

Abstract Submitted
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Physics or Mathematics Preparation - which is the better predictor of performance in a first, calculus-based college physics course?
NORMA CHASE, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences — Data spanning fifteen semesters and including more than 1200 students showed far less than the anticipated difference in performance between students with quite diverse levels of physics preparation. Students ranged from those with no prior physics course work to those with two or more years of HS physics and prior courses in college physics. Less prior physics training frequently coincided with better performance in the first calculus-based course. Preparation in mathematics, on the other hand, appeared critically important; students at the extremes of the math preparation spectrum were concentrated at the corresponding extremes of the physics grade distribution.

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