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# Getting prepared:

A 2001 report  
on recent high school  
graduates who took  
developmental/remedial  
courses

Minnesota State Colleges & Universities  
University of Minnesota

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State-level summary

Minn. Stat. 13.32 Subd. 6

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**Minnesota State Colleges & Universities**  
**University of Minnesota**

**State-level summary**

**March 5, 2001**

## **Introduction**

This document is a state-level summary of the individual reports sent to Minnesota school districts by Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and the University of Minnesota. Those reports provided information to districts on their recent high school graduates who took developmental or remedial courses within two years after graduation.

## **Legislative Mandate**

MnSCU and the U of M are directed by law to report to school districts on the academic performance of recent high school graduates who receive developmental or remedial instruction. Minnesota statutes were also amended to permit the post-secondary systems to disclose personally identifiable information about students in the reports to school districts. Finally, the public systems are required to submit an annual summary report to the Department of Children, Families and Learning. The Department is required to evaluate the data and report its findings to the education committees of the legislature (Minnesota Statutes 1992, section 13.32, subdivisions 3 and 6).

## **Background**

Developmental or remedial education includes both coursework and academic support services for students who are under-prepared for the academic rigor of the college-level curriculum. Developmental courses and services most often are in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, study skills and English as a Second Language (ESL). Basic academic skills in these areas are necessary for successful college-level study. Developmental courses carry no college credit or carry credit only for financial aid and athletic eligibility purposes. Credits earned in developmental courses may not be used to meet the requirements of a certificate, diploma, or degree. Most institutions offer academic support programs and services that do not generate credits. Learning centers, supplemental instruction, tutoring, and advising programs are examples of such academic support.

All Minnesota public institutions admit some students who have need for developmental instruction. Developmental instruction expands access to higher education for those students who have the ability to succeed in college, but need extra help to improve their basic skills. Some students take developmental courses because they have not taken the necessary coursework in high school. Other students, who have taken the necessary courses, may still need to take one or more developmental courses, based on their placement exam results. Many of these individuals have been out of high school for a number of years and have lost skills they once had mastered.

## **Institutional Mission and Developmental/Remedial Education**

MnSCU colleges have the most extensive array of developmental courses and academic support services. These institutions also have the mission of providing open admission to students who might need improvement in reading, writing, and mathematics.

Developmental instruction in these areas is necessary to prepare students for vocational or technical programs or for transfer to baccalaureate institutions. Some of the colleges also offer supplemental instruction and tutoring. Developmental courses are typically taken early in a student's college career. In some instances, developmental courses are offered as part of an instructional program.

Universities with the mission of offering baccalaureate and graduate degrees have fewer developmental courses. These institutions are selective in their admissions. Consequently, entering students are better prepared for college-level work than entering students at institutions with "open admissions" policies. Most universities offer developmental courses in mathematics and some also offer developmental courses in writing and reading.

### **Developmental/Remedial Course Offerings Minnesota and U. S. Public Post-secondary Institutions**

Institution Type	Number of Institutions	Percent of Institutions that Offer Developmental/Remedial Courses in:			
		Math, Reading or Writing	Mathematics	Reading	Writing
Minnesota Public	39	100.0%	100.0%	75.0%	82.5%
Univ. of MN	4	100.0%	100.0%	25.0%	25.0%
State Univs.	7	100.0%	100.0%	28.6%	57.1%
MnSCU Colleges	28	100.0%	100.0%	89.7%	96.6%
U. S. Public	1,500	93.0%	91.3%	81.8%	88.7%
Public 4 Year	550	81.0%	78.0%	52.0%	71.0%
Public 2 Year	950	100.0%	99.0%	99.0%	99.0%

**Sources:**

University of Minnesota: U of M Office of Planning and Analysis: 1999-2000 data  
MnSCU Institutions: MnSCU Research and Planning: 1999-2000 data  
U. S. Institutions: National Center for Education Statistics: 1995 data.

All of Minnesota's public post-secondary institutions offered at least one developmental mathematics, reading or writing course in 1999-2000. In 1995, 93 percent of the public institutions in the nation offered at least one developmental course. This is the most current national information available.

### **Institutional Assessment and Placement Practices**

All Minnesota public post-secondary institutions use tests, often combined with other measures, to determine student need for developmental education. The University of Minnesota campuses typically use American College Testing (ACT) Service College Admissions Test Mathematics and English subscores, either alone or in combination with other placement tests or measures.

MnSCU state universities and two-year colleges use basic skills assessment tests in reading, writing and mathematics to judge the college readiness of students. The tests were developed by College Board and include the Descriptive Tests of Language Ability, The Descriptive Tests of Mathematical Ability, and the Computerized Placement Tests. Institutions establish their own placement standards based on the skill expectations of the faculty teaching the college-level curriculum. Student placement into a developmental course can be mandated or recommended, depending on the institution. MnSCU state universities also use American College Testing (ACT) Service College Admissions Test to exempt certain students from taking the basic skills assessment tests.

## **Graduates Reported**

This summary includes information on 1998 and 1999 graduates from public high schools in Minnesota who enrolled at Minnesota public colleges or universities during the 1998-99 or 1999-00 Academic Years. Due to an information system conversion at the University of Minnesota, information is available only for the 1999-00 Academic Year for 1999 high school graduates. Public institutions providing data included all institutions of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and all campuses of the University of Minnesota.

## **Summary Report Format and Content**

The legislative mandate specifies that the summary should report on the extent and content of developmental instruction, the results of assessment testing and the academic performance of recent high school graduates. The information is reported in four tables, one for all public institutions and one for each of three institutional types: campuses of the University of Minnesota, MnSCU state universities and MnSCU two-year colleges.

The information is presented separately for 1998 and 1999 high school graduates. The report on 1998 graduates is complete since it is based on two years of tracking post-secondary enrollment. The report on 1999 graduates is a partial one in that it is based on only one year (1999-00) of tracking enrollment. For comparison purposes, information is presented for students who took developmental courses and for all students from the same high school graduating cohort.

The tables contain a separate section for each type of information presented:

- **Extent of Developmental Education** - This section reports the number of 1998 and 1999 high school graduates enrolled and the number who took one, two, three, and four or more developmental courses.
- **Content of Developmental Courses** - This section reports the number of developmental credits taken by 1998 and 1999 high school graduates. Credits are reported separately for mathematics, reading, writing, ESL, and study skills courses.
- **Assessment Test Results** - This section reports available test results. The mean composite score on the ACT College Admissions Test is reported for University of Minnesota campuses and state universities.

- **Academic Performance** – This section reports the distribution of grade point averages for 1998 and 1999 high school graduates through the end of the 1999-2000 Academic Year.

## **Findings**

### **1999 High School Graduates Attending Minnesota Public Colleges and Universities**

- Thirty-two percent or 7,200 of the 22,447 Minnesota public high school graduates in 1999 who enrolled at public colleges and universities took one or more developmental courses during the 1999-2000 Academic Year as shown in Table 1.
- Eighty percent of the 7,200 graduates who took developmental instruction took one developmental course (55.3 percent) or two developmental courses (24.6 percent).
- Fifty-six percent of the developmental credits taken by the 1999 graduates were in mathematics courses and another twenty-six percent were in writing courses.
- Eighty-three percent of the 1999 graduates who took developmental courses had grade point averages of 2.0 or higher in college, slightly lower than the 88 percent figure for all 1999 graduates enrolled at public colleges and universities.

### **1999 High School Graduates attending the University of Minnesota**

- Fifteen percent or 766 of the 5,202 Minnesota public high school graduates in 1999 who enrolled at the University of Minnesota took one or more developmental courses during the 1999-2000 Academic Year as shown in Table 2.
- Three-quarters of the 766 graduates who took developmental instruction at the University of Minnesota took one developmental course.
- Ninety-eight percent of the developmental credits taken by the 1999 graduates at the University of Minnesota were in mathematics courses.
- Recent high school graduates who took one or more developmental courses at the University of Minnesota had an average ACT score of 19.8 compared to 23.7 for all recent high school graduates enrolled at the University of Minnesota.
- Eighty-seven percent of 1999 high school graduates who enrolled in developmental courses at the University of Minnesota had grade point averages of 2.0 or higher, slightly lower than the 92 percent figure for all 1999 graduates.

### **1998 and 1999 High School Graduates Attending MnSCU State Universities**

- Twenty-one percent or 2,464 of the 11,833 Minnesota public high school graduates in 1998 and 1999 who enrolled at MnSCU State Universities took one or more developmental courses during the 1998-1999 and/or 1999-2000 Academic Years as shown in Table 4.
- Eighty-three percent or 2,049 of the 2,464 recent graduates who took developmental instruction at state universities took one developmental course.
- Eighty-seven percent of the developmental credits taken by the 1998 and 1999 high school graduates at state universities were in mathematics courses.
- Recent high school graduates who took one or more developmental courses at the state universities had an average ACT score of 19.3 compared to 21.2 for all recent high school graduates.

- Eighty-two percent of 1998 high school graduates who enrolled developmental courses at state universities had grade point averages of 2.0 or higher, slightly lower than 85 percent figure for all 1998 graduates.

#### **1998 and 1999 High School Graduates Attending MnSCU Two-Year Colleges**

- Forty-five percent or 12,120 of the 27,158 Minnesota public high school graduates in 1998 and 1999 who enrolled at MnSCU Two-Year Colleges took one or more developmental courses during the 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 Academic Years as shown in Table 5.
- Seventy-two percent or 8,754 of the 12,120 recent graduates who took developmental instruction at the colleges took one or two developmental courses.
- Fifty percent of the developmental credits taken by the 1998 and 1999 high school graduates at the colleges were in mathematics courses and another 30 percent were in writing courses.
- Eighty percent of 1998 high school graduates who enrolled in developmental courses at the colleges had grade point averages of 2.0 or higher, slightly lower than the 86 percent figure for all 1998 graduates.

**Table 1**  
**Summary Report on 1999 Minnesota Public High School Graduates**  
**Enrolled at MnSCU Institutions or University of Minnesota Campuses**  
**Fiscal Year 1999-2000**

**Extent of Developmental Education: Developmental Courses/Credits**

Year of Graduation	Minnesota HS Graduates			Number of Developmental Courses/Credits								Total Dev Credits
	All Students Number	Students in Dev Courses		1 Course		2 Courses		3 Courses		4+ Courses		
		Number	Number	Percent	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	
1999	22,447	7,200	32.1%	3,982	13,804	1,768	11,761	870	8,445	580	8,325	42,335
Total	22,447	7,200	32.1%	3,982	13,804	1,768	11,761	870	8,445	580	8,325	42,335
Percent	N/A	100.00%	N/A	55.3%	N/A	24.6%	N/A	12.1%	N/A	8.1%	N/A	N/A

**Content of Developmental Courses**

Subject Area	Credits	
	Number	Percent
Math	52,599	55.6%
Writing	24,640	26.1%
Reading	13,523	14.3%
ESL	2,109	2.2%
Study Skills & Other	1,704	1.8%
Total	94,575	100.0%

**Academic Performance: Grade Point Average Distribution\***

Year of Graduation	3.00 to 4.00		2.00 to 2.99		Below 2.00		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
All Students	6,780	42.1%	7,412	46.0%	1,915	11.9%	16,107	100.0%
Sts. In Dev Courses	1,212	27.5%	2,440	55.3%	762	17.3%	4,414	100.0%

\* Includes students with 16 or more semester credits.



**Table 2**  
**Summary Report on 1999 Minnesota Public High School Graduates**  
**Enrolled at the University of Minnesota Campuses**  
**Fiscal Year 1999-2000**

**Extent of Developmental Education: Developmental Courses/Credits**

Year of Graduation	Minnesota HS Graduates			Number of Developmental Courses/Credits								
	All Students Number	Students in Dev Courses		1 Course		2 Courses		3 Courses		4+ Courses		Total Dev Credits
		Number	Percent	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	Total Dev Credits	
1998	Information for 1998 graduates not available											
1999	5,202	766	14.7%	573	2,486	163	1,302	29	345	1	16	4,149
Total	5,202	766	14.7%	573	2,486	163	1,302	29	345	1	16	4,149
Percent	N/A	100.00%	N/A	74.8%	N/A	21.3%	N/A	3.8%	N/A	0.1%	N/A	N/A

**Content of Developmental Courses**

Subject Area	Credits	
	Number	Percent
Math	4,080	98.3%
Reading	57	1.4%
Other	12	0.3%
Total	4,149	100.0%

**ACT Composite Scores**

Year of Graduation	All Students		Students in Dev Courses	
	# Valid Scores	Mean Score	# Valid Scores	Mean Score
1998	Not available			
1999	5,082	23.7	753	19.8
Total	5,082	23.7	753	19.8

**Academic Performance: Grade Point Average Distribution\***

Year of Graduation	3.00 to 4.00		2.00 to 2.99		Below 2.00		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1998 All Students Sts. In Dev Courses	Information for 1998 graduates not available							
1999 All Students	2,207	48.0%	2,001	43.5%	390	8.5%	4,598	100.0%
1999 Sts. In Dev Courses	211	35.7%	303	51.3%	77	13.0%	591	100.0%

\* Includes students with 16 or more semester credits.

**Table 3**  
**Summary Report on 1998 and 1999 Minnesota Public High School Graduates**  
**Enrolled at MnSCU Institutions**  
**Fiscal Years 1998-1999 and 1999-2000**

**Extent of Developmental Education: Developmental Courses/Credits**

Year of Graduation	Minnesota HS Graduates			Number of Developmental Courses/Credits								Total Dev Credits
	All Students Number	Students in Dev Courses		1 Course		2 Courses		3 Courses		4+ Courses		
		Number	Number	Percent	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	
1998	21,746	8,150	37.5%	4,080	13,376	2,086	13,280	1,014	9,869	970	15,715	52,240
1999	17,245	6,434	37.3%	3,409	11,318	1,605	10,459	841	8,100	579	8,309	38,186
Total	38,991	14,584	37.4%	7,489	24,694	3,691	23,739	1,855	17,969	1,549	24,024	90,426
Percent	N/A	100.00%	N/A	51.4%	N/A	25.3%	N/A	12.7%	N/A	10.6%	N/A	N/A

**Content of Developmental Courses**

Subject Area	Credits	
	Number	Percent
Math	48,519	53.7%
Writing	24,640	27.2%
Reading	13,466	14.9%
ESL	2,109	2.3%
Study Skills	1,692	1.9%
Total	90,426	100.0%

**Academic Performance: Grade Point Average Distribution\***

Year of Graduation	3.00 to 4.00		2.00 to 2.99		Below 2.00		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1998								
All Students	5,490	37.8%	6,956	47.8%	2,097	14.4%	14,543	100.0%
Sts. In Dev Courses	1,259	24.2%	2,917	56.0%	1,030	19.8%	5,206	100.0%
1999								
All Students	4,573	39.7%	5,411	47.0%	1,525	13.3%	11,509	100.0%
Sts. In Dev Courses	1,001	26.2%	2,137	55.9%	685	17.9%	3,823	100.0%

\* Includes students with 16 or more semester credits.

**Table 4**  
**Summary Report on 1998 and 1999 Minnesota Public High School Graduates**  
**Enrolled at MnSCU State Universities**  
**Fiscal Years 1998-1999 and 1999-2000**

**Extent of Developmental Education: Developmental Courses/Credits**

Year of Graduation	Minnesota HS Graduates			Number of Developmental Courses/Credits								
	All Students Number	Students in Dev Courses		1 Course		2 Courses		3 Courses		4+ Courses		Total
		Number	Number	Percent	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	Total Dev Credits
	1998	6,157	1,330	21.6%	1,065	3,361	238	1,194	25	191	2	17
1999	5,676	1,134	20.0%	984	3,148	139	686	9	78	2	21	3,933
Total	11,833	2,464	20.8%	2,049	6,509	377	1,880	34	269	4	38	8,696
Percent	N/A	100.00%	N/A	83.2%	N/A	15.3%	N/A	1.4%	N/A	0.2%	N/A	N/A

**Content of Developmental Courses**

Subject Area	Credits	
	Number	Percent
Math	7,521	86.5%
Writing	499	5.7%
Reading	209	2.4%
ESL	6	0.1%
Study Skills	461	5.3%
Total	8,696	100.0%

**ACT Composite Scores**

Year of Graduation	All Students		Students in Dev Courses	
	# Valid Scores	Mean Score	# Valid Scores	Mean Score
1998	5,250	21.3	1,330	19.3
1999	4,463	21.2	1,134	19.2
Total	9,713	21.2	2,464	19.3

**Academic Performance: Grade Point Average Distribution\***

Year of Graduation	3.00 to 4.00		2.00 to 2.99		Below 2.00		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1998								
All Students	1,860	37.1%	2,401	47.9%	754	15.0%	5,015	100.0%
Sts. In Dev Courses	251	21.8%	686	59.7%	213	18.5%	1,150	100.0%
1999								
All Students	1,843	39.6%	2,215	47.6%	596	12.8%	4,654	100.0%
Sts. In Dev Courses	257	26.2%	578	58.9%	147	15.0%	982	100.0%

\* Includes students with 16 or more semester credits.

**Table 5**  
**Summary Report on 1998 and 1999 Minnesota Public High School Graduates**  
**Enrolled at MnSCU Two-Year Colleges**  
**Fiscal Years 1998-1999 and 1999-2000**

**Extent of Developmental Education: Developmental Courses/Credits**

Year of Graduation	Minnesota HS Graduates			Number of Developmental Courses/Credits								
	All Students	Students in Dev Courses		1 Course		2 Courses		3 Courses		4+ Courses		Total Dev Credits
		Number	Number	Percent	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	Total Dev Credits	Students	
	1998	15,589	6,820	43.7%	3,015	10,015	1,848	12,086	989	9,678	968	15,698
1999	11,569	5,300	45.8%	2,425	8,170	1,466	9,773	832	8,022	577	8,288	34,253
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,158</b>	<b>12,120</b>	<b>44.6%</b>	<b>5,440</b>	<b>18,185</b>	<b>3,314</b>	<b>21,859</b>	<b>1,821</b>	<b>17,700</b>	<b>1,545</b>	<b>23,986</b>	<b>81,730</b>
<b>Percent</b>		<b>100.00%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>44.9%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>27.3%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>15.0%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>12.7%</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

**Content of Developmental Courses**

Subject Area	Credits	
	Number	Percent
Math	40,998	50.2%
Writing	24,141	29.5%
Reading	13,257	16.2%
ESL	2,103	2.6%
Study Skills	1,231	1.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>81,730</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Academic Performance: Grade Point Average Distribution\***

Year of Graduation	3.00 to 4.00		2.00 to 2.99		Below 2.00		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>1998</b>								
All Students	3,630	38.1%	4,555	47.8%	1,343	14.1%	9,528	100.0%
Sts. In Dev Courses	1,008	24.9%	2,231	55.0%	817	20.1%	4,056	100.0%
<b>1999</b>								
All Students	2,730	39.8%	3,196	46.6%	929	13.6%	6,855	100.0%
Sts. In Dev Courses	744	26.2%	1,559	54.9%	538	18.9%	2,841	100.0%

\* Includes students with 16 or more semester credits.