mole ratios pogil answer key

mole ratios pogil answer key is a critical resource for students and educators grappling with stoichiometry and quantitative chemistry. This article aims to provide a comprehensive guide to understanding and utilizing mole ratios, particularly within the context of the popular POGIL (Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning) activities. We will delve into the fundamental concepts of mole ratios, explore their application in chemical reactions, and offer insights into how to effectively navigate and interpret POGIL answer keys related to this topic. Understanding mole ratios is foundational for mastering stoichiometry, predicting product yields, and analyzing reaction pathways. This guide will equip you with the knowledge to confidently tackle mole ratio problems, whether you are a high school chemistry student or an undergraduate delving deeper into chemical calculations.

- Understanding the Core Concept of Mole Ratios
- The Role of Balanced Chemical Equations in Determining Mole Ratios
- Applying Mole Ratios in Stoichiometry Problems
- Common Challenges and Strategies for Using Mole Ratios
- Decoding Mole Ratios POGIL Activities and Answer Keys
- Practical Applications of Mole Ratios in Chemistry

Understanding the Core Concept of Mole Ratios

The concept of mole ratios is a cornerstone of quantitative chemistry, enabling us to relate the amounts of different substances involved in a chemical reaction. At its heart, a mole ratio is a conversion factor derived from the coefficients of a balanced chemical equation. It represents the relative number of moles of reactants consumed and products formed. For instance, in the reaction $2H_2 + O_2 \rightarrow 2H_2O$, the mole ratio between hydrogen gas (H_2) and water (H_2O) is 2 moles of H_2 to 2 moles of H_2O , which simplifies to a 1:1 ratio. Similarly, the ratio of oxygen (O_2) to water is 1 mole of O_2 to 2 moles of H_2O , expressed as a 1:2 ratio. Mastering these ratios is essential for calculating the amount of product that can be formed from a given amount of reactant, or conversely, determining the amount of reactant needed to produce a specific quantity of product.

These ratios are not arbitrary but are directly dictated by the law of conservation of mass, which states that matter cannot be created or destroyed in a chemical reaction. The coefficients in a balanced equation ensure that the number of atoms of each element remains constant on both sides of the equation, thus reflecting the precise stoichiometry of the transformation. Without a balanced equation, deriving accurate mole ratios is impossible, rendering any subsequent stoichiometric calculations incorrect. Therefore, the first crucial step in any mole ratio problem is always to ensure the chemical equation is properly balanced.

The Role of Balanced Chemical Equations in Determining Mole Ratios

Balanced chemical equations serve as the indispensable blueprint for understanding and quantifying chemical reactions. The coefficients assigned to each reactant and product molecule are not merely decorative; they represent the molar proportions in which these substances react and are produced. For example, consider the synthesis of ammonia from nitrogen and hydrogen: $N_2 + 3H_2 \rightarrow 2NH_3$. This balanced equation tells us that one mole of nitrogen gas reacts with three moles of hydrogen gas to produce two moles of ammonia. From this, we can derive several key mole ratios:

- The mole ratio of N_2 to H_2 is 1 mole N_2 : 3 moles H_2 .
- The mole ratio of N_2 to NH_3 is 1 mole N_2 : 2 moles NH_3 .
- The mole ratio of H_2 to NH_3 is 3 moles H_2 : 2 moles NH_3 .

These ratios act as conversion factors in stoichiometric calculations. If we know the number of moles of one substance, we can use the appropriate mole ratio to determine the number of moles of another substance involved in the same reaction. The accuracy of these calculations hinges entirely on the correctness of the balanced chemical equation. An unbalanced equation, even by a single atom, will lead to erroneous coefficients and consequently, incorrect mole ratios and faulty predictions about reaction quantities.

The process of balancing chemical equations itself reinforces the understanding of mole ratios. It involves systematically adjusting coefficients to ensure that the number of atoms of each element is the same on both the reactant and product sides. This meticulous balancing act directly translates into the accurate representation of the mole ratios governing the specific chemical transformation. Students often find that practicing balancing equations improves their intuitive grasp of how different substances combine and are produced in fixed proportions.

Applying Mole Ratios in Stoichiometry Problems

Stoichiometry is the branch of chemistry that deals with the quantitative relationships between reactants and products in chemical reactions. Mole ratios are the fundamental tools used to bridge the gap between the known and unknown quantities in these calculations. A typical stoichiometry problem involves starting with a given amount of one substance (reactant or product) and calculating the amount of another substance involved in the same reaction. The process usually follows a structured pathway: convert the given amount to moles, use the mole ratio from the balanced equation to find moles of the desired substance, and then convert moles of the desired substance to the required units (e.g., grams, volume). This multi-step process is often referred to as dimensional analysis, where mole ratios are the crucial conversion factors that link different chemical species.

For instance, if a problem asks how many grams of water can be produced from 10 grams of hydrogen reacting with excess oxygen according to the equation

 $2H_2 + O_2 \rightarrow 2H_2O$, the mole ratio comes into play after converting 10 grams of H_2 to moles of H_2 . The mole ratio of H_2 to H_2O is 2:2 or 1:1. This ratio allows us to determine the moles of H_2O produced, which can then be converted to grams. The ability to select the correct mole ratio for each step is paramount. If the question involved excess hydrogen and asked about the amount of oxygen consumed, the mole ratio between H_2 and O_2 (2:1) would be used. Therefore, proficiency in identifying and applying these ratios is key to solving a wide array of quantitative chemistry problems.

Common Challenges and Strategies for Using Mole Ratios

One of the most frequent challenges students encounter when working with mole ratios is failing to balance the chemical equation correctly. As discussed, an unbalanced equation yields incorrect coefficients, leading directly to erroneous mole ratios and flawed stoichiometric calculations. Therefore, a primary strategy for success is to dedicate sufficient time and attention to accurately balancing every chemical equation before proceeding with any calculations. Many students also struggle with identifying the correct mole ratio to use in a given problem. This often stems from not carefully reading the question or not understanding which substances are being related. The key is to identify the "given" substance and the "wanted" substance and then find the ratio between them as indicated by their coefficients in the balanced equation.

Another common pitfall is mixing up moles and mass. Students may inadvertently use mass ratios instead of mole ratios, leading to significant errors. It's crucial to remember that mole ratios are derived from the molar quantities (coefficients) and apply to moles, not directly to grams or other mass units. Conversion to moles is almost always the necessary first step. To overcome this, visualizing the process can be helpful: Start with mass, convert to moles, use the mole ratio, and then convert back to mass or other desired units. Finally, some students find it difficult to set up the dimensional analysis correctly, often leading to cancelled units that don't result in the desired outcome. Practicing with various examples and paying close attention to how units cancel can build confidence and competence in setting up these calculations.

Decoding Mole Ratios POGIL Activities and Answer Keys

POGIL activities are designed to foster conceptual understanding through guided inquiry. When these activities focus on mole ratios, they typically present scenarios that require students to derive these ratios from balanced equations and then apply them to solve specific problems. The POGIL answer key serves as a crucial validation tool, allowing students to check their work and identify any conceptual misunderstandings. Understanding how to interpret the POGIL answer key for mole ratios is therefore essential. Often, the answer key will not only provide the final numerical answer but may also outline the steps taken to arrive at that solution, including the specific mole ratios used.

When reviewing a POGIL answer key related to mole ratios, it's important to go beyond simply verifying the final number. Students should analyze how the answer was derived. Did they correctly balance the equation? Which mole ratio was applied, and why? Was the conversion from the initial quantity to moles performed accurately? By dissecting the provided solution, students can gain a deeper appreciation for the problem-solving process. If a student's answer differs from the key, they should work backward from the correct answer, using the information in the key to pinpoint where their own reasoning or calculation diverged. This iterative process of solving, checking, and understanding the rationale behind the answer is fundamental to effective learning with POGIL materials and their corresponding answer keys.

Practical Applications of Mole Ratios in Chemistry

The importance of mole ratios extends far beyond textbook problems; they are fundamental to numerous practical applications in chemistry and related fields. In industrial chemical synthesis, precise control over reactant quantities is vital for maximizing product yield and minimizing waste. Chemical engineers use mole ratios to calculate the exact amounts of raw materials needed to produce desired chemicals on a large scale, ensuring efficiency and cost-effectiveness. For example, in the Haber-Bosch process for ammonia synthesis (N₂ + 3H₂ \rightarrow 2NH₃), accurate mole ratios are used to determine the optimal proportions of nitrogen and hydrogen to feed into the reactor for maximum ammonia production.

Furthermore, mole ratios are critical in analytical chemistry for determining the concentration of unknown substances. Titration experiments, for instance, rely heavily on mole ratios to calculate the amount of analyte present in a sample based on the volume of titrant consumed. If a reaction has a known stoichiometry, like the reaction between an acid and a base, the mole ratio dictates how many moles of one react with how many moles of the other. This allows chemists to accurately quantify the concentration of solutions. Even in biological contexts, understanding the stoichiometry of biochemical reactions, which are governed by mole ratios, is crucial for comprehending metabolic pathways and enzyme activity. The ubiquitous nature of mole ratios underscores their significance in virtually every facet of chemistry.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a mole ratio and why is it important in chemistry?

A mole ratio is a conversion factor derived from the coefficients in a balanced chemical equation, representing the relative number of moles of reactants and products involved in a reaction. It's crucial for stoichiometric calculations, allowing us to predict the amount of product formed or reactant consumed.

How do you determine the mole ratio between two substances in a chemical reaction?

You find the mole ratio by looking at the coefficients of the two substances in a balanced chemical equation. The ratio is simply the coefficient of the desired substance divided by the coefficient of the known substance.

What is the primary purpose of using a POGIL activity on mole ratios?

The primary purpose of a POGIL activity on mole ratios is to guide students to discover the concept and its application through guided inquiry, collaborative learning, and data analysis, rather than simply being told the definition.

If a balanced equation shows 2 moles of A reacting with 3 moles of B to form 4 moles of C, what is the mole ratio of A to B?

The mole ratio of A to B is 2:3, as indicated by their coefficients in the balanced equation.

How can mole ratios be used to convert between mass and moles?

Mole ratios are used in conjunction with molar mass. First, you convert the given mass of a substance to moles using its molar mass. Then, you use the mole ratio from the balanced equation to find the moles of the desired substance. Finally, if needed, you can convert these moles back to mass using the molar mass of the desired substance.

What is a common misconception students have regarding mole ratios in POGIL activities?

A common misconception is confusing mole ratios with mass ratios. Students might mistakenly assume the ratio of masses of reactants or products is the same as the ratio of their coefficients, failing to account for different molar masses.

Why is balancing a chemical equation a prerequisite for correctly using mole ratios?

Balancing a chemical equation ensures that the law of conservation of mass is obeyed. The coefficients in a balanced equation represent the correct stoichiometric relationships in terms of moles, which are directly used to determine the mole ratios.

In a POGIL context, what type of data or scenarios are typically presented to help students understand mole ratios?

POGIL activities often present data from experiments, hypothetical reaction

scenarios with given quantities, or pre-balanced chemical equations that students analyze to derive the mole ratios and their implications.

What is the 'key' aspect of a 'mole ratios POGIL answer key'?

The 'key' aspect refers to the provided answers or solutions that accompany the POGIL activity. These answers allow students to check their understanding, verify their reasoning, and clarify any points of confusion they encountered during the guided inquiry process.

Additional Resources

Here are 9 book titles related to mole ratios and POGIL answer keys, along with short descriptions:

- 1. Mastering Stoichiometry with Mole Ratios. This comprehensive guide delves deeply into the concept of mole ratios, providing clear explanations and numerous practice problems. It's designed to build a strong foundation in stoichiometric calculations, essential for chemistry students. The book focuses on developing problem-solving strategies that mirror the guided inquiry approach often found in POGIL activities.
- 2. The POGIL Approach to Understanding Chemical Quantities. This text specifically addresses the pedagogical strengths of the Process-Oriented Guided Inquiry Learning (POGIL) method as applied to chemical quantities. It features POGIL-style activities, including those centered on mole ratios, with built-in opportunities for student discovery and critical thinking. The accompanying answer key is integrated within the resource, facilitating self-assessment.
- 3. Decoding Mole Ratios: A Student's Companion. Aimed at students seeking to clarify their understanding of mole ratios, this book breaks down complex concepts into manageable steps. It offers detailed explanations of how to interpret chemical formulas and equations to derive mole ratios, with an emphasis on common pitfalls. The book often includes exercises that reflect the typical structure and difficulty of POGIL worksheets.
- 4. Stoichiometry Solved: The Mole Ratio Connection. This book is a practical manual for mastering stoichiometry, with a particular focus on the pivotal role of mole ratios. It presents a structured approach to solving a wide variety of stoichiometric problems, from simple conversions to complex multistep calculations. The integrated answer key provides detailed solutions, allowing students to verify their work and understand the reasoning behind each step.
- 5. Inquiry-Based Chemistry: Mole Ratios and Beyond. This resource leverages the principles of inquiry-based learning to explore chemical concepts, with a significant portion dedicated to mole ratios. It provides a series of guided investigations designed to help students construct their own understanding of how to use mole ratios in calculations. The book includes a robust answer key to support both student learning and instructor facilitation.
- 6. The Art of Stoichiometric Calculation: Mole Ratios in Practice. This title emphasizes the practical application of mole ratios in chemical calculations. It offers a step-by-step methodology for tackling stoichiometry problems, highlighting the importance of accurate mole ratio utilization. The book is

designed to equip students with the confidence and skills to solve a broad range of chemical quantitative problems, often referencing the problemsolving frameworks found in POGIL materials.

- 7. POGIL Chemistry: Essential Mole Ratio Skills. This book is a focused exploration of the critical skills related to mole ratios within the POGIL curriculum framework. It presents POGIL-style activities and problem sets specifically designed to build proficiency in using mole ratios for quantitative analysis. The accompanying answer key offers comprehensive explanations for each problem, aiding students in their learning journey.
- 8. Chemical Quantities Unpacked: The Mole Ratio Handbook. This handbook serves as a comprehensive reference for understanding chemical quantities, with a dedicated section on mole ratios. It provides clear definitions, illustrative examples, and practice exercises designed to solidify comprehension. The book is structured to help students develop a deep understanding of mole ratios and their application in various chemical contexts.
- 9. From Formulas to Calculations: Mastering Mole Ratios. This title focuses on the fundamental process of transitioning from chemical formulas and equations to practical stoichiometric calculations using mole ratios. It offers a clear and logical approach to deriving and applying mole ratios, making it an invaluable resource for students struggling with stoichiometry. The book's problem sets and explanations are often aligned with the discovery-based learning found in POGIL.

Mole Ratios Pogil Answer Key

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Mole Ratios POGIL Answer Key: Mastering Stoichiometry

Ebook Title: Unlocking Stoichiometry: A Comprehensive Guide to Mole Ratios with POGIL Activities

Outline:

Introduction: What are mole ratios? Why are they important in chemistry? Introduction to POGIL activities.

Chapter 1: Understanding Moles and Molar Mass: Defining the mole, calculating molar mass, converting between grams and moles.

Chapter 2: Balancing Chemical Equations: Importance of balanced equations in stoichiometry, practice balancing various types of equations.

Chapter 3: Mole Ratio Calculations: Determining mole ratios from balanced equations, solving stoichiometric problems using mole ratios (limiting reactant problems included).

Chapter 4: Mole Ratio Applications: Real-world applications of mole ratios in various fields (e.g., pharmaceuticals, environmental science).

Chapter 5: Advanced Stoichiometry Problems: Problems involving percent yield, limiting reactants,

and excess reactants. Solutions to selected POGIL activities. Conclusion: Recap of key concepts, emphasizing the importance of mastering mole ratios in chemistry.

Unlocking Stoichiometry: A Comprehensive Guide to Mole Ratios with POGIL Activities

Introduction: The Foundation of Chemical Calculations

Stoichiometry, the heart of quantitative chemistry, deals with the relationships between reactants and products in chemical reactions. At its core lies the concept of the mole ratio, a crucial tool for predicting the amounts of substances involved in a reaction. Understanding mole ratios is essential for accurately interpreting chemical equations and performing quantitative analyses in various fields, from industrial chemical production to environmental monitoring. POGIL (Process-Oriented Guided-Inquiry Learning) activities offer a hands-on, collaborative approach to mastering this concept, allowing students to actively participate in their learning journey. This ebook provides a comprehensive guide to mole ratios, combining theoretical explanations with practical examples and solutions to selected POGIL activities. We'll explore the fundamental concepts, step-by-step calculations, and real-world applications, empowering you to confidently tackle stoichiometric problems.

Chapter 1: Understanding Moles and Molar Mass - The Building Blocks

Before diving into mole ratios, we must solidify our understanding of the mole, the cornerstone of chemical measurements. A mole represents Avogadro's number (approximately 6.022×10^{23}) of particles, whether atoms, molecules, or ions. This number provides a consistent link between the macroscopic world (grams) and the microscopic world (atoms and molecules). The molar mass of a substance is the mass of one mole of that substance, expressed in grams per mole (g/mol). Calculating molar mass involves summing the atomic masses of all atoms present in a molecule, obtained from the periodic table.

For example, to calculate the molar mass of water (H₂O):

Atomic mass of Hydrogen (H) = 1.01 g/mol Atomic mass of Oxygen (O) = 16.00 g/mol Molar mass of H₂O = $(2 \times 1.01 \text{ g/mol}) + (1 \times 16.00 \text{ g/mol}) = 18.02 \text{ g/mol}$ Converting between grams and moles is straightforward using the molar mass as a conversion factor. For instance, to find the number of moles in 36.04 g of water:

Moles = (Mass in grams) / (Molar mass) = 36.04 g / 18.02 g/mol = 2 moles

Chapter 2: Balancing Chemical Equations - The Equation of Success

A balanced chemical equation is the roadmap for stoichiometric calculations. It provides the quantitative relationship between reactants and products, ensuring the law of conservation of mass is obeyed (the same number of atoms of each element on both sides of the equation). Balancing equations involves adjusting coefficients (the numbers in front of chemical formulas) until the number of atoms of each element is equal on both the reactant and product sides.

For example, consider the reaction between hydrogen and oxygen to form water:

 $H_2 + O_2 \rightarrow H_2O$

This equation is unbalanced. The balanced equation is:

 $2H_2 + O_2 \rightarrow 2H_2O$

This balanced equation shows that 2 moles of hydrogen react with 1 mole of oxygen to produce 2 moles of water.

Chapter 3: Mole Ratio Calculations - The Heart of Stoichiometry

The mole ratio is the ratio of the moles of one substance to the moles of another substance in a balanced chemical equation. It acts as the crucial conversion factor in stoichiometric calculations. The mole ratio is derived directly from the coefficients in the balanced equation.

For the balanced equation above $(2H_2 + O_2 \rightarrow 2H_2O)$, the mole ratios are:

 $\begin{array}{l} 2 \text{ moles } H_2: 1 \text{ mole } O_2 \\ 2 \text{ moles } H_2: 2 \text{ moles } H_2O \\ 1 \text{ mole } O_2: 2 \text{ moles } H_2O \end{array}$

Using these ratios, we can determine the amount of one substance given the amount of another. For example, if we have 4 moles of H_2 , how many moles of H_2 O can be produced?

Moles of $H_2O = 4$ moles H_2 x (2 moles $H_2O / 2$ moles H_2) = 4 moles H_2O

This chapter will guide you through various types of stoichiometry problems, including those involving limiting reactants—the reactant that is completely consumed first, thus limiting the amount of product formed.

Chapter 4: Mole Ratio Applications - Real-World Relevance

Mole ratios aren't confined to textbook problems; they have wide-ranging applications in diverse fields.

Pharmaceutical Industry: Precise stoichiometric calculations are crucial in drug manufacturing to ensure the correct dosage and purity.

Environmental Science: Analyzing pollutant concentrations and determining the amount of reactants needed for remediation processes require a thorough understanding of mole ratios.

Industrial Chemistry: Optimizing chemical reactions in industrial settings to maximize product yield and minimize waste relies heavily on stoichiometric principles.

Agricultural Chemistry: Determining the amount of fertilizer needed for optimal crop growth involves calculations based on mole ratios of nutrients.

Chapter 5: Advanced Stoichiometry Problems - Mastering the Challenges

This chapter delves into more complex stoichiometry problems, including:

Percent Yield: The actual yield of a reaction compared to the theoretical yield, often less than 100% due to various factors.

Limiting Reactants and Excess Reactants: Identifying the reactant that limits the reaction and calculating the amount of excess reactant remaining.

Solutions to Selected POGIL Activities: Detailed step-by-step solutions to challenging POGIL activities to reinforce understanding.

Conclusion: A Foundation for Further Study

Mastering mole ratios is fundamental to success in chemistry and related fields. This ebook has provided a comprehensive framework, moving from basic concepts to advanced applications. By understanding the mole, balancing equations, and effectively using mole ratios, you possess the essential tools for tackling a wide range of stoichiometric problems. Continue practicing and applying these principles to solidify your understanding and prepare for future challenges.

FAQs

- 1. What is the difference between a mole and a molar mass? A mole is a unit of measurement representing Avogadro's number of particles, while molar mass is the mass of one mole of a substance.
- 2. Why is it important to balance chemical equations before performing stoichiometric calculations? Balancing ensures mass conservation and provides the correct mole ratios for calculations.
- 3. How do I identify the limiting reactant in a reaction? Determine the moles of each reactant, then compare the mole ratios to find the reactant that produces the least amount of product.
- 4. What is percent yield, and how is it calculated? Percent yield is the ratio of actual yield to theoretical yield, multiplied by 100%.
- 5. What are some real-world applications of mole ratios? Applications include drug manufacturing, environmental monitoring, industrial chemistry, and agriculture.
- 6. How do POGIL activities help in learning stoichiometry? POGIL promotes active learning through collaborative problem-solving, improving comprehension.
- 7. Can I use mole ratios for reactions involving solutions? Yes, after converting solution concentrations (e.g., molarity) into moles.
- 8. What if I have a reaction with more than two reactants? The same principles apply; find the limiting reactant among all reactants.
- 9. Where can I find more practice problems on mole ratios? Numerous chemistry textbooks and online resources offer ample practice problems.

Related Articles:

- 1. Stoichiometry: A Beginner's Guide: A basic introduction to the concepts of stoichiometry.
- 2. Limiting Reactants and Excess Reactants Explained: A detailed explanation of limiting reactant calculations.
- 3. Percent Yield Calculation and its Significance: A detailed explanation of percent yield and its applications.
- 4. Molarity and Mole Calculations in Solutions: How to use molarity for stoichiometric calculations.
- 5. Solving Complex Stoichiometry Problems: Advanced problems involving multiple steps and different units.
- 6. Applications of Stoichiometry in the Pharmaceutical Industry: Real-world applications in drug development and manufacturing.
- 7. Stoichiometry and Environmental Chemistry: How stoichiometry is applied in pollution control and environmental analysis.
- 8. POGIL Activities for High School Chemistry: Examples of effective POGIL activities on

stoichiometry for high school students.

9. Mastering Stoichiometry through Practice Problems: A collection of practice problems with solutions to test your understanding.

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colliding particles produce states, and so much more. To provide students with hands-on experience, AP chemistry courses include extensive labwork as part of the standard curriculum. This is why the book dedicates a chapter to providing a brief review of common laboratory equipment and techniques and another to a complete survey of recommended AP chemistry experiments. Two full-length practice exams help you build your confidence, get comfortable with test formats, identify your strengths and weaknesses, and focus your studies. You'll discover how to Create and follow a pretest plan Understand everything you must know about the exam Develop a multiple-choice strategy Figure out displacement, combustion, and acid-base reactions Get familiar with stoichiometry Describe patterns and predict properties Get a handle on organic chemistry nomenclature Know your way around laboratory concepts, tasks, equipment, and safety Analyze laboratory data Use practice exams to maximize your score Additionally, you'll have a chance to brush up on the math skills that will help you on the exam, learn the critical types of chemistry problems, and become familiar with the annoying exceptions to chemistry rules. Get your own copy of AP Chemistry For Dummies to build your confidence and test-taking know-how, so you can ace that exam!

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contemporary applications and an intuitive problem-solving approach that helps students discover the exciting potential of chemical science. This book incorporates fresh applications from the three major areas of modern research: materials, environmental chemistry, and biological science.

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mole ratios pogil answer key: Barriers and Opportunities for 2-Year and 4-Year STEM Degrees National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, National Academy of Engineering, Policy and Global Affairs, Board on Higher Education and Workforce, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, Board on Science Education, Committee on Barriers and Opportunities in Completing 2-Year and 4-Year STEM Degrees, 2016-05-18 Nearly 40 percent of the students entering 2- and 4-year postsecondary institutions indicated their intention to major in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in 2012. But the barriers to students realizing their ambitions are reflected in the fact that about half of those with the intention to earn a STEM bachelor's degree and more than two-thirds intending to earn a STEM associate's degree fail to earn these degrees 4 to 6 years after their initial enrollment. Many of those who do obtain a degree take longer than the advertised length of the programs, thus raising the cost of their education. Are the STEM educational pathways any less efficient than for other fields of study? How might the losses be stemmed and greater efficiencies realized? These questions and others are at the heart of this study. Barriers and Opportunities for 2-Year and 4-Year STEM Degrees reviews research on the roles that people, processes, and institutions play in 2-and 4-year STEM degree production. This study pays special attention to the factors that influence students' decisions to enter, stay in, or leave STEM majorsâ€quality of instruction, grading policies, course sequences, undergraduate learning environments, student supports, co-curricular activities, students' general

academic preparedness and competence in science, family background, and governmental and institutional policies that affect STEM educational pathways. Because many students do not take the traditional 4-year path to a STEM undergraduate degree, Barriers and Opportunities describes several other common pathways and also reviews what happens to those who do not complete the journey to a degree. This book describes the major changes in student demographics; how students, view, value, and utilize programs of higher education; and how institutions can adapt to support successful student outcomes. In doing so, Barriers and Opportunities questions whether definitions and characteristics of what constitutes success in STEM should change. As this book explores these issues, it identifies where further research is needed to build a system that works for all students who aspire to STEM degrees. The conclusions of this report lay out the steps that faculty, STEM departments, colleges and universities, professional societies, and others can take to improve STEM education for all students interested in a STEM degree.

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