

COLORADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

SYSTEM PRESIDENT'S PROCEDURE

BASIC SKILLS ASSESSMENT

BP 9-41

Reference: BP9-41, Basic Skills

Effective: July 1, 2004

Approved:

Nancy J. McCallin, System President

APPLICATION

This procedure applies to all state system community colleges beginning with fiscal year 2005.

BASIS

Board Policy 9-41 requires the System President to promulgate procedures necessary to implement basic skills assessment. Further, these Procedures respond to the CCHE Statewide Remedial Education Policy.

GUIDELINES

This procedure provides guidance for implementation of basic skills assessment in reading, writing, and mathematics of first-time undergraduate students within the state system of community colleges.

PROCEDURE

I. Requirement for Assessment

First-time undergraduate students must be assessed in mathematics, writing, and reading prior to enrolling in the second semester of their college career.

A. First-Time Undergraduate: As applied in this policy, an undergraduate student enrolling in a higher education institution for the first time with no previous postsecondary experience. Enrollment in personal enrichment or avocational courses is not considered previous postsecondary experience. Prior enrollment as a high school student concurrently enrolled in a higher education institution does not preclude a student from being categorized as first-time.

1. Three groups of students are included in the definition of first-time undergraduate unless exempted below:

- a. first-time, degree-seeking undergraduates;
- b. non-degree-seeking undergraduates who change to degree-seeking status; and
- c. non-degree-seeking first-time undergraduates who have graduated from a Colorado public or private high school (or its equivalent) during the previous academic year.¹

2. Students who have completed either a college-level transfer mathematics and college-level transfer writing course or a remedial course (if required) in mathematics, writing, and reading are exempt from assessment. Other students exempt from assessment include those who:

- a. earned a baccalaureate degree; or
- b. earned a transfer-oriented associate degree (i.e., A.A. or A.S.); excludes A.G.S. and A.A.S. graduates; or
- c. are pursuing a vocational certificate. Institutions may be more stringent and require assessment of certificate-seekers); or
- d. are a concurrently enrolled high school student until they are matriculated by the institution as a degree-seeking undergraduate by an institution; or
- e. are exchange students (students coming from another institution, state, or country for study) for a defined period of time (e.g., academic term or year); or
- f. are non-degree-seeking undergraduates (unless recent high school graduates referenced above) until they become degree-seeking.

¹ Pursuant to C.R.S. 23-1-113.3, CCHE must provide a high school feedback report to Colorado school districts on remediation of their recent high school graduates. For that report, recent high school graduates are defined as degree- and non-degree-seeking undergraduates who a) have graduated from a Colorado public or private high school (or its equivalent) during the previous academic year; or b) are 17, 18, or 19 years of age if year of high school graduation is not provided by the higher education institution. Age will be calculated as of September 15 of the specified fiscal year.

II. Assessment Methods and Minimum Basic Skills Standards

A. Colleges must use one of the following assessment tests and cut scores. A student who scores the indicated score or above within the five years prior to first enrollment is determined not to be in need of basic skills instruction.

1. The ACT test [English (18), Reading (17), Mathematics (19)]; or
2. The SAT test [Verbal (440) for the English assessment or (430) for the reading assessment, Mathematics (460) for the mathematics assessment.
3. If a student's score falls below these scores or the student has not taken one of these tests, the student must take the Accuplacer [Sentence Skills (95) for the English assessment, Reading Comprehension (80) for the reading assessment, Elementary Algebra (85) for the mathematics assessment].

III. Basic Skills Instruction

- A. Colleges must place students in the appropriate level course work upon assessment. Students meeting the specified minimum cut score may be placed in college-level courses and reported as such, provided that a student's transcripts or other secondary-level assessment justifies such placement.
- B. Colleges must ensure that each enrolled first-time undergraduate student identified as needing basic skills remedial course work is provided with written notification identifying which state institutions offer such basic skills courses, including electronic on-line courses.
- C. All students whose assessment scores do not meet the standards above are responsible for completing basic skills instruction during their first thirty (30) credit hours of attendance at the college. For students with unmet remedial needs who have completed 30 or more credit hours, colleges must require that such students meet with an academic advisor on the need to address basic skills deficiencies before registering for additional course work.

III. Data Collection

- A. Each college shall collect and report as required by the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) regarding students who are assessed.
- B. Documentation of the student's basic skills assessment must be retained for a minimum of five years after testing.