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Abstract

During the last decade the demand for university education in the Netherlands has grown, and until two years ago there was still a yearly increase in the number of students attending university. However, not all of these students graduate and those that do often take longer than the programmed four years to finish their studies. The policy of the Minister of Education aims to increase the rate of completion and to reduce the time needed to graduate. Within the last decade far more attention has been paid to research as well as the policy on factors within the curriculum organization. This is in stark contrast to the sixties and seventies, when student-related factors were more prominent. This article focuses on the relationship between curriculum organization and academic success in the first year of university education. In this research academic success is defined as the number of students succeeding for the first-year examination and can be seen as fraction, with enrolling students as the numerator and students that passed the first-year examination within one year as the denominator. We investigated the academic success of five groups of students (enrolment years 1987-1991) within six

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different departments at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. Aspects of curriculum organization that contributed positively to academic success were for example, decreasing the study load by spreading exams and programming fewer parallel courses, whereas it was better not to spread re-tests over the whole year. (HRK / Abstract übernommen), Jansen, E. P. W. A., E-Mail: e.p.w.a.jansen@ppsw.rug.nl