



COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
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UC 923707S 1/24/07
RECEIVED NOV 22 2006

TO: Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
FROM: John Antel, Dean
SUBJECT: Math Placement Exam
DATE: November 22, 2006

The following is a proposal in support of a campus-wide effort to make the Math Placement Exam mandatory for all first-time-in-college freshmen. Currently all Honors College freshman, as well as students in ARCH, ENGR, NSM, PHAR and TECH are required to take the Math Placement Exam. Pre-CLASS majors are allowed various exemptions based on SAT, ACT, or THEA scores or completion of MATH 1310. This proposal is an effort to standardize the policy across campus for all majors.

Proposal: The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences supports including first-time-in-college pre-CLASS majors among those students required to take the Math Placement Exam.

Current Wording (Undergraduate Catalog, p. 31):

B. Mathematics Placement

Prior to registration, students must take the THEA Math test or its equivalent. Incoming freshmen should enroll in Math 1310 if they have a minimum of 250 on the THEA Math Test. Students with scores below the minimum should enroll in MATH 1300.

Students who are exempt from the TSI Test may use SAT/ACT scores or the Department of Mathematics placement exam scores to determine the appropriate math course for them.

Placement in the sequence of mathematics/reasoning courses is determined in one of two ways.

- a. Students with a composite score of 900 (if taken prior to April 1, 1995) or higher on the SAT or 20 or higher on the ACT (21 EACT) may enroll directly in MATH 1310: College Algebra or MATH 1311: Elementary Mathematical Modeling. For SAT tests taken on or after April 1, 1995, mathematics subtest scores (subscores) instead of composite scores will be used, and a minimum score of 530 on the SATM mathematics subtest will be

- required for direct enrollment in MATH 1310 or 1311. Students with these scores are also qualified to take a departmental examination which may allow them to place out of MATH 1310 and register for three hours of mathematics/reasoning.
- b. Students with test scores lower than 20 ACT (21 EACT) or 900 SAT (if taken prior to April 1, 1995) or with mathematics subscores lower than 530 SATM (on tests taken on or after April 1, 1995), and students who do not have SAT or ACT scores must take a placement examination designed by the Department of Mathematics prior to registration in mathematics courses. On the basis of this examination, students will either be admitted to MATH 1310: College Algebra or MATH 1311: Elementary Mathematical Modeling; required to complete MATH 1300 or equivalent in preparation for MATH 1310 or MATH 1311; or placed out of MATH 1310.
 - c. Students transferring six or more hours of equivalent core-approved courses in the appropriate categories have satisfied the mathematics and the mathematics/reasoning core curriculum requirements. Such students are not required to take the mathematics placement examination.

Students transferring fewer than six hours of equivalent core-approved mathematics courses including College Algebra do not have to take the mathematics placement examination but may have to take a mathematics/reasoning course.

Proposed Wording:

First-Time-in-College Freshmen

B. Mathematics Placement

All first-time-in-college freshmen students are required to take the mathematics placement exam.

Justification: Currently all Honors College freshman, as well as students in ARCH, ENGR, NSM, PHAR and TECH are required to take the Math Placement Exam. The Math Placement Exam provides a standardized, up-to-date reflection of a student's current skill level to determine whether the student needs a developmental math course, college algebra or should be allowed to take a higher level math course. Such a policy would also simplify advising during orientation. Currently, due to all the possible exceptions, many newly admitted students are confused. This confusion creates a bottleneck during orientation and registration because students first need to see an advisor and provide documentation of SAT, ACT, or THEA scores, or an evaluated transcript of

showing completion of MATH 1310 to determine if they need to take the placement exam. Since the exam is offered every Wednesday for \$5 and lasts about an hour and a half, requiring all students to take it would not be overly difficult for them or too much of a financial burden and would standardize the process across campus, giving students and advisors an up-to-date reflection of their math skill level.