Learning Communities: Their Effects on College Mathematics Students

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The purpose of this study is to analyze the effects of learning communities on students attending mathematics at an urban commuter college. Learning communities have been shown to have a positive effect on whether students complete their four year course of study in a traditional university setting. Traditional freshmen who were part of a learning community were more likely to be successful in their mathematics classes. These students were also more likely to feel confident and comfortable in the mathematics classes that they needed to take for their degree programs. Students who were not a part of a learning community were less likely to feel as much of a connection with the university community and thus were not as likely to complete their four year degrees. Students who were a part of a learning community had higher retention rates and lower DFW rates. Returning adults are not eligible to be included in learning communities. They may benefit from other programs to complete their degree programs.