Agenda Item No. 9
Higher Education Coordinating Board
January 29, 2016

**STUDENT PLACEMENT INTO
GENERAL EDUCATION CORE COURSES**

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In accordance with A.C.A. §6-61-110, the Arkansas Department of Higher
Education (ADHE) will address the placement standards necessary for
enrollment of students into mathematics, English composition, and reading based
on appropriate indicators of potential student success rates.

ADHE Executive Staff recommend that the Arkansas Higher Education
Coordinating Board approve the following resolution:

>   **RESOLVED,** That all institutions must adopt appropriate
>   placement measures which are supported by student success
>   data.

>   **FURTHER RESOLVED,** That the Arkansas Higher Education
>   Coordinating Board approves the policy on Student Placement
>   into General Education Core Courses.

Student Placement into General Education Core Courses

Policy Statement

Student preparedness for college level courses is an important variable in student success rates. This policy addresses placement standards necessary for enrollment of students into mathematics, English composition, and reading based on appropriate indicators of potential student success rates. All institutions must adopt appropriate placement measures which are supported by student success data.

Applicable Arkansas Code

Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-61-110

Definitions

ACT Benchmarks: College readiness benchmarks adopted by ACT based on students' likelihood of success in credit-bearing first year college courses.

ACT Equivalent: Tests or other measures that can be used to approximate college readiness benchmarks. These criteria should be based on national, state, or institutional level data analytics establishing the likelihood of student success.

Co-Requisite Remediation: Credit-bearing college courses with embedded remedial assistance. Under this model, remediation occurs simultaneously with credit-bearing course enrollment.

Credit-bearing courses: Courses offered for college credit.

Fast Track Remediation: Remedial courses offered to students in a compressed format, the objective of which is to shorten the time necessary to prepare a student for credit-bearing courses.

Remediation: Courses or other interventions offered to prepare students for credit-bearing college courses. Traditionally, remedial courses have been offered in a semester-long format and bear no college credit.

Procedures

The mathematics, English composition, and reading placement standards contained in this policy implement Arkansas Code Annotated § 6-61-110. These standards apply to first-time undergraduate students, as defined in the Arkansas Higher Education Student Information

System Manual, who enroll in associate or baccalaureate degree programs at Arkansas public colleges and universities; and to any student who enrolls in college-level courses in English composition and college algebra or other comparable college-level mathematics course.

- A college or university may allow simultaneous enrollment in college-level credit and developmental courses.
- The board and administration of any campus may elect to set minimum scores for enrollment in college-level mathematics and English composition courses based on established and documented criteria which demonstrate the students' ability to succeed.
- A student must submit to the institution for purposes of admission and course placement the ACT or comparable exam scores or alternative methods of assessment as determined by the admitting institution. All first time entering freshman shall be assessed for placement into *credit-bearing courses* by at least one of the following methods:
  - o   an objective examination
  - o   previous coursework and/or career training
  - o   or other criteria as the institution deems suitable on the basis of appropriate data analysis

The placement assessment should reflect a better than 75 percent likelihood of the student's ability to earn a "C" or better grade in the course in which the student is placed. A student's reading level should be strong enough for them to earn a "C" or better in courses that require substantial reading such as courses in the sciences, humanities, and social sciences. Using the ACT college readiness benchmarks (https://www.act.org/solutions/college-career-readiness/college-readiness-benchmarks/) as a standard, assessment measures should approximate established ACT ranges. Schools are encouraged to use more than one measure, especially if the ACT equivalent is below the benchmarks set for each subject.
Ideally students should possess a readiness for credit-bearing courses and the institution admitting them should develop and refine a system to determine this. Nationally normed exams, while a clear indicator for high ability, may eliminate students able to benefit from brief remediation or refresher work. Institutions are encouraged to find effective ways to address this category of student, without requiring full semester remediation. Alternatively, students who meet standardized exam benchmarks may exhibit other indicators of difficulty with college level work, such as a low GPA on past academic work. These other indicators may demonstrate a need for additional student support even for students who meet benchmarks and should be considered in placement decisions.

Placement plans should be adopted, and evaluated, on the basis of institutional student success data. Institutions will develop placement models that provide appropriate justification for student course placements and allow for follow-up evaluation of placement effectiveness.

MATHEMATICS

Each institution shall establish a matrix of assessment measures to evaluate the preparedness or readiness of students in each of the math courses in ACTS. Typical math courses have been listed in the matrix below. However, institutions which offer other courses which meet the general education math requirement may add those in the space provided. Measures for establishing readiness of students may include one or more of the following:

- ACT exam
- Other standardized and normed exams
- High school academic performance
- Assessment of student motivation to succeed
- Other measures supported by sufficient analysis of predicted student success

ACT benchmarks establish a 22 as a cutoff score for student success in college algebra at a 75 percent or greater rate. However, other measures can provide equally important data regarding student preparedness and likelihood of success. As such, schools are encouraged to use more than one measure if the ACT or ACT-equivalent is below 22 to ensure that students are placed at the appropriate course level.

Using the ACT benchmarks as a standard, assessment measures should approximate the following ACT ranges. The ranges indicated in the matrix are not fixed but can be varied based on institutional data. For each cell, indicate the placement measure(s) to be employed and the course level/course design in which students will be placed.

- Each placement measure, other than national, standardized exams, should be accompanied by appropriate analysis to justify adoption of the measure, such as past success rates of students with similar characteristics
- Course levels or course designs include the range of traditional credit-bearing, credit-bearing with required lab/tutoring, co-requisite remedial, fast-track remedial, semester-long remedial, and adult basic education. It is anticipated that levels of student intervention will increase as student preparedness indicators decrease.

Course	ACT Range				
	Below 13	13 – 15	16 – 18	19 – 21	Above 21
College Algebra					
Statistics					
Quantitative Reasoning					
College Math					
Other:					

ENGLISH
Similar to the requirements above, each institution shall establish a matrix of assessment measures to evaluate the preparedness or readiness of students in each of the English courses in ACTS, or other courses which meet the general education English requirement. Such measures may include one or more of the following:
- ACT exam
- Other standardized and normed exams
- High school academic performance
- Assessment of student motivation to succeed
- Writing samples
- Other measures supported by sufficient analysis of predicted student success

ACT benchmarks establish an 18 as a cutoff score for student success in English Composition at a 75 percent or greater rate. However, other measures can provide equally important data regarding student preparedness and likelihood of success. As such, schools are encouraged to use more than one measure if the ACT or ACT-equivalent is below 18 to ensure that students are placed at the appropriate course level.

Using the ACT benchmarks as a standard, assessment measures should approximate the following ACT ranges. The ranges indicated in the matrix are not fixed but can be varied based on institutional data. For each cell, indicate the placement measure(s) to be employed and the course level/course design in which students will be placed.
- Each placement measure, other than national, standardized exams, should be accompanied by appropriate analysis to justify adoption of the measure, such as past success rates of students with similar characteristics
- Course levels or course designs include the range of traditional credit-bearing, credit-bearing with required lab/tutoring, co-requisite remedial, fast-track remedial, semester-long remedial, and adult basic education. It is anticipated that levels of student intervention will increase as student preparedness indicators decrease.

Course	ACT Range			
	Below 13	13 – 15	15 – 17	Above 17
English Composition II				
English Composition I				
Fundamentals of Writing				
Other:				

READING

A student's reading level should be strong enough to indicate potential for success at a "C" or better in freshman courses that require substantial reading, such as courses in the humanities and social sciences. Each institution shall establish a matrix of assessment measures to evaluate the preparedness or readiness of students in each of the humanities and social science courses in ACTS. Such measures may include one or more of the following:

- ACT exam
- Other standardized and normed exams
- High school academic performance
- Assessment of student motivation to succeed
- Other measures supported by sufficient analysis of predicted student success

ACT benchmarks establish a 22 as a reading cutoff score for student success in social science courses at a 75 percent or greater rate. However, other measures can provide equally important data regarding student preparedness and likelihood of success. As such, schools are encouraged to use more than one measure if the ACT or ACT-equivalent is below 22 to ensure that students are placed at the appropriate course level.

Using the ACT benchmarks as a standard, assessment measures should approximate the following ACT ranges. The ranges indicated in the matrix are not fixed but can be varied based on institutional data. For each cell, indicate the placement measure(s) to be employed and the course level/course design in which students will be placed.

- Each placement measure, other than national, standardized exams, should be accompanied by appropriate analysis to justify adoption of the measure, such as past success rates of students with similar characteristics
- Course levels or course designs include the range of traditional credit-bearing, credit-bearing with required lab/tutoring, co-requisite remedial, fast-track remedial, semester-long remedial, and adult basic education. It is anticipated that levels of student intervention will increase as student preparedness indicators decrease.

	ACT Range				
Discipline	Below 13	13 – 15	16 – 18	19 – 21	Above 21
Geography					
History					
Languages					
Philosophy					
Political Science					
Psychology					
Sociology					
Other:					

Forms

Revision History
Last revision date: Adopted by AHECB on _____
Previous revisions: