

# Assessing the Efficacy of Communication-Intensive Courses as a High-Impact Practice

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# 10 High-Impact Practices (HIPs)

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1. First-Year Seminars and Experiences
2. Common Intellectual Experiences
3. Learning Communities
4. Writing-Intensive Courses
5. Collaborative Assignments and Projects
6. Undergraduate Research
7. Diversity/Global Learning
8. Service Learning, Community- Based Learning
9. Internships
10. Capstone Courses and Projects

*—American Association of Colleges & Universities*

# C-I Courses @ LSU

- ★ Teach and assess proper communication techniques throughout the course for at least 2 modes (written, spoken, visual, or technological communication) 1, 3, 6 ★
- ★ Engage students in informal communication for learning, and formal communication for sharing ideas publicly 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 ★
- ★ Focus on genres and audiences appropriate to the discipline or profession 3, 4, 7 ★
- ★ Use iterative feedback loops to advance communication skills 2, 3, 5, 6 ★
- ★ Uphold ethical and professional standards for all class work 1, 3, 6 ★
- ★ Allocate 40% of course grade to communication-based work 1, 2 ★

[www.CxC.lsu.edu](http://www.CxC.lsu.edu) / [www.TeachingCI.com](http://www.TeachingCI.com)

# 8 Key Elements of HIPs

1. Performance expectations set at appropriately high levels
2. Significant investment of time and effort by students over an extended period of time
3. Interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters
4. Experiences with diversity, wherein students are exposed to and must contend with people and circumstances that differ from those with which students are familiar
5. Frequent, timely, and constructive feedback
6. Periodic, structured opportunities to reflect and integrate learning
7. Opportunities to discover relevance of learning through real-world applications
8. Public demonstration of competence

# High-Impact Practices (HIPs)

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Teaching and learning practices that **RESULT IN SIGNIFICANT EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS FOR STUDENTS** who participate in them, including and especially those from demographic groups historically underserved by higher education

*–American Association of Colleges & Universities*

**LSU's primary indicator of student success:**


**retention + graduation**

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- 1. Do C-I Courses contribute to LSU's indicators?**
- 2. Are C-I Courses performing as a HIP at LSU?**

# Institutional Data

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- C-I Courses tagged at the course section- and student- levels
- Other programmatic tags/identifiers are very limited
- Still on mainframe 
- Financial aid data is somewhat disconnected
- Incomplete data on first-generation status
- Unreliable data on declared major for 1st & 2nd year students

# GRADUATION RATES

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**Is there a meaningful relationship between C-I Courses and Degree Completion at LSU?**

**LSU**

# Purpose of the Study

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- to examine if C-I Courses are positively **related** to undergraduate degree completion at LSU
- understand the **extent** to which C-I Courses are operating as a HIP for degree completion at LSU



# Research Questions

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1. Is participation in C-I Courses a **predictor** of graduation? Does the positive correlation found in the 2012 cohort **hold true across other cohorts**?
2. Does participation in 1 or 2 C-I Courses show **similar correlations** to 3 or more C-I Courses?
3. To what extent is C-I Courses a significant predictor of graduation specifically for **Pell Grant students**?

# Methods

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- **Longitudinal institutional data**
- **Series of logistic regression models to examine the relationship between C-I Courses and graduation outcomes**
- **Six cohorts of incoming students; Fall 2011 - Fall 2016 (n = 32,092)**

# Variables

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- **Independent variable: C-I Courses**
  - **Binary predictor:** took *at least* 1 C-I Course
  - **Continuous predictor:** number (0-13) of C-I Courses completed
- **Outcome variable:** Graduated within 6 years (yes/no)
- **Control variables:**
  - **Demographic:** gender, race/ethnicity, first-generation status, in-state/out-of-state status, Pell Grant, other need-based aid
  - **Pre-College Academic Achievement:** high school GPA, ACT composite score

# RQ1: 6-year Graduation, Full Sample

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- Taking at least one C-I Course (binary predictor 0-1) was associated with a 38% increase in the probability of graduating within 6 years.
- Modeled another way, each C-I Course a student takes (continuous predictor 0-13) was, on average, associated with a 13% increase in their probability of graduating within 6 years.

# RQ2: 4 & 6-year Graduation, Full Sample

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- Taking 1-2 C-I Courses was associated with a 25% increase in the probability of graduating within 4 years and a 33% increase in the probability of graduating within 6 years compared to students who took 0 C-I Courses.
- Taking 3 or more C-I Courses was associated with a 20% increase in the probability of graduating within 4 years and a 47% increase in the probability of graduating within 6 years compared to students who took 0 C-I Courses.

# RQ3: 6-year Graduation, Pell vs. Non-Pell

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- Pell students, taking at least one C-I Course was associated with a 36% increase in the probability of graduating within 6 years (non-Pell students 37% increase).
- Modeled another way, each C-I Course a Pell student takes was, on average, associated with a 15% increase in their probability of graduating within 6 years (non-Pell students, 13% increase).

# Results

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- **This study does not suggest C-I Courses are a “magic solution”; it sought to contribute to research gaps as the first institution-wide quantitative assessment of C-I Courses and degree completion.**
- **This longitudinal research reveals a positive relationship exists between C-I Courses and graduation.**

# Future Research

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- ❑ Are findings consistent in future LSU cohorts?
- ❑ Is there a difference by major/discipline?
- ❑ Is there a difference by communication mode?
- ❑ Do C-I Courses influence retention within the Institution?
- ❑ Do C-I Courses influence post-graduation success?
- ❑ When students experience C-I with other interventions, what effect does it have on retention and graduation?
- ❑ What impact do C-I Courses have on direct student learning?
- ❑ How does this track with other institutions engaging in HIPs?



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