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Academic Placement

Placement Test Requirements

The California State University requires that each entering undergraduate, except those who qualify for an exemption, take the CSU English Placement Test (EPT) and the CSU Entry Level Mathematics (ELM) examination after admission and prior to enrollment. These placement tests are not a condition for admission to the CSU, but they are a condition for enrollment. These examinations are designed to identify entering students who may need additional support in acquiring the college entry-level English and mathematics skills necessary to succeed in CSU baccalaureate-level courses. Undergraduate students who do not demonstrate college-level skills in English and/or mathematics should enroll in appropriate developmental courses or programs during the first term of their enrollment.

English Placement Test (EPT)

Purpose of the EPT

The EPT is designed to assess the level of reading and writing skills of undergraduate students entering Cal Poly so that they can enroll in appropriate composition courses. Those undergraduate students who do not demonstrate college-level skills on the EPT are then advised to enroll in courses or programs designed to help them attain those skills. The EPT is not a condition for admission to the CSU, but it is a condition for enrollment at Cal Poly. Students may take the EPT only once. It may not be repeated.

Who Must Take the EPT

The CSU EPT must be completed by all non-exempt entering undergraduates prior to enrollment in any course, including remedial courses. Students who score 147 or above on the EPT are placed in college-level composition classes. Exemptions from the EPT are granted only to those who present proof of one of the following:

- A score of “Exempt” or “Ready for college-level English courses” on the CSU Early Assessment Program (EAP) taken along with the English Language Arts California Standard Test in grade 11.
- A score of “Conditionally ready for college-level English courses” or “Conditional” on the CSU Early Assessment Program (EAP) taken on grade 11, provided successful completion of the Expository Reading and Writing Course (ERWC), AP English, 1B English or an English course approved for extra honors weight on the University of California “a-g” Doorways course list.
- A score of 500 or above on the critical reading section of the College Board SAT Reasoning Test.
- A score of 22 or above on the American College Testing (ACT) English Test.
- A score of 3 or above on either the Language and Composition or Composition and Literature examination of the College Board Scholastic Advanced Placement Program.
- Completion and transfer of the credits for a college course that satisfies the General Education A1 requirement in English Composition, provided such a course was completed with a grade of C or better.

Registration Holds/Disenrollment

CSU Trustee policy requires that all non-exempt students take the EPT examination after admission and before enrollment in the CSU. At Cal Poly, failure to take the EPT examination or show documented exemption before enrollment results in a hold on registration privileges and may lead to disenrollment from the University.

Information about the EPT is mailed to all students subject to the requirement. The materials also may be obtained from the Testing Services website: www.testoffice.calpoly.edu.

Remediation

All students who score below 147 on the EPT are required to enroll in Cal Poly’s Writing and Rhetoric Stretch Program during their first year of coursework. Students who do not make adequate progress in completing the program during their first year of enrollment face disqualification from the University.

In the Writing and Rhetoric Stretch Program, students complete two quarters of coursework as a cohort with the same instructor. Coursework is taken in the following sequence:

- First, students enroll in either ENGL 102 Basic Writing II or ENGL 113 Essay Writing/ESL
- After earning credit for either ENGL 102 or ENGL 113, students enroll in ENGL 103 Writing and Rhetoric Tutorial concurrently with either ENGL 134 Writing and Rhetoric or ENGL 133 Writing & Rhetoric for English as a Second Language Students.

Note: Failure to complete successfully ENGL 102/ ENGL 113 or ENGL 103 results in a grade of F in ENGL 134/ ENGL 133.

Upon successful completion of the Writing and Rhetoric Stretch Program, students fulfill their remediation requirement and earn credit in GE Area A1.

Entry Level Mathematics (ELM) Exam

Purpose of the ELM

The ELM examination is designed to assess the skill levels of entering CSU students in the areas of mathematics typically covered in three years of rigorous college preparatory courses in high school (normally Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry). Undergraduate students who do not demonstrate college-level skills are advised to enroll in courses or programs designed to help them attain these skills. The ELM is not a condition for admission to the CSU, but it is a condition of enrollment.

Who Must Take the ELM

All entering undergraduates must take the ELM examination before enrolling in a course that satisfies the college-level mathematics requirement of the General Education-Breadth program. Exemptions from the test are given only to those students who can present proof of one of the following:

- A score of “Exempt” or “Ready for college-level Mathematics courses” on the CSU Early Assessment Program (EAP), taken in grade 11 in conjunction with the CST in Summative High School Mathematics or Algebra II.
- A score of “Conditionally ready for college-level Mathematics courses” or “Conditional” on the CSU Early Assessment Program
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(EAP) taken in grade 11 along with the California Standards Test in Summative High School Mathematics or Algebra II, provided successful completion of a CSU-approved 12th grade math course that require Algebra II as a prerequisite.

• A score of 550 or above on the mathematics section of the College Board SAT Reasoning Test or on a College Board SAT Subject Test in Mathematics (level 1 or level 2).
• A score of 23 or above on the ACT Mathematics Test.
• A score of 3 or above on the College Board Advanced Placement Calculus AB or Calculus BC exam or on the College Board Advanced Placement Statistics exam.
• For transfer students, completion and transfer to CSU of a college course that satisfies the requirement in Quantitative Reasoning, provided such a course was completed with a grade of C or better.

Registration Holds/Disenrollment

CSU Trustee policy requires that all non-exempt students take the ELM examination after admission and before enrollment in the CSU. At Cal Poly, failure to take the ELM examination or show documented exemption before enrollment results in a hold on registration privileges and may lead to disenrollment from the University.

In addition, students who do not demonstrate requisite competence are required to enroll in appropriate remedial or developmental programs during the first term of enrollment and each subsequent term until such time as they demonstrate competence. Students who do not demonstrate proficiency within the first year of enrollment face disqualification from the University.

At Cal Poly, students may not enroll in any college level mathematics or statistics course without satisfying the ELM requirement.

Students who need to take the ELM exam are sent the information about the exam and how to register. This information is also available from the ELM/MAPE Office 805.756.2268, or online at: http://www.math.calpoly.edu/elm.

Early Start Program

Entering resident freshmen who are not proficient in English or math must begin the remediation process by completing the Early Start Program the summer before their first regular term.

The goals of the Early Start Program are as follows:

• To augment students’ preparedness in English and/or math before they begin fall quarter of freshman year
• To add an important and timely assessment tool in preparing students for college
• To improve students’ chances of successful completion of a college degree

Newly admitted freshmen who are required to complete Early Start will be notified of their options for completing the program.

Cal Poly Mathematics Placement Examination (MAPE)

The Cal Poly Mathematics Placement Exams are diagnostic exams given by the Mathematics Department to place students who have satisfied the ELM requirement in the appropriate college-level math course. The MAPE is not intended for all students, so please read the following information carefully.

Precalculus MAPE

Students who anticipate taking Trigonometry or Calculus (MATH 119, MATH 141, MATH 161, or MATH 221) must pass the precalculus MAPE unless they have presented proof of one of the following exemptions:

• a score of 600 or above on the mathematics section of the SAT I Test or on the SAT II Mathematics Tests Level I, IC (Calculator), II, or IIC (Calculator);
• a score of 26 or above on the American College Testing (ACT) Mathematics Test;
• a score of 3 or above on the College Board Advanced Placement Mathematics (Calculus AB or BC) examination;
• completion of MATH 118 at Cal Poly or transfer of a college course equivalent to MATH 118

NOTE: For MATH 141, students must also have credit for college or high school trigonometry, completed with grade C or better.

Intermediate Algebra MAPE

Students who anticipate taking Precalculus Algebra (MATH 118) must pass the intermediate algebra MAPE unless they have presented proof of one of the following exemptions:

For MATH 118:

• a score of 550 or above on the mathematics section of the SAT I Test or on the SAT II Mathematics Tests Level I, IC (Calculator), II, or IIC (Calculator);
• a score of 23 or above on the American College Testing (ACT) Mathematics Test; or
• a score of 65 or above on the ELM test.

NOTE: Students who have satisfied the ELM requirement and are planning to take MATH 112 or MATH 116 do not need to take the MAPE.

Students who need to take a math placement exam must do so prior to enrollment. The MAPE is free and offered regularly throughout the year. For information, contact the ELM/MAPE Office (805-756-2268) or the Math Department Office (805-756-2206).