

Pathways to Success Summer 2016 Results



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Introduction

This paper presents the outcomes from Pathways students in Summer 2016. Summer 2016 was unique for Pathways in that students were permitted to take courses in any subject via any methodology just by asking.¹ This precedent setting move was the result of an advising error turned into a pilot project to generate data on student behavior. The paper describes then overall results, then limits the data to continuing students. It further limits the data to those who would have been granted permission and those who would not have been granted permission to take certain courses including online sections.

Overall Summary

A total of 57 individual Pathways students – 18 at LSUA and 39 at LSUE – were registered as of the census day for Summer 2016. The 57 students took 86 courses generating 258 credit hours. Table 1 details the outcomes for the students.² A total of 61 (71%) of the courses were successfully completed while 25 (29%) received either a D, F, or withdrew.³ The data indicates that three-fourths did not complete MATH 1021 while about half did not complete BIOL 1001, MATH 0001, and MATH 0002.

Table 1
Pathways Students' Final Grade Frequencies for SU 16.

Course	A	B	C	D	F	W	Grand Total
BIOL1001		2	1			3	6
ENGL0001	5	1			1	1	8
ENGL1001	3	6	2			1	12
ENGL1002	2						2
HIST1003	1						1
MATH0001	1	1	1	1	2	1	7
MATH0002	2	6	4	2	3	6	23
MATH1015		1		1			2
MATH1021		1		1	1	1	4
PSYC2070	2	1					3
UNIV0008		5	2				7
UNIV1005	4	3	4				11
Grand Total	20	27	14	5	7	13	86

Summary of Continuing Students

Omitting the ten new freshmen who took UNIV 1005 and ENGL 0001 in the summer yields **47 continuing Pathways students taking 69 summer courses**. Reducing to the 47 continuing students makes sense since success in math, science, and online classes is in question. As Table 2 indicates, a total of 45 (65%) of the courses were successfully

¹ Subject to prerequisites stated in the LSU Eunice Catalog.

² Pathways Summer 2016 GPA statistics: mean = 2.471, median = 3.000, s.d. = 1.189

³ Pathways overall GPA statistics: mean = 2.688, median = 2.790, s.d. = 0.765

completed with an A, B, or C while 24 (35%) were not. Overall, continuing students had the most difficulty with MATH 0002, then MATH 0001, and then BIOL 1001/MATH 1021.

Table 2
Final Grade Results for all Continuing Pathways Students SU 16.

Course	A	B	C	D	F	W	Grand Total
BIOL1001		2	1			3	6
ENGL0001					1		1
ENGL1001	3	6	2			1	12
ENGL1002	2						2
HIST1003	1						1
MATH0001	1	1	1	1	2	1	7
MATH0002	2	6	4	2	3	6	23
MATH1015		1		1			2
MATH1021		1		1	1	1	4
PSYC2070	2	1					3
UNIV0008		5	2				7
UNIV1005	1						1
Grand Total	12	23	10	5	7	12	69

Permission to take Courses in the Summer

Pathways students were permitted to take any summer course taught by any methodology for the first time since 2007. This was contrary to the policy that restricted participation in some courses. For example, science and mathematics historically caused issues for Pathways students. As a result, the restriction to a GPA of 3.50 or higher was created as a guideline. Pathways students meeting the 3.50 GPA requirement were permitted to take science and mathematics in the summer. Pathways students with a GPA between 3.50 and 3.00 had to ask the permission of the Director to take science or mathematics with decisions being made on a case by case basis. Several factors went into the creation of the 3.50 including the GPA to provide a historical prospective of student performance. The second consideration was that courses move twice as fast in the summer. The third was a desire to be sensitive to the needs of the campus at large given the pace and that Pathways students may slow the presentation of course material, especially in mathematics.

Beyond the conditions for math/science courses, Pathways students were generally afforded the permission to take other courses as necessary to satisfy their major. Given that these conditions were waived for Summer 2016, the question of permission surfaces. For example, for continuing Pathways students, what were the outcomes if permission would have been given?

Table 3 seeks to answer that question by filtering the data in Table 2 for continuing students who would have received permission to take their summer courses. As Table

3 demonstrates, a total of 36 (82%) of the courses were successfully completed by students who would have obtain the permission to take them in the summer. Of the remaining seven courses, two were taken by a student banned from the campus midway through the summer due to a discipline issue.⁴ The remaining six (14%) of the courses were not successfully completed even though the students would have been given permission to take them. The data indicates that Pathways students given permission had the most difficulty with MATH 0002 with the rest being split MATH 1021, MATH 0001 and MATH 0002.

Table 3
Pathways Results for SU 16 Filtered by Permission – Yes.

Course	A	B	C	F	W	Grand Total
BIOL1001		1				1
ENGL0001				1		1
ENGL1001	3	6	2		1	12
ENGL1002	2					2
HIST1003	1					1
MATH0001	1				1	2
MATH0002	2	5	1	1	2	11
MATH1015		1				1
MATH1021		1		1	1	3
PSYC2070	2					2
UNIV0008		5	2			7
UNIV1005	1					1
Grand Total	12	19	5	3	5	44

Next, there were 25 courses taken by students that would not have been given permission. Nine (36%) of the courses were successfully completed while 15 (64%) were not. Students had the most difficulty with MATH 0002, then BIOL 1001, and then MATH 0001 as Table 4 demonstrates.

Table 4
Pathways Results for SU 16 Filtered by Permission – No.

Course	B	C	D	F	W	Grand Total
BIOL1001	1	1			3	5
MATH0001	1	1	1	2		5
MATH0002	1	3	2	2	4	12
MATH1015			1			1
MATH1021			1			1
PSYC2070	1					1
Grand Total	4	5	5	4	7	25

⁴ As a result the student dropped ENGL 1001 and MATH 0002.

Online Courses in the Summer.

Generally, Pathways students are not given permission to take online courses in any semester. That said, Pathways students with high GPAs are generally given permission to attempt online classes if they can provide a rationale for taking it. Given the situation with the Summer courses, students were given permission to take online courses merely by asking. During Summer 2016, 15 Pathways students were permitted to take 23 online courses as Table 5 indicates. Overall, 12 (52%) of the courses were successfully completed while the remaining 11 (48%) were not. Students had the most difficulty with online MATH 0002, and then MATH 0001, MATH 1021, and then BIOL 1001 as Table 5 indicates.

Table 5
Pathways Student Results SU 16 – Online Courses Only.

Course	A	B	C	D	F	W	Grand Total
BIOL1001		2	1			2	5
ENGL1002	2						2
HIST1003	1						1
MATH0001					1	1	2
MATH0002		2	1		1	2	6
MATH1015				1			1
MATH1021				1	1	1	3
PSYC2070	2	1					3
Grand Total	5	5	2	2	3	6	23

Permission to take Online Courses in the Summer

The rationale for limiting online courses simply stems from the National Center for Developmental Education best practices given the lack of critical reading ability. Students who have a high reading ability (COMPASS = 83+ or ACT = 22+) and a high GPA have an increased probability of successfully completing online courses and have, on occasion, been granted permission to take them. Table 6 details the outcomes for students who would have been given permission to take online classes. The data indicates that Pathways students taking **seven (70%) online courses successfully completed them** while the remaining three (30%) did not having the most difficulty with MATH 1021 and then MATH 0001.

Table 6
Pathways Student Results SU 16 – Online Courses Only with Permission of Yes.

Course	A	B	F	W	Grand Total
BIOL1001		1			1
ENGL1002	2				2
HIST1003	1				1
MATH0001				1	1
MATH0002		1			1
MATH1021			1	1	2
PSYC2070	2				2
Grand Total	5	2	1	2	10

This same scenario is shown in Table 7 using Spring 2016 GPA. Table 7 indicates that even high performing students with top GPAs (3.67 and 3.75) had difficulty with MATH 1021 online – one receiving an F and one withdrawing. The student with the 3.00 GPA withdrew from MATH 0001.

Table 7
Pathways Results SU 16 – Online Courses Only with Permission of Yes by GPA.

Spring 2016 GPA	A	B	F	W	Grand Total
3.00				1	1
3.20	1	1			2
3.25		1			1
3.67	1			1	2
3.75	1		1		2
4.00	2				2
Grand Total	5	2	1	2	10

Finally, Table 8 presents the data for the remaining 13 online courses. These students would not have secured permission to take online classes, mostly due to past performance, GPA, or due to the requested course. The data indicates that **five (38%) successfully completed the course while 8 (62%) did not**. Students who would not have secured permission had the most difficulty with MATH 0002, BIOL 1001, and then MATH 0001.

Table 8
Pathways Student Results SU 16 – Online Courses Only with Permission of No.

Course	B	C	D	F	W	Grand Total
BIOL1001	1	1			2	4
MATH0001				1		1
MATH0002	1	1		1	2	5
MATH1015			1			1
MATH1021			1			1
PSYC2070	1					1
Grand Total	3	2	2	2	4	13

Next, Table 9 shows the results for the same 13 courses by Spring 2016 GPA indicating that a wide range of GPAs can have limited success with online courses. Successful completion occurred for BIOL 1001 and MATH 0002 – the very same courses that other students have difficulty with and did not complete.

Table 9
Pathways Results SU 16 – Online Courses Only with Permission of No by GPA.

Spring 2016 GPA	B	C	D	F	W	Grand Total
2.00	1	1				2
2.17					1	1
2.33	1			1		2
2.55					1	1
2.71		1				1
2.88					2	2
2.97			1			1
3.17	1			1		2
3.29			1			1
Grand Total	3	2	2	2	4	13

Final Thoughts

This paper presented data on Pathways student performance from Summer 2016. It was not written to recommend policy dealing with the Pathways to Success program. The Director believes that the results, for the most part, confirm that the policies for the Pathways to Success program should remain as they are. Questions on the information presented in this paper should be directed to Dr. Paul Fowler, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Developmental Education at pfowler@lsue.edu.