Developmental education is an obstacle to college success

- The vast majority of students entering California’s community colleges are deemed unprepared and placed into developmental (or remedial) education.
- Very few complete college-level English or math, or transfer to a four-year college.
- The structure of developmental education is a primary obstacle.
- Colleges are experimenting with reforms:
  - Improving assessment and placement
  - Streamlining developmental education course sequences
The traditional developmental English pathway is long.

- College Composition
- Writing 3 and Reading 3
- Writing 2 and Reading 2
- Writing 1 and Reading 1

Transfer-level course
Developmental English course
Reform pathways shorten the traditional sequence

- **Writing-only sequence**
  - Writing 3
  - Writing 2
  - Writing 1

- **Mixed sequence**
  - IRW 3
  - IRW 2
  - Reading 1
  - Writing 1

- **Integrated Reading and Writing sequence**
  - IRW 3
  - IRW 2
  - IRW 1
  - Reading 1
  - Writing 1

- **Low acceleration**
  - Accelerated (Writing or IRW)
  - Reading, Writing, or IRW
  - IRW 1

- **One-semester acceleration**
  - Accelerated (Writing or IRW)

- **Co-requisite remediation**
  - College composition
  - Support course
Accelerated pathways are a popular reform

- Two types of accelerated pathways:
  - One-semester acceleration (open access)
  - Low acceleration (has a prerequisite)

- Often entail structural, curricular, and pedagogical reforms
  - Reducing exit points
  - Integrating reading, writing, and critical thinking
  - Employing “backward design” from the college-level course
The number of colleges offering accelerated pathways is increasing rapidly

Number of colleges offering accelerated pathways

- One-semester acceleration
- Low acceleration
Students who take accelerated pathways have better outcomes...

Percent of students successfully completing college composition within two years

- One-semester acceleration: 42%
- Low acceleration: 41%
- Started two levels below: 27%
- Started three levels below: 14%
... but equity gaps remain large

Percent of students successfully completing college composition within two years

- **Asian American**
- **White**
- **Latino**
- **African American**

- **One-semester acceleration**
- Started two levels below
- Started three levels below
Co-requisite remediation is a promising approach

- Evidence from other states shows larger gains from co-requisite remediation than what we find with one-semester acceleration
- Only eight colleges offered co-requisite remediation in 2016–17
  - Combined enrollment of about 2,500 students
- But we expect these numbers to grow significantly
- Ongoing PPIC research will assess the effectiveness of co-requisite remediation in our state
More work needs to be done

- Only a few colleges are offering reform pathways at scale; most colleges continue to offer multilevel sequences
- Professional development is key
- Reducing equity gaps should be a main consideration
- AB 705 provides a tremendous opportunity for adopting and scaling up reforms
Reforming English Pathways at California’s Community Colleges

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Notes on the use of these slides

These slides were created to accompany a presentation. They do not include full documentation of sources, data samples, methods, and interpretations. To avoid misinterpretations, please contact:

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Thank you for your interest in this work.