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Exploring Performance Differences in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math Courses NITA KEDHARNATH, University of Michigan — Performance differences in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) courses are an unfortunate reality at many large universities throughout the country. Despite entering STEM classes with the same cumulative GPA, major, ACT math scores, and other relevant academic factors, often times women and minorities underperform. After examining different aspects of the classes, we conclude that stereotype threat, where a person experiences a fear of confirming a negative stereotype about their identity when in an evaluative environment, is a likely cause for these performance differences since the extra anxiety often leads to underperformance.

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