

Why Study Entry Phases Deserve Closer Attention

Early Insights and a Curriculum Analytics Research Agenda

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Context: The Study Entry and Orientation Phase (StEOP) in Austria

- Structured and formally defined** introductory phase
- Integrated into **all Bachelor's** degree programs
- Defined at program level** by curriculum committees

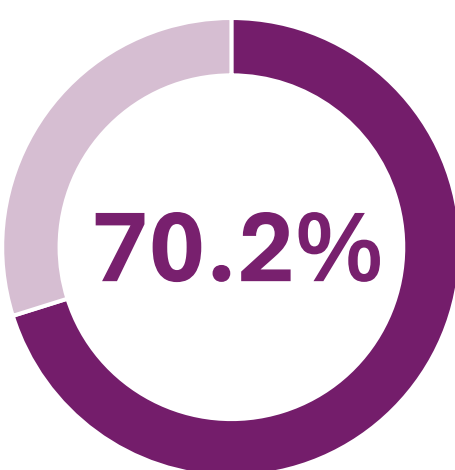
- Goal**
- Provide students with a **program overview**
 - Help students **assess their study fit**
- Characteristics**
- Comprises between **8 and 20 ECTS**
 - Defines courses to be **completed before** students can take **advanced courses**
 - Can combine **mandatory and elective** components
 - To be **completeable within the first semester**

Our Approach

- Provide initial **empirical insights** into StEOP characteristics
 - How? Descriptive and inferential statistics*
 - Who? All Bachelor's students at TU Wien from 2017-2025*
- Show the **need for further investigations**
- Identify research gaps and present a **research agenda**

RQ: How can the StEOP be systematically evaluated and improved?

First Insights

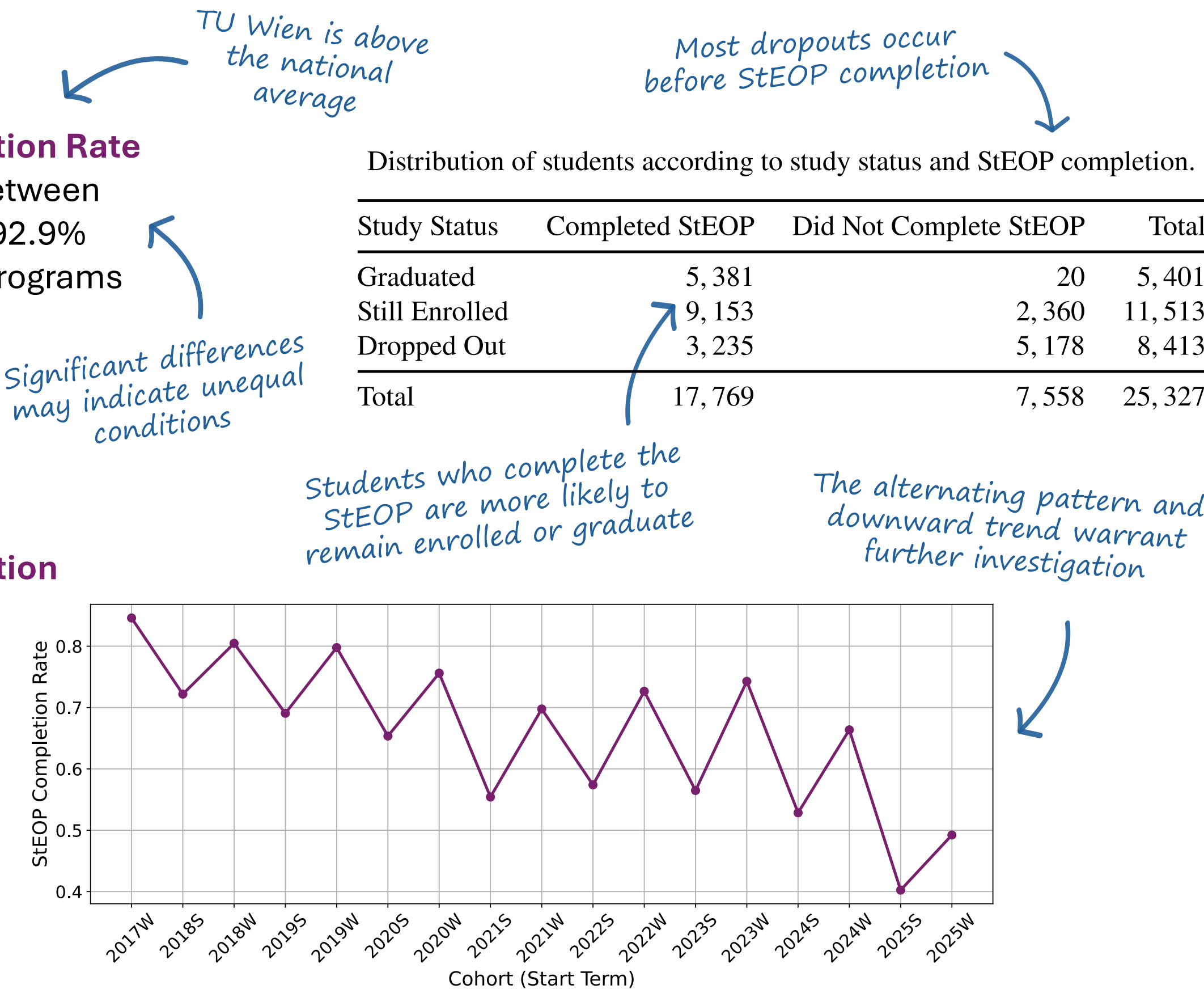


Completion Rate
Varies between 38.5% - 92.9% across programs



Average Completion Time

Exceeds the intended 1-semester duration, indicating possible design flaws



Key Takeaways

Rethinking Success
StEOP success cannot be assessed by completion rates alone.

Orientation over Persistence
Leaving a program may reflect an informed study choice rather than failure.

Design Matters
Large differences between programs suggest StEOP design influences outcomes.

Research Agenda

1. Defining and Operationalising StEOP Success

- GAP** How can we measure the success of a study entry phase?
- AIM** Develop a multi-dimensional framework

Possible Indicators

- Study Progression
- Retention
- Duration
- Equity

2. Analysing Influences on StEOP Success

- GAP** Which characteristics are associated with a successful StEOP?
- AIM** Investigate how StEOP designs relate to success indicators

Characteristics to Consider

- StEOP Composition
- StEOP Complexity
- Temporal Scheduling
- Program Conditions

3. Translating Analytics into Decision Support

- GAP** How can curriculum designers be supported in decisions regarding the StEOP?
- AIM** Develop an analytics-based decision support system for curriculum design and evaluation

May Include

- Monitoring Dashboards
- Progress Visualisations
- StEOP Design Recommendations

