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Improving Undergraduate Calculus Students' Learning through Ability Group Sectioning.

This research considers the merits of ability group sectioning in a college calculus curriculum. While the larger issue of ability group sectioning is well-studied for middle school and high school students, this research addresses the less-studied question of ability group sectioning for college students. We consider three metrics in our analysis: statistical differences in final exam performance, student opinion surveys, and faculty perspectives. This talk presents both the benefits and the concerns of a college-level ability group sectioning policy within the context of the mandatory integral calculus course at the United States Military Academy. We conclude that ability group sectioning increases calculus students' learning for students of all ability levels, and the policy is strongly supported by both student and faculty opinions. (Received September 20, 2007)