

Early English Language Assessment to Improve First-Year Student Success

University of Toronto
Dr. Penny Kinnear, Dr. Micah Stickle
Queens University
Dr. Brian Frank , Dr. Jake Kaupp

Goals

1. Identify and support engineering students who need English language support
2. Use (a) screening and (b) diagnostic instruments to identify specific needs

Screening: DELNA

Diagnostic English Language Needs Assessment

Timed Vocabulary

Timed Reading

Why use a post-enrolment assessment?

Awaken student awareness to the difference between language proficiency and using language to learn

Direct students to supports BEFORE they struggle and/or fail

Guide instructors in designing and delivering support

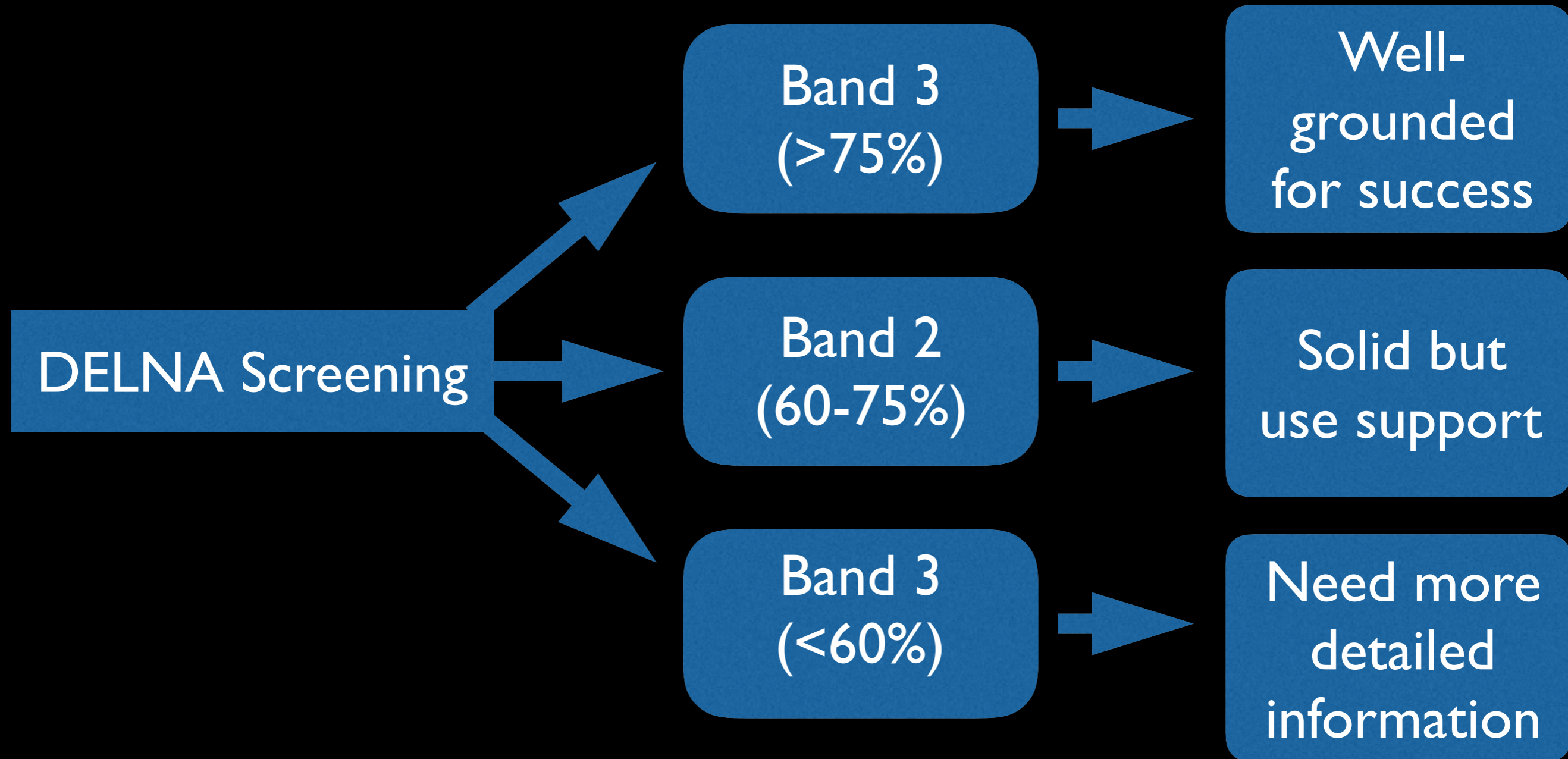
Designing a Diagnostic

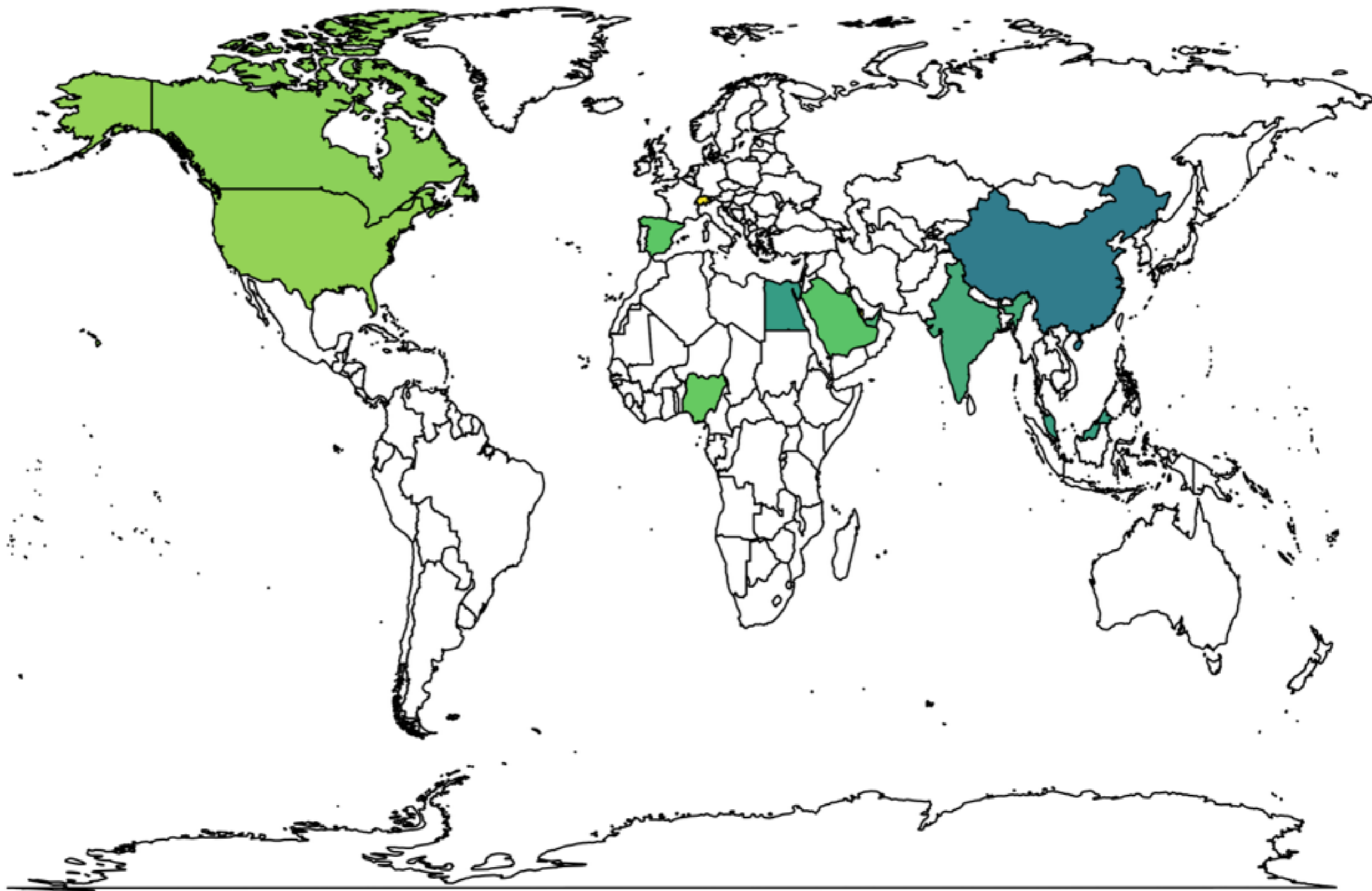
- Engineering specific
- Literal comprehension
- Interpretative
- Inferential

Designing a Rubric

	Content
Accuracy	Lexicogrammatical
Rhetorical	Argument (Claim & Evidence)
Audience	Lexicogrammatical choices
Concision	

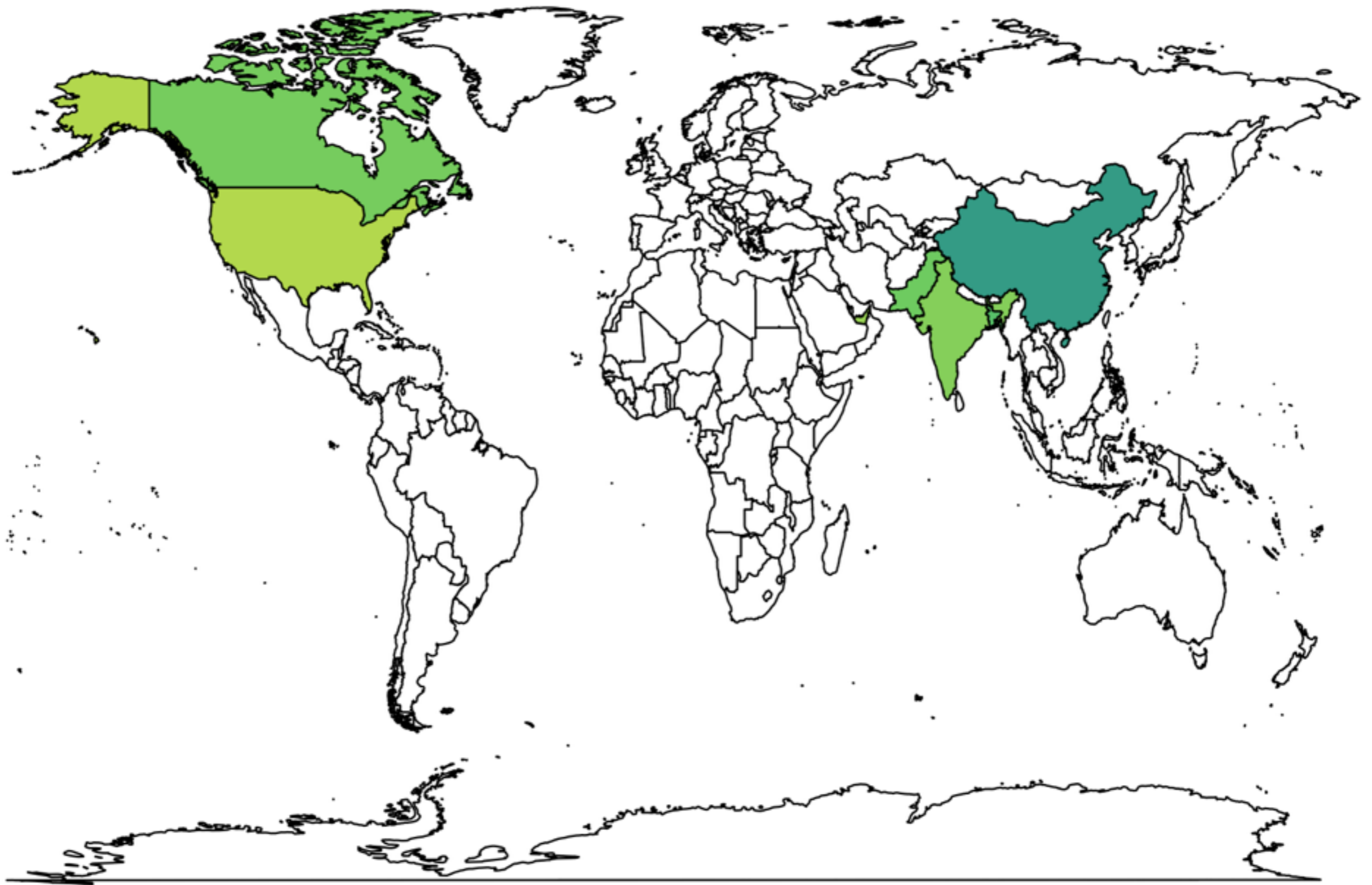
Implementation





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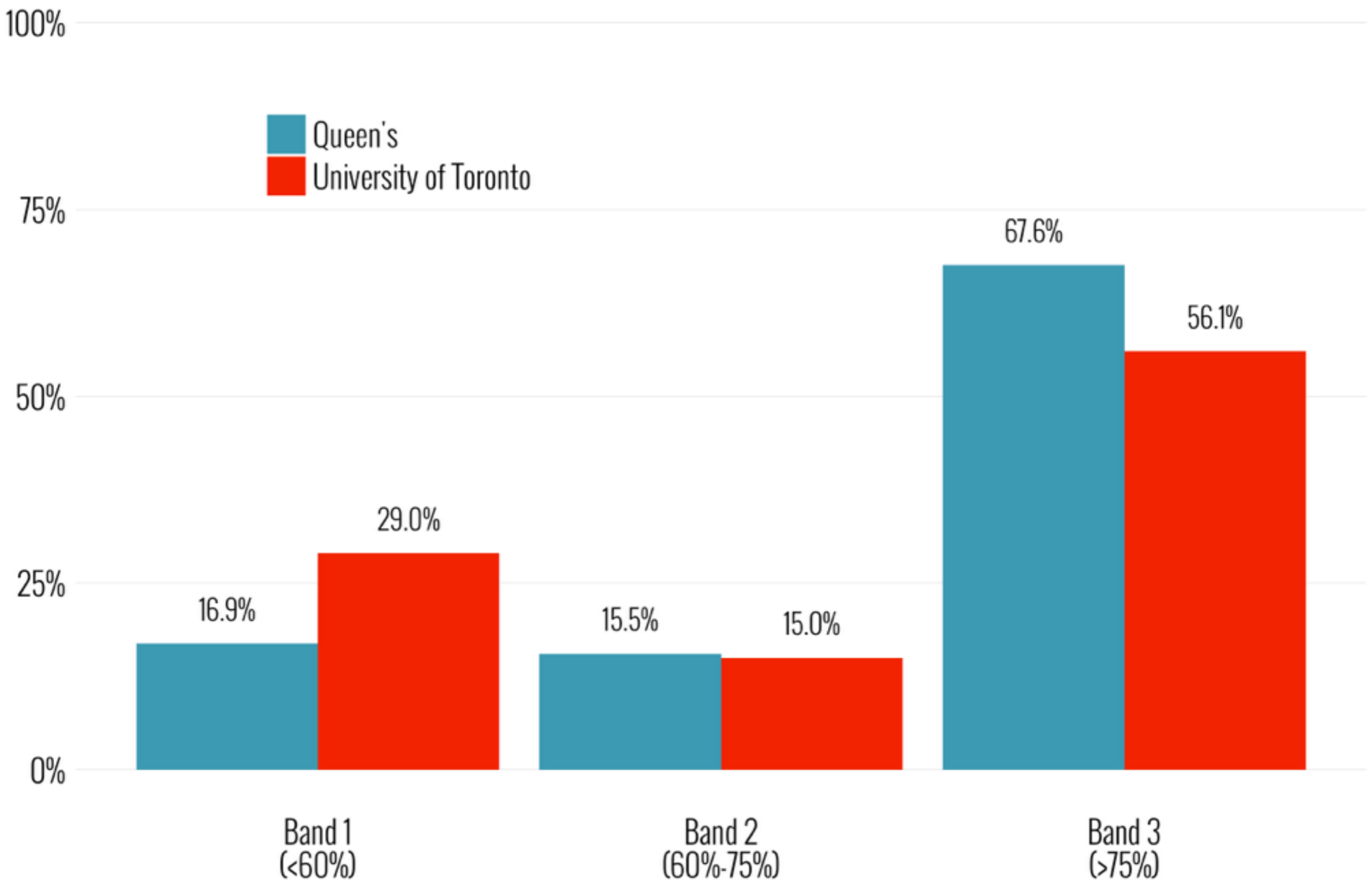


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DELNA Band Distribution

By percentage of tested population



Clusters of support needs

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1. **Proofreading:** Few needs aside from proofreading
2. **Speed:** Unable to complete the third task. *Need support to develop reading and writing speed*
3. **Comprehension:** Meaning difficult to understand. *Need instruction and practice with syntax, rhetorical organization and vocabulary.*
4. **Both speed and comprehension.** *Most in danger*

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1. No additional support would be recommended.
2. Low scores on with argumentation and inferencing
3. Low scores on most dimensions. *Need support in multiple areas*

What we did

- Inform students of what the results mean
- Support not remediation
 - Course specific writing feedback and assistance
 - Reading through concepts

Impact of this approach

- Can identify support need very early in program
- Diagnostic identifies clusters of specific needs
- Moderate correlations with writing courses, strong correlation with existing English Proficiency Test

Future Plans

- Validate rubric
- Validate diagnostic

Follow up with Band I students

Thank you

Questions?

penny.kinnear@utoronto.ca