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**Abstract**

This article aims to answer three questions concerning (1) the prevalence of the mismatch between student expectations and real university life, (2) factors influencing this mismatch, and (3) the effect of the expectation-reality mismatch on academic performance during the first year of study at university. The results of this study suggest that a large share of first-year students overestimate their future academic experience. However, this mismatch cannot be predicted by personal background characteristics and motivation at the beginning of study. According to the findings, three mismatch characteristics affect students' academic outcomes: (1) a mismatch between expected and real grades, (2) a mismatch between expected and real levels of interest in studying, and (3) a mismatch between expected and real time for extracurricular activities at university. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)