

An intensive approach for course repeating students at a Chilean University

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Improved access to higher education can reduce social and economic inequality only if universities achieve equality in graduation rates of different groups of students. Concerned about first year failures among first-generation students, a university in Chile devised a between-semester course intended to allow failed students to remain with their entering class. The course had three major elements: compression of a semester's course work into 2 weeks; use of incentives to motivate students to prepare for classes; and "flipped class" participation. In 2014, this intensive course was offered in the break between the first and second semesters. Some 310 students in Health Sciences who had failed at least one of three required courses were invited to enroll; 140 signed up. At the end of the course, more than 90% of the students taking the intensive course passed the regular final examination they had previously failed and continued with their entering class. With no additional intervention, over the next seven semesters, students who had taken the intensive course performed as well in their courses as those who had not and were less likely to drop out. In 2017, more than 75% were still with their class, compared with 53% of those who had not taken the course. © 2020, Springer Nature B.V.

Accelerated instruction

Chile

Flipped class

Intensive instruction

Reading before class

Retention rate