Dependencies

3 Prioritize Resources

Focus on courses where you can have the largest impact on students, such as high enrollment and capacity constrained courses

Critical analyses:



Courses with Highest Unearned Credit Hours



Bottom 30 Courses by Completion Rate

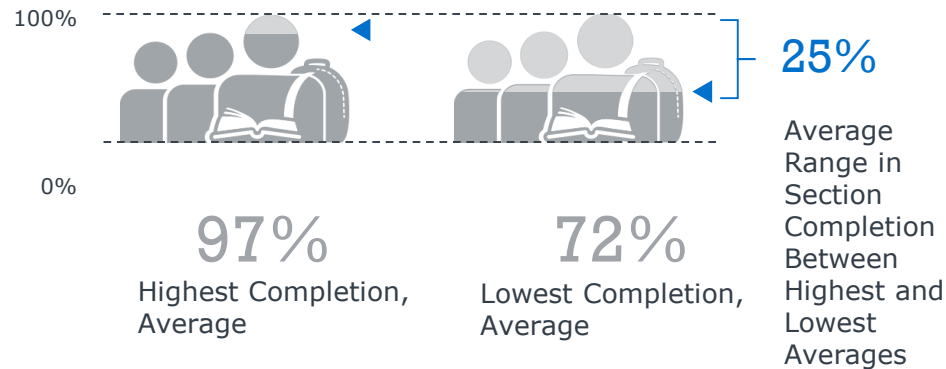


Impact of Course Bottlenecks on Course Completion

How Much Variation Can We Expect?

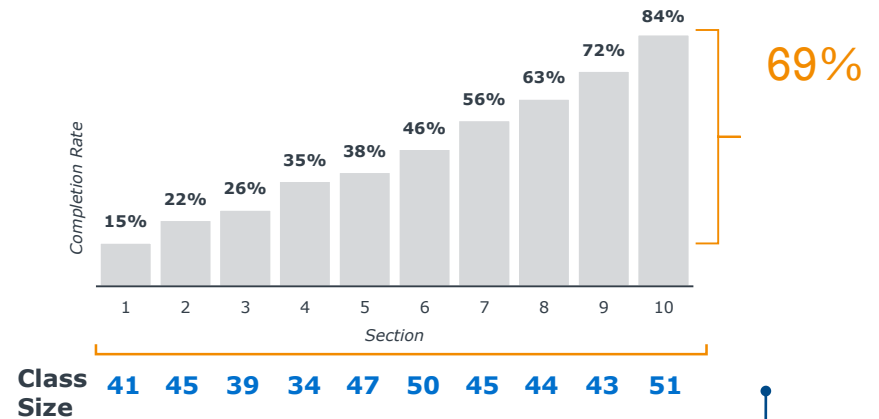
Range of Section Completion Rates¹

n=43 institutions



Even Wider Variation for Gateway Courses²

n=1 Very Large Research Institution, Fall 2015



Class size not a determining factor

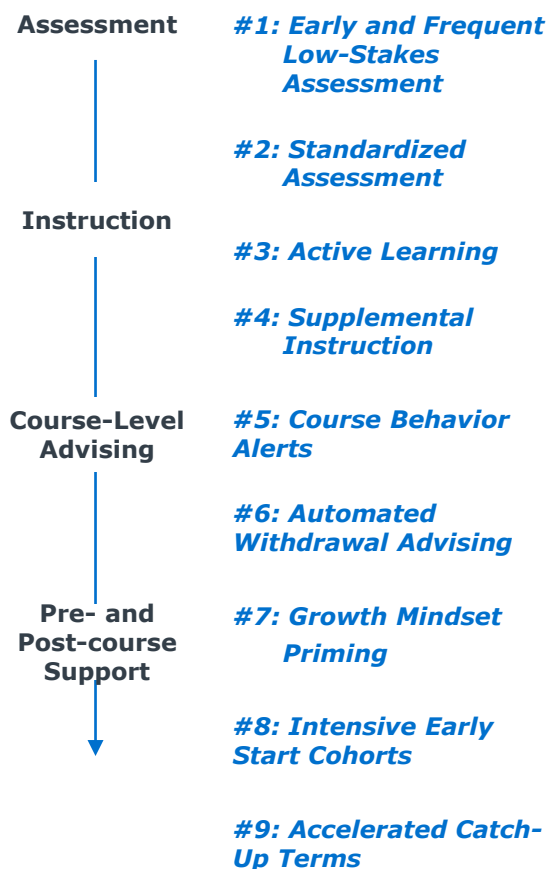
Variation in sample Calculus I completion rates is almost triple that of the average

1) Methodology: Found the range of completion rate for each course with five or more sections at each school in the collaborative, then took the average.
2) Sample data from one institution in the collaborative. All sections with class size greater than 25.

Best Practices in Action as Boise State Scales Course Redesign



Nine Tactics for Improving Course Completion



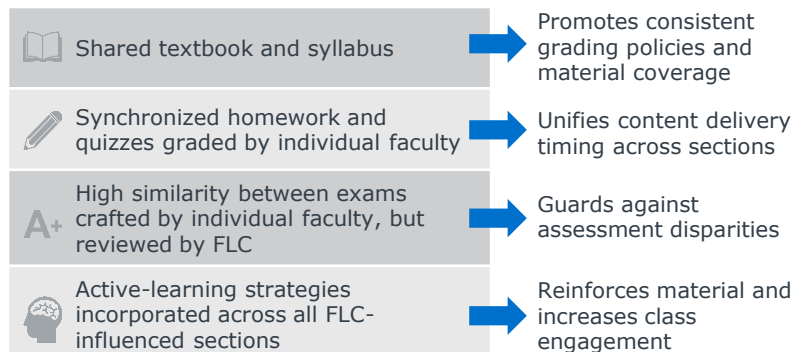
Case in Brief



BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

As part of a course-based faculty learning community (FLC), Boise State brought together instructors from a multi-section calculus course to improve teaching and learning through adoption of shared materials and approaches

A Coherent Multi-Section Course



Impact Highlights

13%

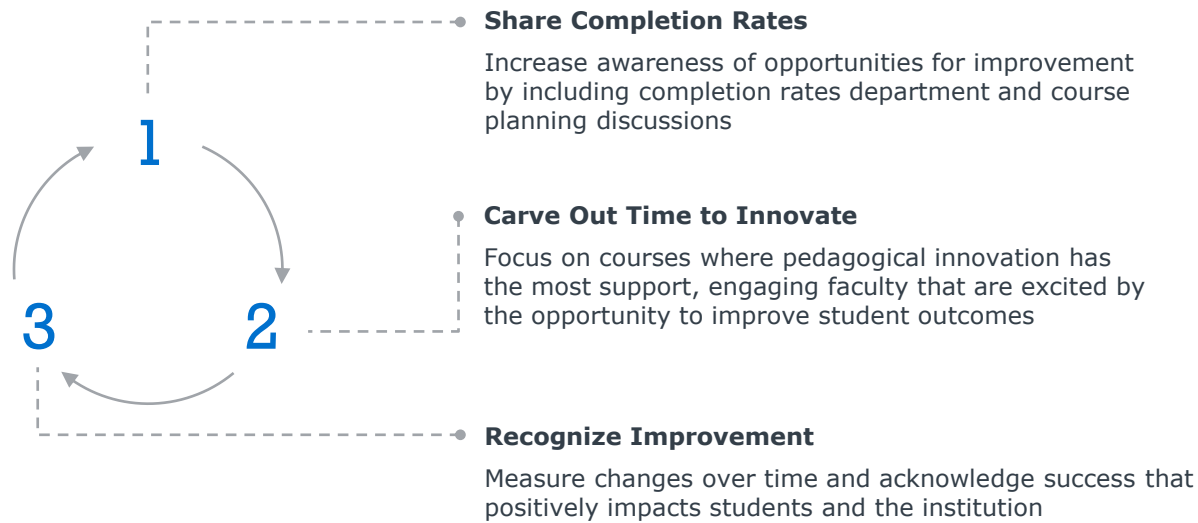
Increase in pass rates

100%

Non-FLC Calculus I instructors adopted redesigned structure and materials the following semester

Source: Bullock D, et al., "Coherent Calculus Course Design: Creating Faculty Buy-in for Student Success," 122nd ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition, 2015; EAB interviews and analysis; Academic Affairs Forum, The Course Completion Playbook.

Closing Principles



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