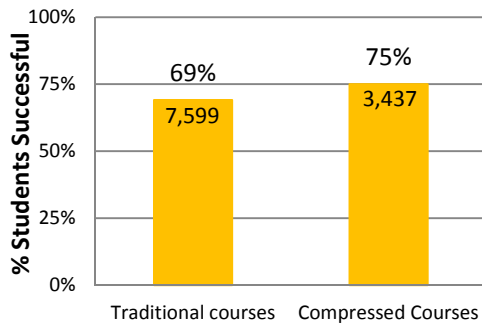


Impact of Course Length on and Subsequent Use as a Predictor of Course Success

Success Rates by Course Length



Students in compressed courses are statistically significantly more likely to successfully complete the course (75%) than students in an 18 week course (69%).

Students with higher than average prior GPAs and in compressed courses are statistically significantly more likely to successfully complete the course (85%) than students in an 18 week course (77%).

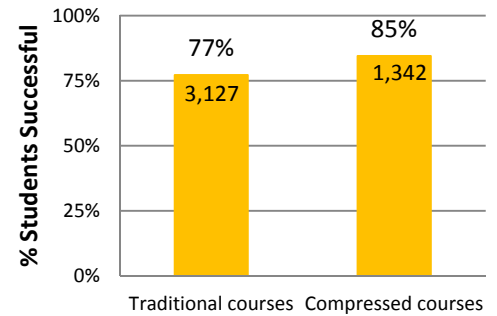
Students in compressed English and reading courses are substantially more likely to successfully complete the course (88% and 92%, respectively) than students in an 18 week course (71% and 85%, respectively).

Students with lower than average prior GPAs and in compressed courses are statistically significantly and substantially more likely to successfully complete the course (70%) than students in an 18 week course (57%).

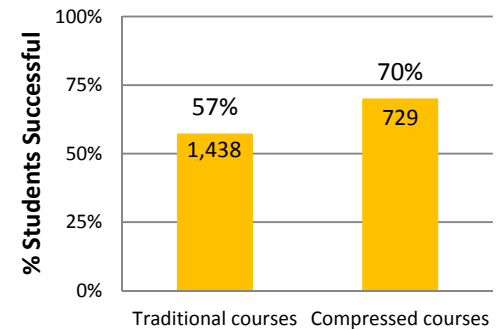
Students in compressed CIS and communication studies courses are statistically significantly and substantially more likely to successfully complete the course (78%) than students in an 18 week course (69% and 56%, respectively).

Students in compressed courses are 1.5 times more likely to successfully complete the course than students in an 18 week course when controlling for prior GPA and instructor.

Success Rates by Course Length for Students with Higher than Average Prior GPAs



Success Rates by Course Length for Students with Lower than Average Prior GPAs

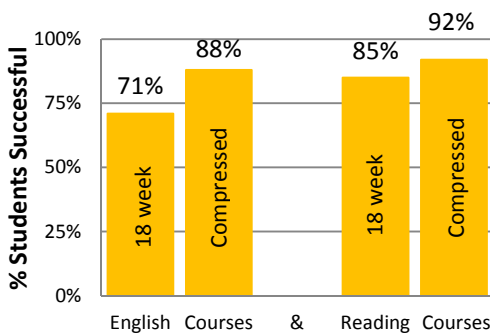


Students are More Likely to Succeed in Compressed Courses

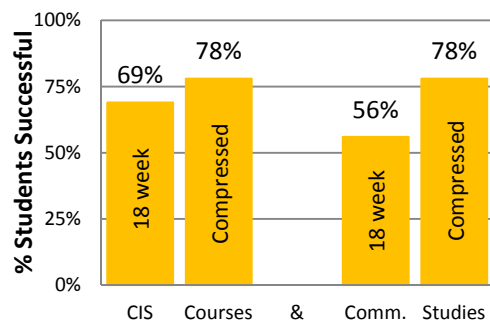
Predictor	β	p	Exp(β)
Course Length	.44	<.001	1.553
Prior GPA	.73	<.001	2.083
Constant	-1.2	<.001	0.299

Course length has an odds ratio of 1.553 and a positive β coefficient meaning a student enrolled in a compressed course is one and a half times more likely to succeed than a student enrolled in a traditional-length course.

Success Rates for English and Reading Courses by Course Length



Success Rates for CIS and Communication Studies Courses by Course Length



Note: The numbers within each bar graph represent the total number of students with the specified characteristic. For instance, referring to the chart on the top left, 4,592 students had completed a compressed course and 75% of those 611 students ($n = 3,437$) successfully completed the course.

Source: Gamboa, B. R. (2013, RRN 688). Impact of course length on and subsequent use as a predictor of course success. *Crafton Hills College Office of Research and Planning*. Retrieved from <http://www.craftonhills.edu/research>

Motivation:

In Summer 2013 an instructor at Craffton Hills College observed abnormally high course completion and success rates in a 5-week lower division general education course, which prompted an inquiry to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research & Planning (OIERP) on whether there was a statistical difference in student success when comparing coterminous (i.e. full-term or traditional) and non-coterminous (i.e. short-term or compressed) courses. A literature review of prior research clearly indicates that compressed and accelerated courses lead to higher course success rates across many disciplines, including developmental courses such as English, reading and mathematics.

Additionally, the HSI STEM Pathways grant program at Craffton Hills College began considering various course sequencing using a compressed course calendar. With a traditional term of 18 weeks, two series of 8-week non-coterminous course offerings could be scheduled consecutively with a first set of courses beginning on the same week as traditional courses and a second set beginning on the eleventh week of the traditional term.

Implications:

This study was conducted due to explicit interest from various instructional programs at Craffton Hills College. Although the overall results find there is a statistical relationship of student success between compressed and traditional-length courses, the practical relationship isn't substantial according to the effect size statistic. When examining the effect size and statistical relationship of student success by course length within instructional divisions and subjects, there appear to be much stronger positive practical implications. For example, a significant and practical relationship appears in six subjects: English, reading, history, computer information systems, communications studies, and theatre arts. Positive, yet insignificant relationships were found in an additional five subjects: mathematics, college life, allied health, respiratory care, and music.

Importantly, English, reading, and mathematics are developmental subjects, which provides opportunities for CHC to consider alternative scheduling to assist students in successfully completing developmental sequences. The results of this study are in agreement with other studies, including Sheldon and Durdella (2009), which found significant improvements in student success in developmental courses offered in compressed formats. Only one subject, learning resources, had a statistically and negative practical relationship, which would require additional analysis to determine a correlation for the lower success rate in compressed courses. Finally, because condensed courses have the same number of contact hours as traditional-length courses in a shorter period of time, condensed courses are required to meet more days a week for more hours possibly causing a strain on facility scheduling when there is a shortage of classroom space or support services.