

Course Signals — Purdue's Predictive Early-Warning System and Its Debunked Retention Claim

AI in Education · Good practice · United States of America

Quality score: 13/100

Evidence strength: Cautionary / limited

Summary

Purdue's Course Signals combined demographics, prior grades and course activity into a red/yellow/green risk light. Purdue claimed a 21.48-point graduation-rate boost, but independent reanalysis found the effect was a statistical artifact that vanished at scale.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Evidence of learning impact	0/3
Equity & inclusion	0/3
Transparency, ethics & data protection	0/3
Teacher capability & pedagogy	1/3
Scalability & sustainability	1/3

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-09-03

[Purdue University](#) — accessed 2026-09-03

[Arnold & Pistilli 2012, LAK '12 \(ACM Digital Library\)](#) — accessed 2026-09-03

[Inside Higher Ed — 'Researchers cast doubt about early warning systems' effect on retention' \(2013\)](#) — accessed 2026-09-03

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