

Introduction

The 2020-21 AACP Argus Commission highlighted the “need for active initiatives to promote well-being and resilience,” and recommending program modifications to enhance student retention while assuring professional competence. Given the high variability in graduate school readiness of students, robust strategies are needed to ensure academic success across the entire pharmacy academy. Since 2020 at West Coast University (WCU), three primary interventions were made that promote student-centric learning, thereby aligning to a growth mindset across all stakeholders, improving program and learning outcomes (LO), and reducing attrition.

Methods: Early Detection and Intervention

(1) Early Detection and Intervention Plan (EDI): EDI provides an early mechanism for identifying and helping at-risk learners in each course. Proactive engagement by the Office of Academic Affairs, course instructors, and faculty advisors provide focused and high-touch support until improvements are noted.

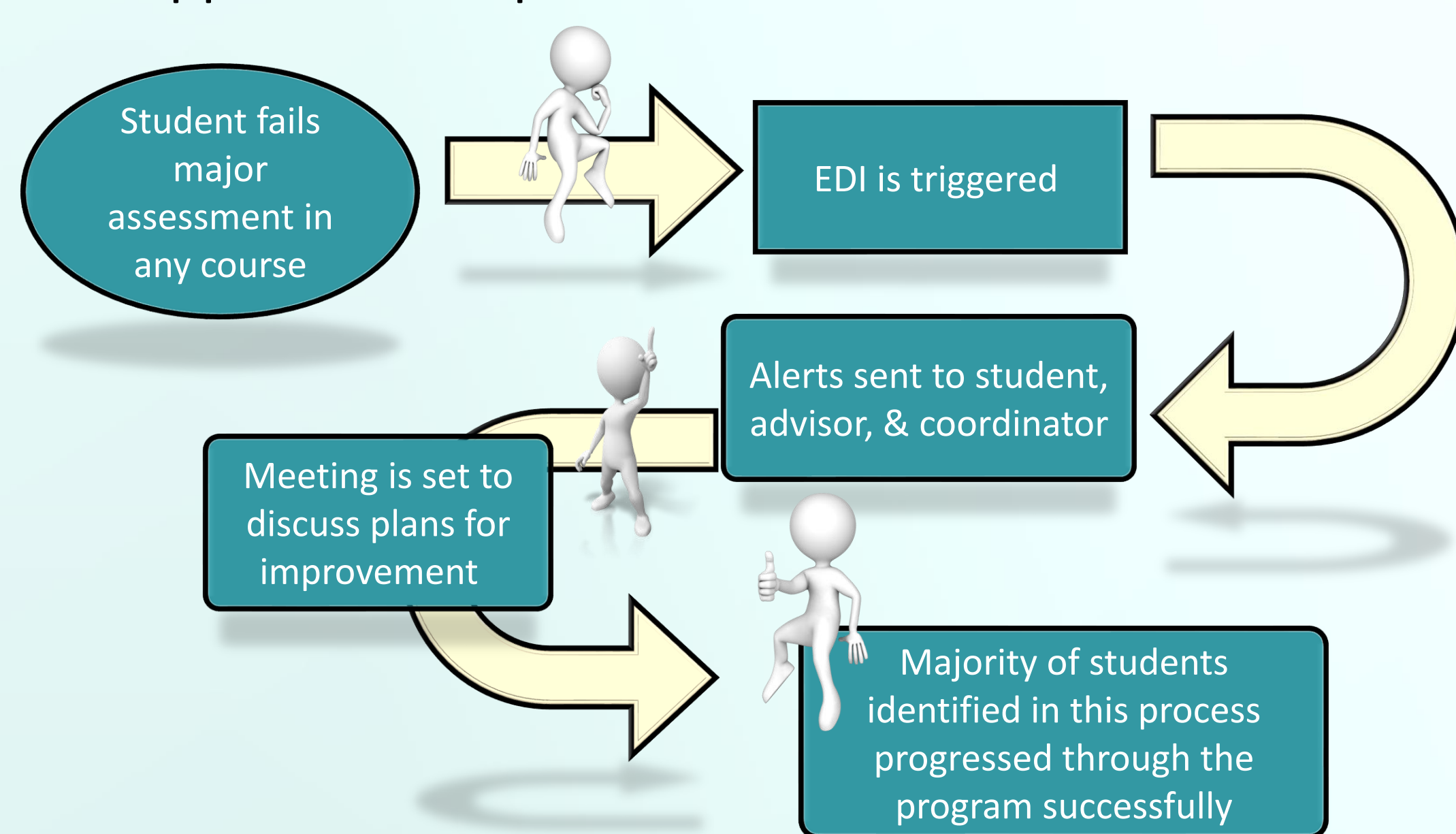


Figure 1: Summary of Early Detection and Intervention Plan (EDI) Process

EDI Results

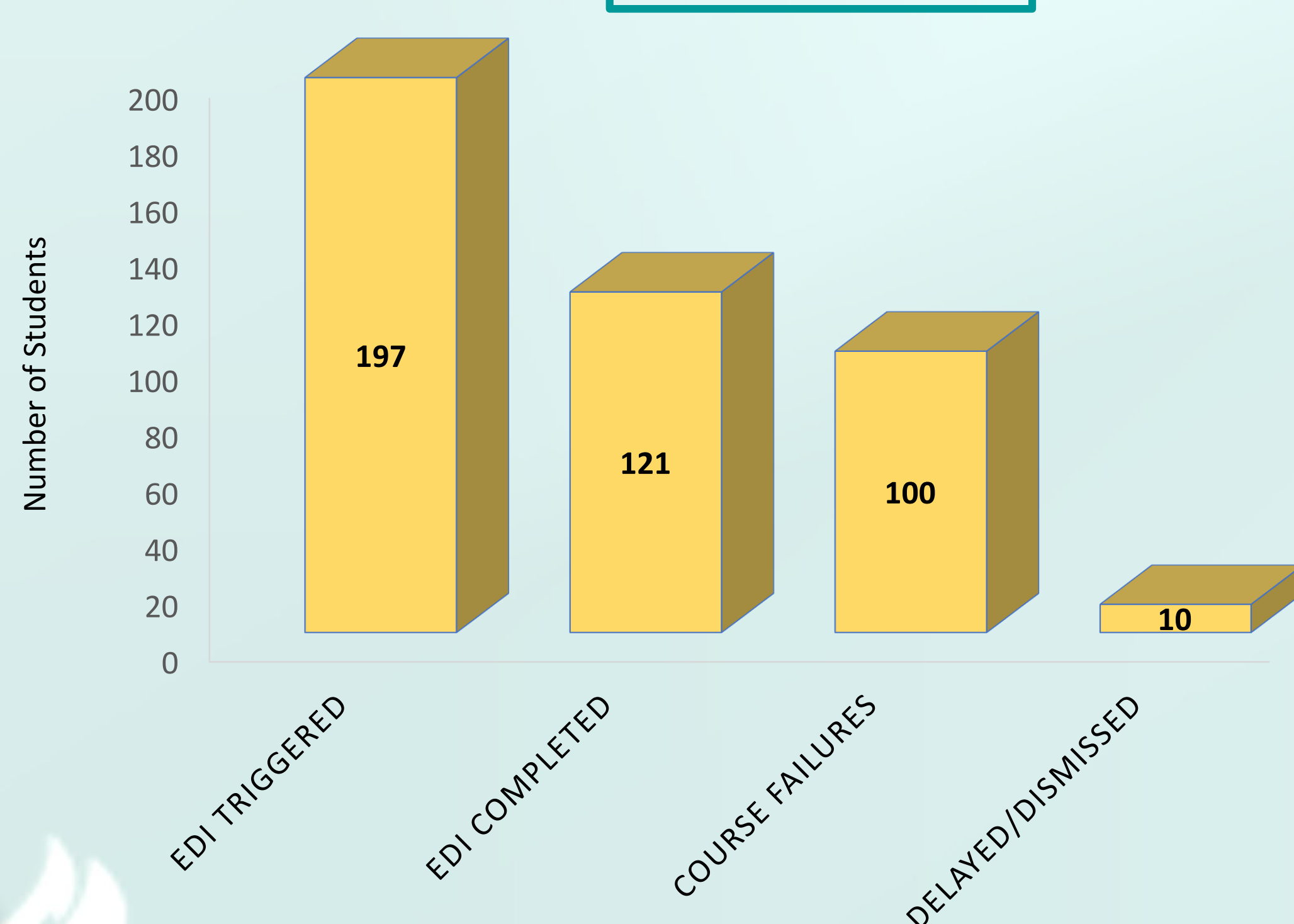


Figure 2: Association between the number of EDI and total drop between 2020-2023

Methods: High-Stakes Exam Review

(2) High-Stakes Exam Review: Questions are routinely evaluated to improve question quality and mapping and to ensure the achievement of each learning outcome.

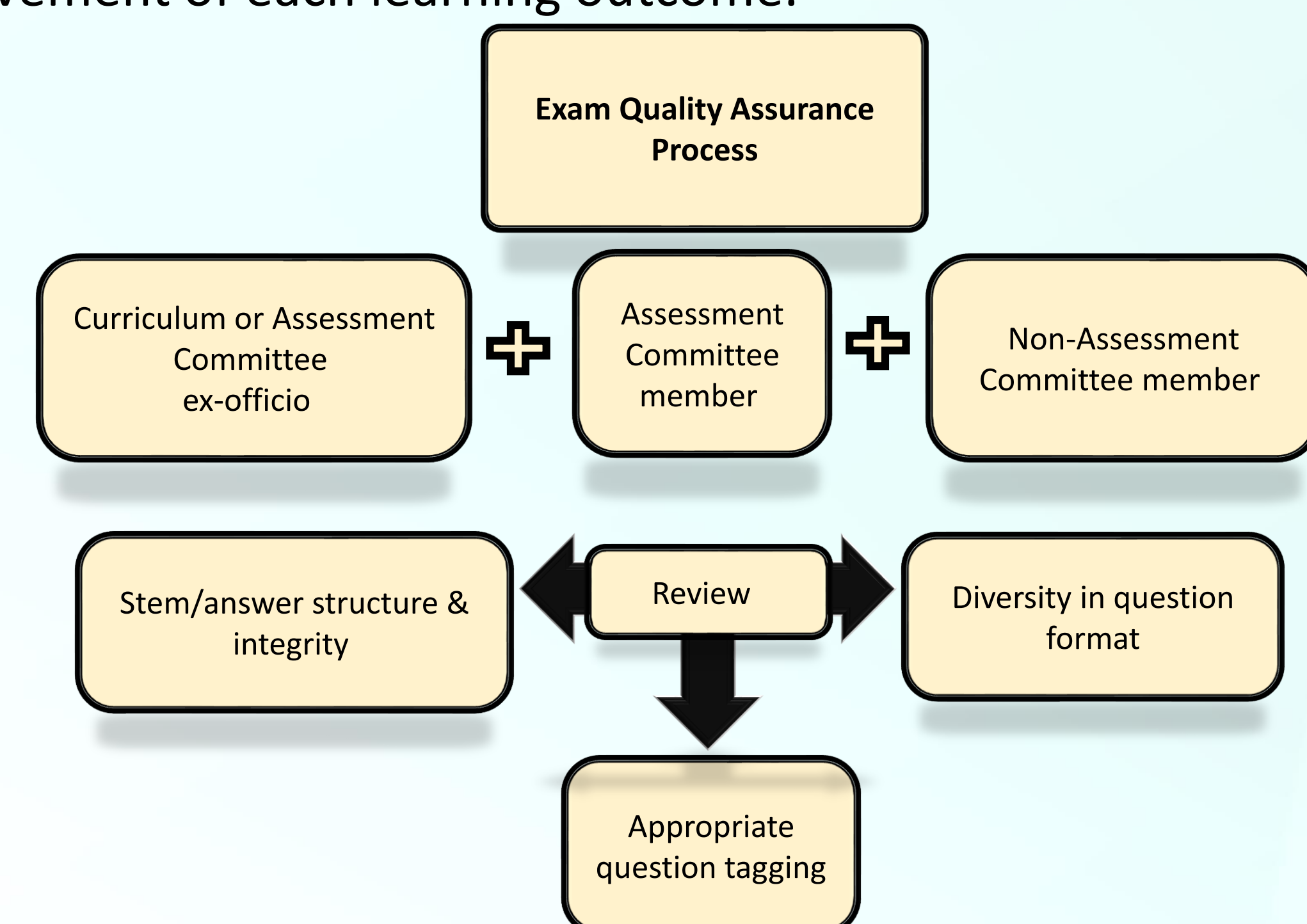


Figure 3: Summary of the Exam Quality Assurance Process

Methods: Remediation

(3a) Remediation Plan: In collaboration with the Academic Standing Committee, Course Coordinator develops an Individualized Action Plan (IAP) that focuses on the learner’s thematic weakness, topic areas of focus, timelines for remediation assessment, and faculty support.

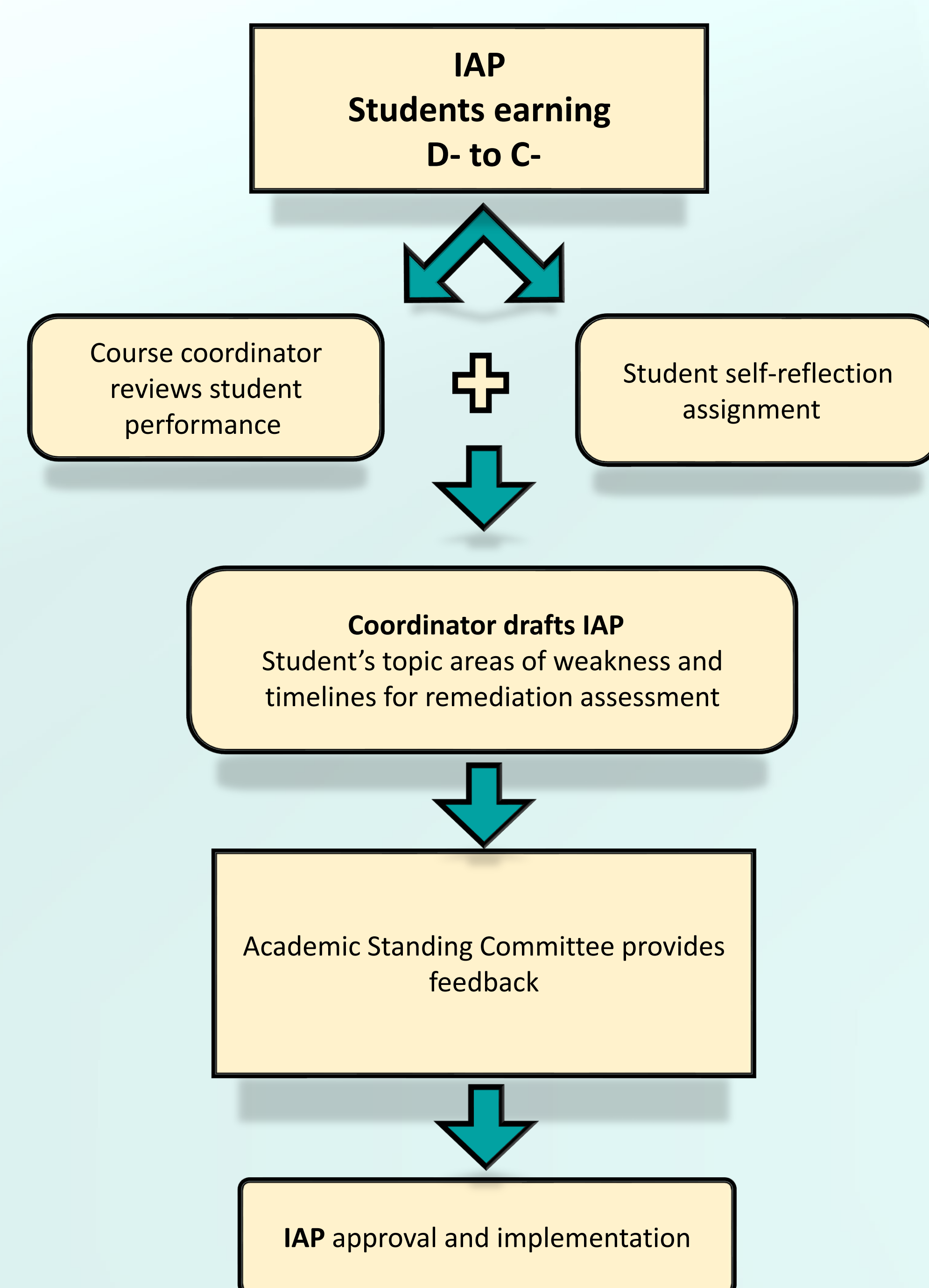


Figure 4: Summary of Remediation Plan Process

Methods: Self-Reflection

(3b) Reflection: Self-reflection exercise is intended to promote self-awareness, identify potential external stressors/barriers that might influence academic performance, and promote metacognition to assess the learner’s test-taking skills and learning strategies. Learners are asked to assess and provide a narrative for the undesired outcome. Key areas that learners self-assess includes academic skills, course performance, and study strategies. Learners are asked to identify their goals for remediation, allowing them an opportunity to identify learning opportunities beyond just re-learning course materials.

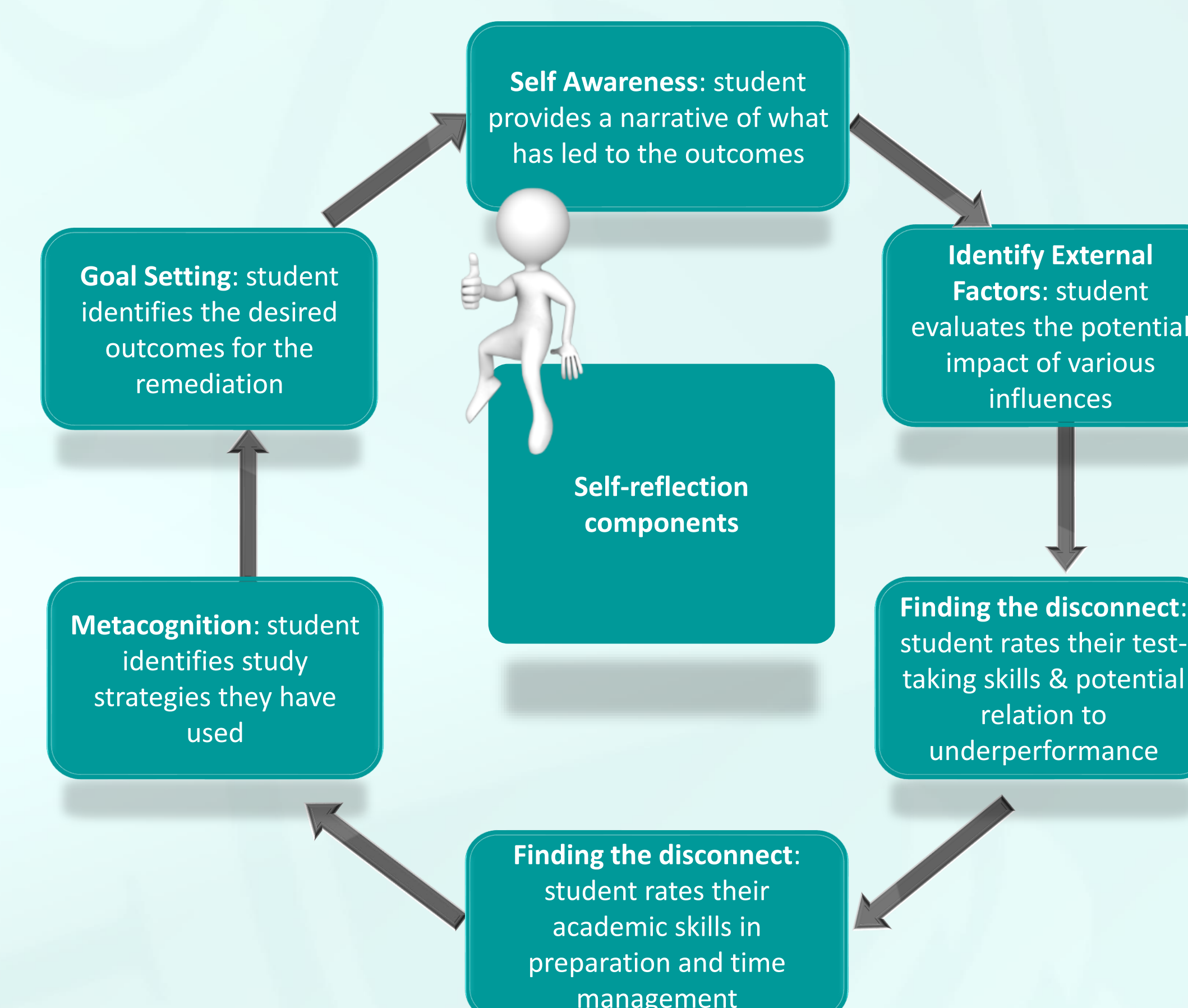


Figure 5: Summary of Self-reflection Exercise Process

Remediation Success Results

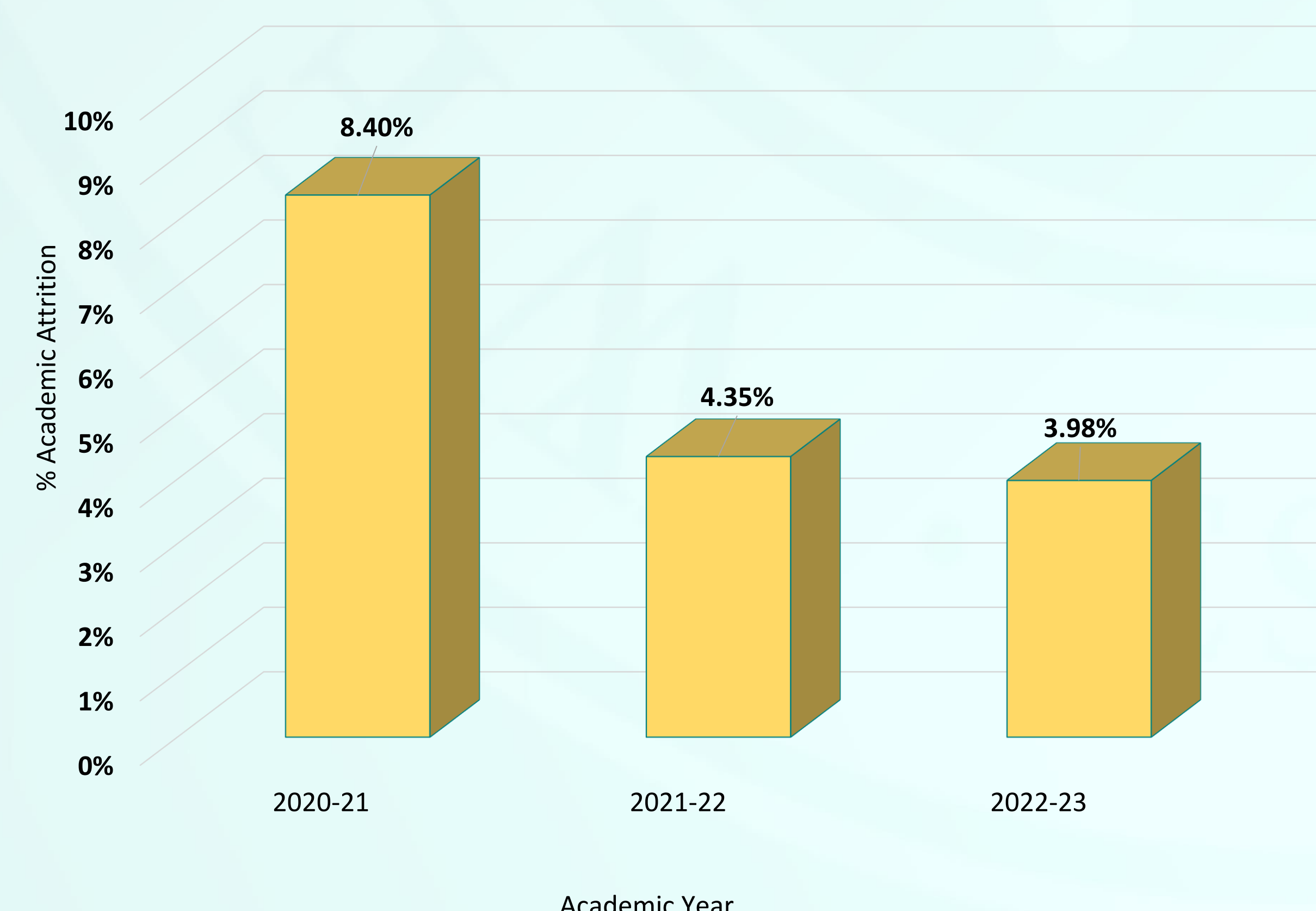


Figure 6: Remediation Success Rate

Discussion/Conclusion

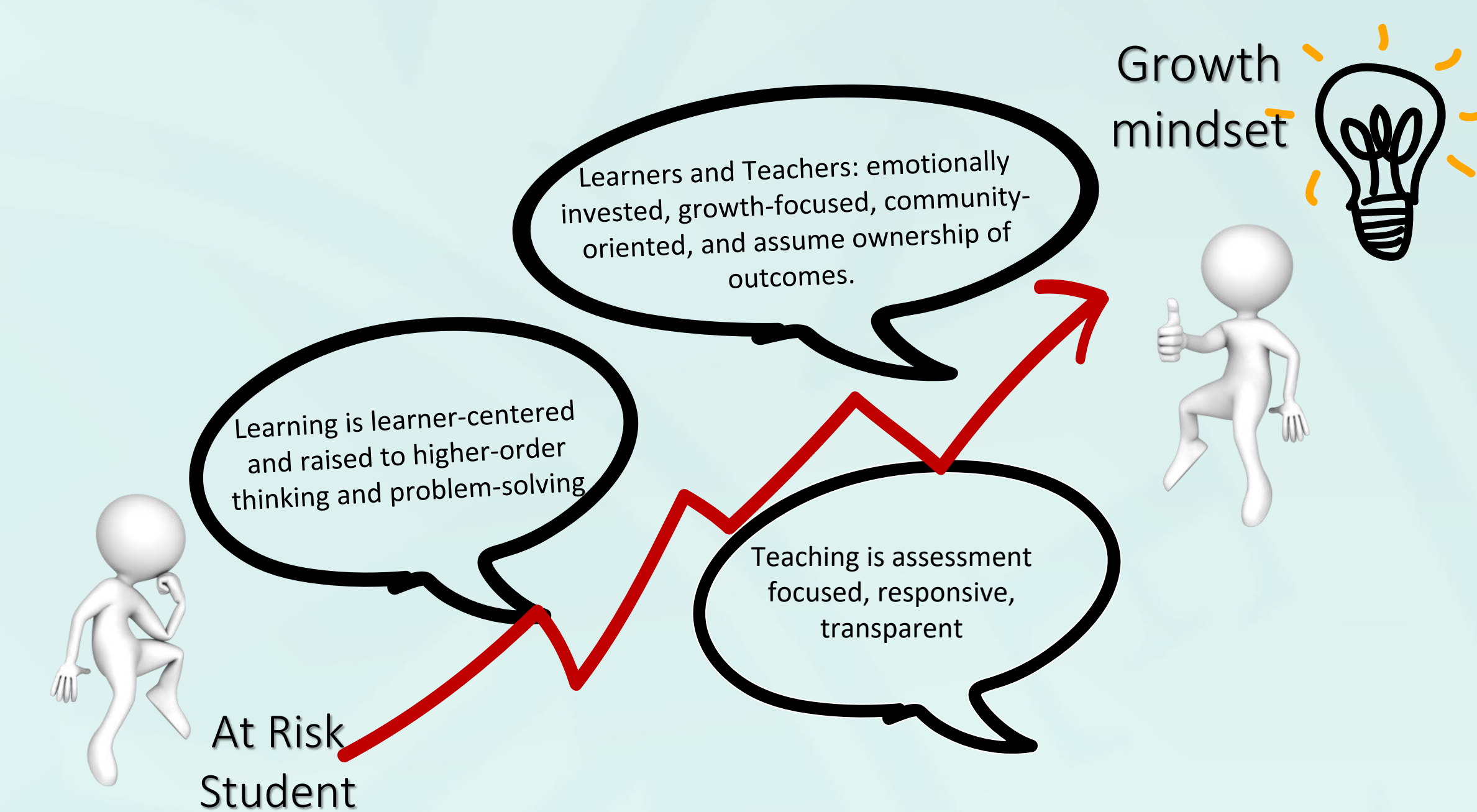


Figure 7: Embracing a growth mindset across student, faculty, and the institutional stakeholders, aligned to the Transformation of Education

Supporting at-risk learners is often discussed with a fixed mindset (i.e., remove poor performers now to protect board scores later, with correlative data as evidence). These new pathways demonstrate that learners can grow and overcome early performance deficiencies with proper support, with higher rates of successful remediation, higher retention rates, and higher board scores.

Call to Action

Programs seeking to collaborate and explore multi-institutional research aims around these and similar development approaches to retention and student success are encouraged to contact us. Please email our corresponding author: pkhansari@westcoastuniversity.edu

Acknowledgment:

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References

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