

Development of a longitudinal course that emphasizes preparation for the COMLEX licensing exams

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- **Challenge/Issue:**
Our mean COMLEX Level 1 scores had fallen to about 10 points below the national average during the 2013-2015 test cycles (DO 2015-2018 cohorts) and we wanted to help support our student’s preparation to bring them back up.
- **Objective:**
We produced a longitudinal course that helps students develop appropriate skills (study strategies, time management, content review), decision-making processes, and increases accountability to help them to be more successful on their COMLEX Level 1.
- **Approach:**
In the 2015/2016 academic year (**Class of DO 2018**), we initiated the Integrated Skills for the Study of Osteopathic Medicine (**ISSM**) courses that run along-side the didactic curriculum. These courses include activities that relate to board preparation, such as: formative board style exams, cumulative over-all the curriculum to date for all four semesters, a series of “board prep” presentations delivered in the 3rd & 4th semesters, and scored assignments that required students to use supplied resources (question banks and review videos). In 2018, the course was expanded to add in a requirement to meet with an assigned “boards advisor” during their second year.
- **Results:**
Since the onset of the ISSM courses, our Level 1 board scores have risen, and stayed above national average, both for the first-time pass rate and average cohort score, including during the transition to a re-sequenced curriculum.
Even though the COMLEX Level 1 is no longer scored, our first-time taker pass rate for the DO 2024 cohort is 3% above the national average. Additionally, skills developed in the ISSM courses will help the students understand what is necessary to prepare for all of their medical licensing exams.

The longitudinal ISSM courses increased student performance on the COMLEX Level 1 to be consistently above the National average

- Implemented cumulative end-of-semester board style exams
- Integrated the use of 1-on-1 board advising

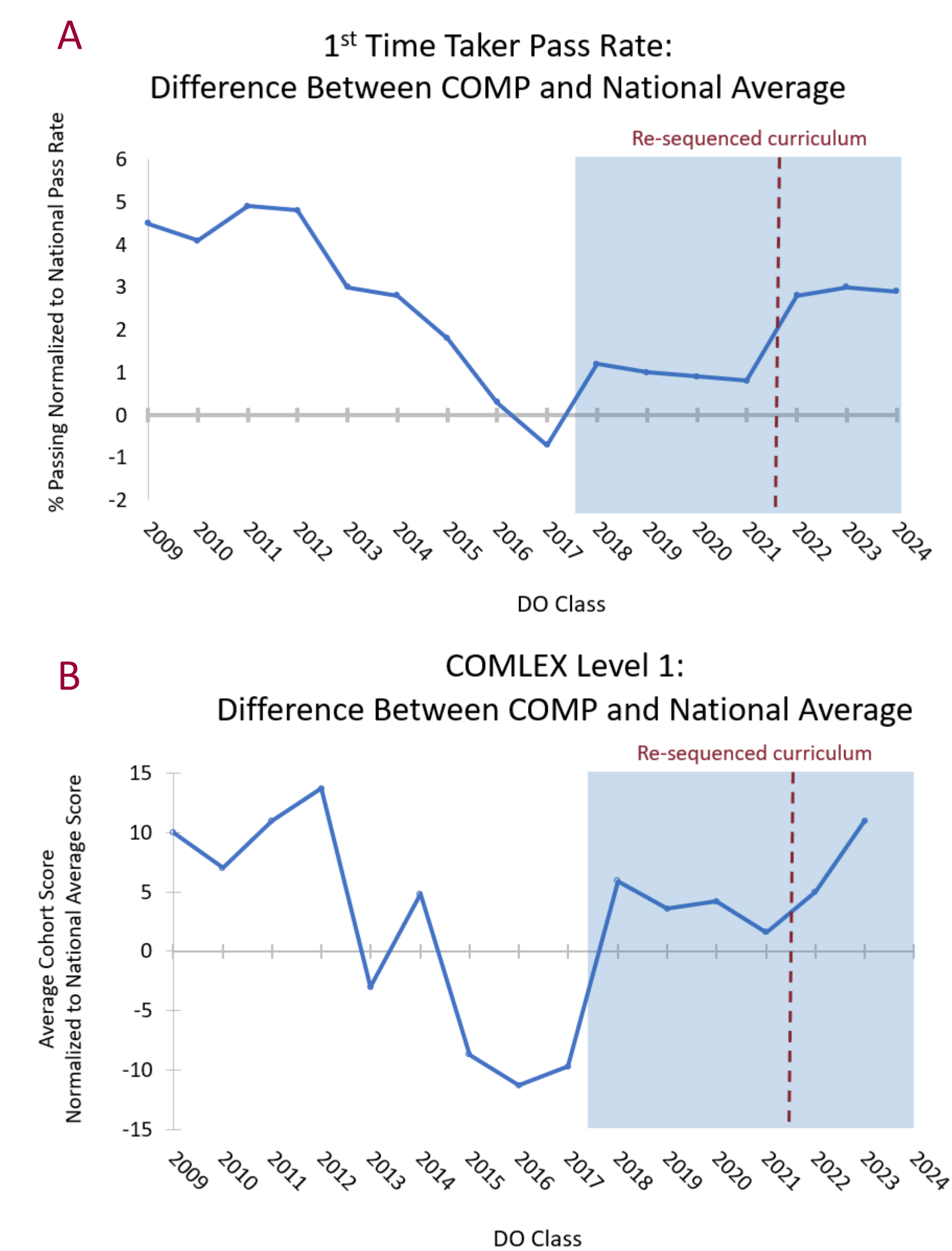


Figure Legend: The difference between COMP and National average for:
A. First time test taker pass rate
B. Average cohort score for the COMLEX Level 1.
The blue box indicates the onset of the longitudinal ISSM course. The red dashed line indicates a change in the structure of the preclinical curriculum.

What we do in ISSM:

- **Individual/group practice exams**
 - once per semester
- **End of semester exams**
 - retired NBME questions
 - COMSAE (end of 2nd semester)
- **Required boards presentations**
- **Required board resources**
 - COMBank
 - Kaplan → Boards & Beyond
 - UWorld
 - Pathoma
 - Sketchy Medical
- **Board advising**
 - board assistance task force (BATF)
 - trained faculty advisors
 - monthly meetings and discussions
 - coordination with office of OSA and BATF to guide at-risk and off-track students
 - required meetings with students
 - 3rd and 4th semesters
 - as requested by students