

# **Recommendations of the Illinois Community College Chief Academic Officers (ICCCAO) & Illinois Community College Chief Student Services Officers (ICCCSSO) on Placement Methods and Scores**

**Approved by the Illinois Council of Community College Presidents on June 1, 2018**

This recommendation is made to the Presidents Council and the ICCB, concerning Illinois' approach to placement methods and scores.

The Illinois Community College Chief Academic Officers (ICCCAO) and the Illinois Council of Chief Student Service Officers (ICCCSSO) believe that an effective community college placement policy should provide students with as much information as can be reasonably gathered and then set parameters for their initial placement based on this information. This belief is consistent with the ICCB Task Force on Remediation, which as early as 2001, stated that students should be allowed to enroll in the highest class where they have the prerequisite skills to be successful.

We believe that institutions should provide multiple methods for students to qualify for college-level English and mathematics classes. While each measure would be used independently, by providing multiple measures, Colleges are offering students a variety of means to demonstrate readiness.

In light of the standardization of introductory college-level curriculum under the Illinois Articulation Initiative, which allows for consistency and portability of courses, we believe placements into those courses should be similar or even identical. Therefore, we believe that it is in the best interests of Illinois community college students that Illinois adopt a consistent approach to placement methods and scores.

1. College-level math placement refers to placement into courses that have been identified under the Illinois Articulation Initiative as:
  - a. M1901 Quantitative Literacy,
  - b. M1902 General Education Statistics,
  - c. M1903 Mathematics for Elementary Teaching,
  - d. M1904 General Education Mathematics,
  - e. M1907 Elementary Mathematical Modeling, and
2. College-level English placement refers to placement into courses that have been identified under the Illinois Articulation Initiative as:
  - a. C1900 Writing Course Sequence,
  - b. C1900R Writing Course Sequence,
  - c. C2900 Oral Communication.
3. The following measures and scores are recommended as valid measures for placement at the college level and may be a part of an institutions placement policy:
  - a. PARCC score of 4 or 5, in the subject area
  - b. ACT score of 22 in mathematics,
  - c. ACT score of 19 in English,
  - d. SAT score of 530 in mathematics,
  - e. SAT score of 480 in English

- f. Placement tests (ACCUPLACER<sup>1</sup>, ALEKS, writing assessment, etc.) with appropriate scores.
  - g. High school cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on an unweighted 4.0 scale for placement into college-level English.
  - h. High school cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher on an unweighted 4.0 scale with a successful completion of a 4th year of math for placement into college-level Math.
  - i. An appropriate high school transition course in mathematics or English with a grade of C or higher,
  - j. A GED score of 165 or comparable score on other high school equivalency tests.
  - k. Successful completion of an appropriate developmental course in mathematics or English at another regionally accredited college or university.
4. An institution may elect to accept a lower score on individual placement methods in combination with other placement methods or when the institution provides significant assistance and supports to students. A college may require students to be engaged in additional support activities, consistent with college policy. Such additional activities shall in no way infringe upon the student's ability to enroll in college-level courses consistent with item 3.
  5. It is recommended that cut scores for placement into college-level English expire no less than three years from the date when the measure was achieved.
  6. It is recommended that cut scores for placement into college-level mathematics expire no less than 18 months from the date when the measure was achieved.
  7. It is recommended that all students be strongly encouraged to enroll in English and mathematics classes during their first semester of college.
  8. There are numerous methods that colleges may use to award college credit to students, (AP, CLEP, IB, dual credit, etc.). Such credit in mathematics or English alleviates the need for assessment for purposes of placement.
  9. The group urges ICCB to collect and analyze data with regard to the effectiveness of these recommendations for placement to ensure that methods and cut scores are fostering the greatest level of success while also providing for the greatest level of opportunity for students to quickly enter into college-level work.
  10. It is recommended that the ICCB assemble a working group to include CSSOs, CAOs and other stakeholders to pursue a statewide strategy to implement the multiple measures approach. In so doing, the ICCB should respect the local decision making authority of community colleges by seeking periodic and continued consensus on the strategy and any emerging policies, through ongoing consultation with the Community College Chief Academic Officers, Chief Student Service Officers and Presidents. This approach will ensure consistency across the system, which is important to the success of students, and also ensures the system stays current with changes in methods and testing.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the College Board, ACCUPLACER tests are designed to assist institutions in placing students into appropriate courses. Given that institutions differ greatly with respect to composition of the student body, faculty and course content, it is not possible to stipulate specific test cut scores that should be used for placement decisions. Instead, each institution should establish their own cut scores to facilitate placement decisions based on factors and data unique to their institution. See: <https://accuplacer.collegeboard.org/pdf/accuplacer-method-setting-cut-scores.pdf>.