



DOES REMEDIATION WORK FOR ALL STUDENTS?

How the Effects Of Postsecondary Remedial And Developmental Courses Vary By Level Of Academic Preparation

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REMEDIAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL POSTSECONDARY COURSES

- Lack of academic prep is a significant barrier to success
- Nationally **approx. 40%** of 1st year students are placed into college remediation (**55-60%** at CCs)
- *Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2009*: Emphasis on increasing the number of adults with 2yr degrees → Effective remediation policies are central to this goal

Do remedial and developmental courses help to improve the outcomes of students?



DOES REMEDIATION IMPROVE STUDENT OUTCOMES

Past studies on the effects of remediation (FL, OH, TX):

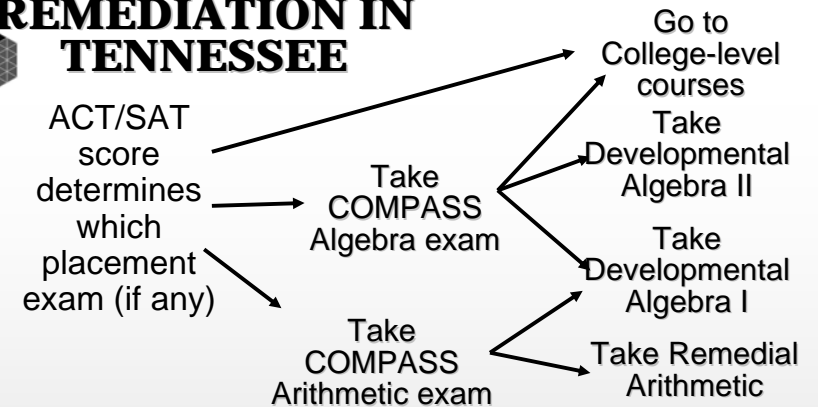
- Mixed results, often negative or zero
- Only focus on students on the *margin* of needing remediation—do not investigate effects of remediation on students who are **extremely** under-prepared (they don't have an appropriate control group)

The Tennessee Case

- Multiple cutoffs and changes in placement policy over time → Investigate effects of different levels of remediation using multiple RDs
- *Sample*: Fulltime students under age 21 who began at a TN public college or university in fall 2000

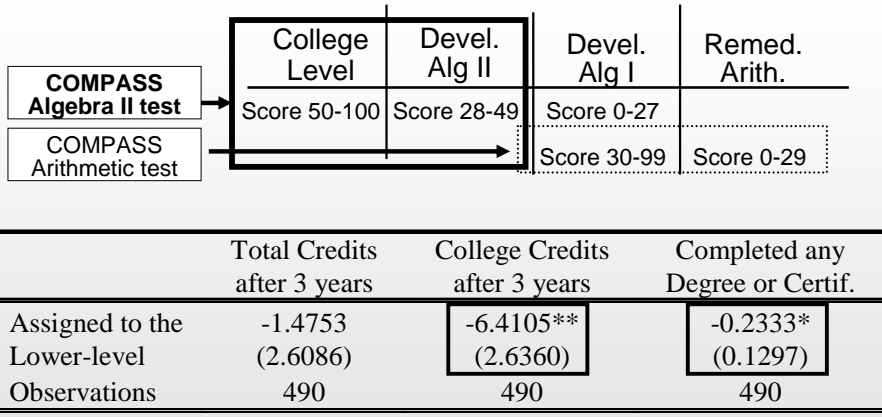


REMEDIATION IN TENNESSEE

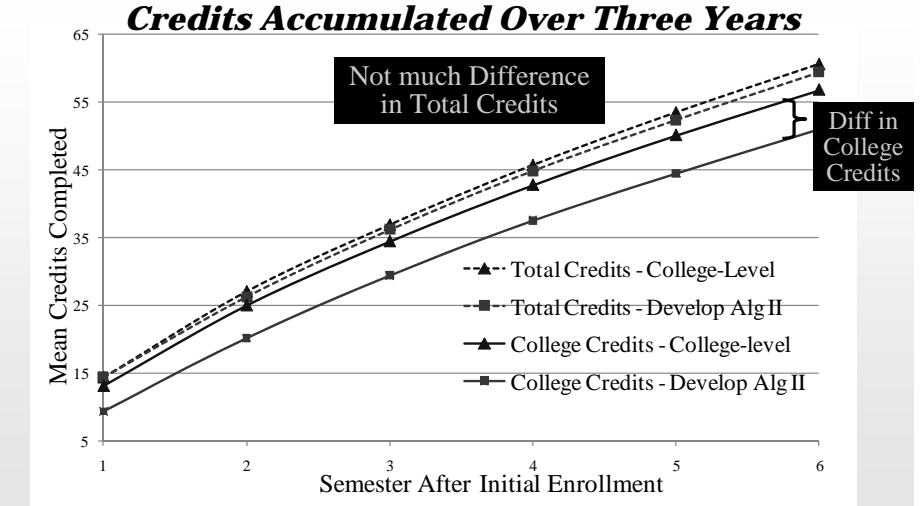


	College Level	Devel. Alg II	Devel. Alg I	Remed. Arith.
COMPASS Algebra II test	Score 50-100	Score 28-49	Score 0-27	
COMPASS Arithmetic test			Score 30-100	Score 0-29

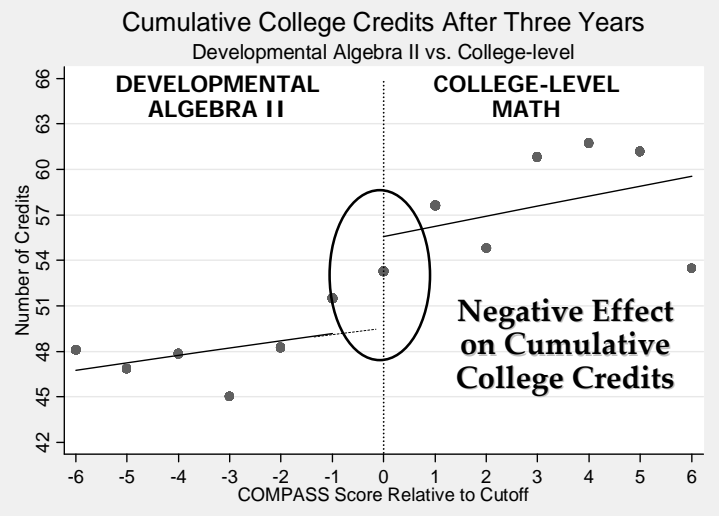
RD #1: Effects of Recommendation to DEVELOP. ALGEBRA II –vs– COLLEGE-LEVEL MATH



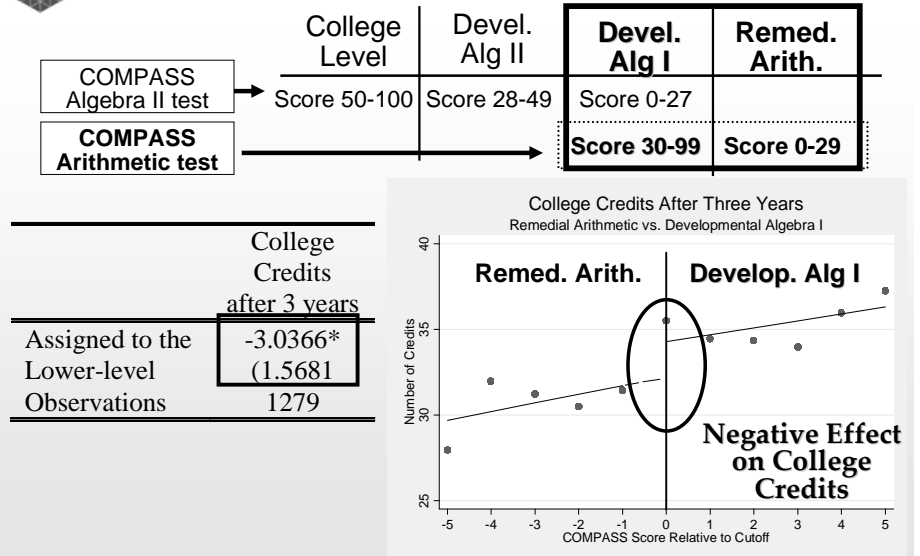
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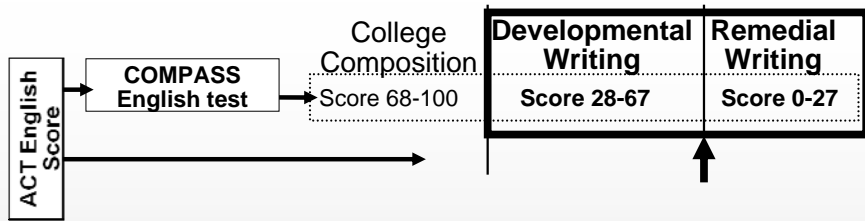


RD #3: REMEDIAL ARITHMETIC –vs– DEVELOP ALGEBRA I





WRITING -vs- REMEDIAL WRITING

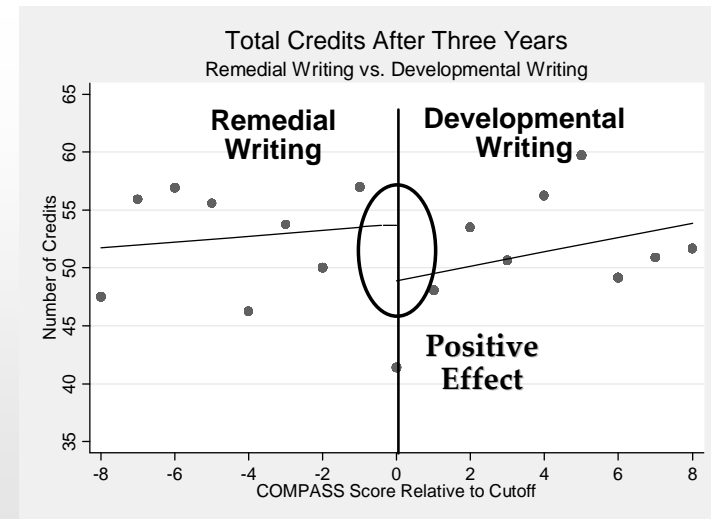


	Still Enrolled in Year 3	Total Credits after 3 yrs	College Credits after 3 yrs	Completed Degree or Certif.
Assigned to the Lower-level	0.2197+ (0.1378)	3.9792+ (2.7198)	-0.4107 (2.5282)	0.3057* (0.1623)
Observations	898	898	898	898

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RD #2: DEVELOPMENTAL WRITING -vs- REMEDIAL WRITING



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Outcome: GRADE IN FIRST COLLEGE-LEVEL COURSE

Not causal analysis, but interesting estimates...

	WRITING	
	College-Level vs. Develop. Writing (RD #1)	Develop. Writing vs. Remedial Writing (RD #2)
Assigned to the Lower-level	0.0342 (0.0998)	0.5389*** (0.1598)
Observations	782	522
FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS ONLY		
Assigned to the Lower-level	0.2791* (0.1464)	0.1954 (0.1803)
Observations	315	231
TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS ONLY		
Assigned to the Lower-level	-0.1438 (0.1356)	0.8960*** (0.2765)
Observations	467	291

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SUMMARY: TENNESSEE RESULTS

- The results suggest that remedial and developmental courses do differ in their impact by the level of student preparation
 - Negative effects for those students on the margins of needing any remediation (similar to other research)
 - However, at the other end of the academic spectrum, the negative effects of remediation were much smaller and occasionally positive, especially in Writing
- Remedial and developmental courses help or hinder students differently depending on their level of academic preparedness

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IMPLICATIONS AND ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

- States and schools need not treat remediation as a singular policy but instead consider it as an intervention that might vary in its impact according to student needs
- Why does remediation work for some students and not for others? → How can we improve remedial and developmental programs for all?
 - What is the best way to offer remediation?
 - Characteristics of strong remedial programs?
- Found differences by institutional level – Has implications for the effects of limitations on remedial course-taking (e.g., only at CCs)?
- Early Placement Testing – a preventative measure?

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