ASSET Newsletter
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This Issue

- **Analysis Highlight**: Early findings from interviews with students about what makes a course stressful
- **Project in Progress**: Investigating the relationship between AP experience and/or taking advisory prerequisite with course success
- **Recently Completed Project**
- **Expanding Partnerships and Collaborations**

What Makes a Course Stressful

Early findings from interviews with 55 undergraduates in 13 different schools indicate that the factors that make a course stressful include:

- a lack of connection between lecture or assignment content and assessments
- uncertainty on how to improve performance in the course (e.g., not receiving feedback, feeling like effort committed does not pay off)
- insufficient resources (not enough office hours offered, no or few assignments for students to practice what they learned, being excluded by other students on group projects)
The interviews show that a course can be academically challenging without being stressful, and vice versa. The courses that students identified as stressful were in a range of subject areas, not just STEM courses.

These interviews are part of a larger project ASSET is conducting about students’ experiences. Interviews will continue in the winter semester.

Project in Progress
ASSET has started investigating if taking an AP exam in the subject area of the introductory course, or taking an advisory prerequisite, is associated with the student’s outcome in the course. The goal is to identify mechanisms that could give some students an advantage over others because of prior exposure to course content.

Recently Completed Project
Analysis for the Comprehensive Studies Program (CSP) about credit success rates, CSP section success rates, and thresholds of credit loads that are associated with graduating in 4- and 6-years.

Expanding Partnerships and Collaborations
ASSET has met with colleagues from the Well-Being Collective, the Arts Initiative, and faculty members at U-M who do research about student experiences and success at the university to discuss how we can support and learn from one another.

Common Interests? Let us know.
If you are interested in partnering with ASSET on an issue related to student success at U-M or if you are working on a project that sounds really similar to what we are doing, reach out to Claire Boeck (claboeck@umich.edu). Collaboration and partnership can help us learn from one another and reduce duplication of effort.

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