



***How is a student's readiness for college-level coursework determined?***

Statute requires the State Board of Education, in conjunction with the Board of Governors, to develop and implement a common placement test to assess the basic computation and communication skills of students who intend to enter a degree program at any public postsecondary educational institution.<sup>1</sup> First-time in college students must demonstrate sufficient proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematics on this test or an alternative assessment identified by the state board before they may take college-level courses in those subject areas at a public postsecondary educational institution.<sup>2</sup>

The test that has been historically implemented to meet the assessment requirement is the Florida College Entry-Level Placement Test, commonly referred to as the College Placement Test (CPT) or Accuplacer, which is provided by the College Board.<sup>3</sup> During the past year, however, the Florida Department of Education (DOE) contracted with McCann Associates for the development of a new test customized for Florida, known as the Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT). The PERT is aligned to the state's recently developed Postsecondary Readiness Competencies in reading, writing, and mathematics and may be administered on a computer or as a paper test. It has diagnostic capabilities that identify skill deficiencies and allow remediation to be tailored to a student's individual needs.<sup>4</sup>

The PERT became available during Fall Term 2010. It is expected that the state will transition to utilizing the PERT as the primary placement assessment for Florida College System (FCS) institutions by the beginning of the 2011-12 academic year. CPT scores will continue to be recognized by the state.<sup>5</sup>

The state board has also identified two alternative assessments: the College Board's SAT-I and the American College Testing Program's Enhanced ACT. Additionally, the DOE has established a pilot project that allows FCS institutions to utilize 10<sup>th</sup> grade Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) scores in Reading and Mathematics.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, scores from the

<sup>1</sup> Sections 1001.03(10) and 1008.30(1), F.S.

<sup>2</sup> Section 1008.30(1), (2), and (3), F.S.; rule 6A-10.0315(7) and (16), F.A.C.

<sup>3</sup> See Rule 6A-10.0315(1)(g), (2), and (3), F.A.C.; Florida Department of Education, Office of Assessment, *Florida College Entry-Level Placement Test (CPT)*, <http://www.fldoe.org/asp/fcelpt/> (last visited Oct. 8, 2010); College Board, *Accuplacer*, <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/accuplacer/> (last visited Oct. 8, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> See Florida Department of Education, Division of Florida Colleges, *Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT) Transition Plan Memorandum* (Aug. 5, 2010); interview with Division of Florida College System staff, Florida Department of Education (Oct. 4, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

<sup>6</sup> Seven FCS institutions were initially authorized to participate in the pilot project that began in Spring Term 2008: Broward College, Daytona State College, Florida State College at Jacksonville, Indian River State College, Miami Dade College, Palm Beach State College, and Valencia Community College. The pilot project was expanded to

CPT, PERT, SAT-I, or ACT may be accepted by FCS and State University System (SUS) institutions and FCAT scores may be accepted by FCS institutions for purposes of assessing a student’s readiness for college-level coursework.<sup>7</sup>

**What scores must be achieved to demonstrate college readiness?**

Students must achieve at least the following cut scores in order to demonstrate college readiness:

<b>Minimum Cut Scores for College Readiness<sup>8</sup></b>		
	<b>Subject Areas</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>CPT</b>	Reading	83
	Sentence Skills	83
	Elementary Algebra	72
<b>PERT<sup>9</sup></b>	Reading	104
	Writing	99
	Mathematics	113
<b>SAT-I</b>	Verbal	440
	Math	440
<b>ACT</b>	Reading	18
	English	17
	Math	19
<b>FCAT<sup>10</sup> (FCS institutions only)</b>	Reading	355 (Level 4)
	Math	375 (Level 5)

include each of the 28 FCS institutions in June 2009. Florida Department of Education, Division of Florida Colleges and Division of Public Schools, *Memorandum: Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test Placement Scores*, at 1, (June 7, 2010) [hereinafter *FCAT Scores Memorandum*].

<sup>7</sup> Section 1008.30(3), F.S.; rule 6A-10.0315(7), F.A.C.

<sup>8</sup> Section 1008.30(3), F.S.; rule 6A-10.0315(3) and (7), F.A.C.; Florida Department of Education, *Performance on Common Placement Tests*, <http://www.fldoe.org/articulation/perfCPT/default.asp> (last visited Oct. 2, 2010); email, Florida Department of Education (Sept. 27, 2010).

<sup>9</sup> The minimum scores for the PERT set forth in the chart will remain in place for the 2010-11 academic year until sufficient data is collected for analysis and validation. The DOE expects to have sufficient data for the state board to determine permanent minimum PERT scores by the end of the 2010-11 academic year. Email, Florida Department of Education (Sept. 27, 2010).

<sup>10</sup> In April 2011, the new FCAT Reading 2.0 assessment will be administered. The DOE has indicated that it will determine a minimum cut score for the new assessment prior to its administration. *FCAT Scores Memorandum*, *supra* note 6, at 3.

## When are students assessed for college readiness?

Assessment scores on the CPT, PERT, SAT, or ACT must be obtained within two years prior to enrollment as a first-time college student in college-level English and Mathematics courses. Tenth grade FCAT scores may only be used by a student who dually enrolls in a FCS institution while in high school or who enrolls in a FCS institution during the academic year that follows the student's graduation from high school, e.g., a student who graduated from high school during the 2009-10 academic year would be eligible to use his or her score during the 2010-11 academic year at the FCS institution.<sup>11</sup> Students who do not have timely scores must be reassessed.<sup>12</sup>

Many students take the SAT or ACT while in high school because they intend to apply for admission to a college or university that requires the submission of those scores.<sup>13</sup> High school students may also be assessed because they elect to participate in a college credit dual enrollment<sup>14</sup> or early admission<sup>15</sup> acceleration program. Both acceleration programs require students to demonstrate adequate precollegiate preparation on an assessment in order to take college-level courses in English, Mathematics, and related General Education areas.<sup>16</sup>

Additionally, high school students may be assessed pursuant to legislation enacted in 2008, which requires public high schools, beginning with the 2008-09 academic year, to evaluate the college readiness of each 11<sup>th</sup> grade student who indicates an interest in postsecondary education<sup>17</sup> and scores at Level 2 or 3 on the reading portion of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade FCAT or Levels 2 through 4 on required mathematics assessments.<sup>18</sup> When a student does not achieve the minimum scores necessary to demonstrate college readiness, the school must review the test results, advise the student of identified deficiencies, and, to the maximum extent practicable, provide the student with access to appropriate remedial instruction prior to high school graduation.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Florida Department of Education, Division of Florida Colleges, *FCAT Pilot Project Rules Reference Sheet*, at 1, (Nov. 1, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Rule 6A-10.0315(16), F.A.C.

<sup>13</sup> First-time in college applicants for the State University System must submit SAT or ACT scores to be considered for admission. Florida Board of Governors Regulation 6.002(1)(e) (Jan. 28, 2010).

<sup>14</sup> Dual enrollment is an acceleration mechanism that allows an eligible secondary student to enroll in a postsecondary course creditable toward high school completion and an associate degree, a baccalaureate degree, or a career certificate. Section 1007.271(1), F.S.

<sup>15</sup> Early admission is a form of dual enrollment for college-level or career coursework in which eligible secondary students enroll on a full-time basis in a postsecondary institution or career center in courses that are creditable toward the high school diploma and an associate degree, a baccalaureate degree, or a career certificate. Section 1007.271(7) and (8), F.S.

<sup>16</sup> Sections 1007.271(3) and 1008.30(5), F.S.

<sup>17</sup> Guidance from the DOE indicates that each school district is responsible for establishing the process to be utilized by the district's high schools to determine student interest in postsecondary education. Florida Department of Education, Division of Florida Colleges and Division of Public Schools, *Memorandum: Implementation of Senate Bill 1908: Expanded Postsecondary Readiness Assessment for High School Students and Opportunities for Remediation Prior to High School Graduation*, at 9 (July 28, 2008), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/CommonPlacementTesting.asp> [hereinafter *High School Remediation Opportunities*].

<sup>18</sup> Section 3, ch. 2008-235, L.O.F., amending s. 1008.30(3), F.S.

<sup>19</sup> Section 1008.30(3), F.S.

For purposes of providing remedial instruction opportunities in high school, the DOE has designated three ½ credit high school courses in the Course Code Directory: Math for College Success (Course No. 1200410);<sup>20</sup> Writing for College Success (Course No. 1009370); and Reading for College Success (Course No. 1008350).<sup>21</sup> Students who successfully complete one of these courses by receiving at least a C and passing the Basic Skills Exit Test for the course may enroll in college-level coursework in the applicable subject area.<sup>22</sup>

The following chart sets forth data for 11<sup>th</sup> graders statewide who took the CPT pursuant to the 2008 legislation during the 2009-10 academic year,<sup>23</sup> as well as data for secondary students who took the CPT for dual enrollment purposes during that same academic year.<sup>24</sup>

Type of Student	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade Students 2008 Legislation		Dual Enrollment Students	
	# of students	%	# of students	%
Mathematics Test Takers	21,573	—	13,498	—
<i>Students Passing Mathematics</i>	6,365	29.5%	7,031	52.1%
Reading Test Takers	20,272	—	13,348	—
<i>Students Passing Reading</i>	7,003	34.6%	7,502	56.2%
Writing Test Takers	19,276	—	13,170	—
<i>Students Passing Writing</i>	9,445	49.0%	9,085	69.0%

Students who are not assessed in high school may choose to later take the SAT-I or ACT by registering with the providers of those exams or may take the CPT or PERT at the public postsecondary educational institution in which they intend to enroll.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Math for College Success prepares students to enter the college-level Intermediate Algebra course, designated as MAC 1033, which is a three-semester hour college credit course that may be applied toward a degree as elective credit. The course may not be applied toward the six hours of general education requirements in Mathematics. *High School Remediation Opportunities*, *supra* note 17, at 10.

<sup>21</sup> Writing for College Success and Reading for College Success prepare students to enter the college-level Freshman Composition Skills I, designated as ENC 1101, which is a three-semester college credit course that is applied toward the nine hours of general education requirements in Communications. Florida Department of Education, Division of Florida Colleges and Division of Public Schools, *Memorandum: High School Students Completing Math/Reading/Writing for College Success Courses And College Placement Determinations*, at 2-3 and 14, (March 29, 2010), available at <http://www.fldoe.org/schools/CommonPlacementTesting.asp> [hereinafter *College Placement Determinations*].

<sup>22</sup> *Id.* at 2-3.

<sup>23</sup> During the 2009-10 academic year, there were a total of 192,422 students enrolled in the 11<sup>th</sup> grade in Florida public high schools. Email, Florida Department of Education, Division of Florida Colleges (Oct. 5, 2010).

<sup>24</sup> Florida Department of Education, Division of Florida Colleges, *College and Career Readiness Initiative: College Placement Testing Results for High School Students*, at 2, (Aug. 2010), available at [www.fldoe.org/cc/OSAS/Evaluations/pdf/fyi2010-04.pdf](http://www.fldoe.org/cc/OSAS/Evaluations/pdf/fyi2010-04.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> Interview with staff from the Division of Florida Colleges, Florida Department of Education (Oct. 4, 2010).

## ***When may a student enroll in college-level courses at a public postsecondary educational institution?***

A first-time in college student may enroll in:

- ❖ MAC 1033, the college-level course entitled Intermediate Algebra, if he or she timely attained the minimum cut scores for math on the assessments or successfully completed the high school Math for College Success course. Students who achieve higher scores for math on one of the assessments may be eligible to enroll in MAC 1105, the college-level course entitled College Algebra,<sup>26</sup> if those scores meet minimum cut score requirements established locally by individual public postsecondary educational institutions.
- ❖ ENC 1101, the college-level course entitled Freshman Composition Skills I, if he or she timely attained the minimum required reading and writing scores on the CPT, PERT, or ACT; the minimum required verbal score on the SAT-I; a Level 4 or higher on the FCAT for reading and is attending a FCS institution; or successfully completed Reading for College Success or Writing for College Success or both, as necessary.<sup>27</sup>

First-time in college students who have not satisfied the requirements above must successfully complete college-preparatory courses<sup>28</sup> in the applicable subject matter before they may enroll in MAC 1033 or ENC 1101 at a public postsecondary institution. Successful completion requires a course grade of at least a C and a passing score on the Basic Skills Exit Exam.<sup>29</sup>

Students enrolled in one or more college-preparatory courses may concurrently enroll in other college-level courses that do not require the skills addressed in the college-preparatory course.<sup>30</sup>

## ***Which entities are authorized to offer college-preparatory courses?***

College-preparatory courses may be offered by the 28 institutions in the FCS and the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU). Other institutions in the State University System (SUS) may offer college-preparatory courses if the percentage of incoming students requiring these courses equals or exceeds the average percentage of such students in the FCS. Additionally, institutions in the SUS may contract with a FCS institution for the provision of college-preparatory instruction on the SUS institution's campus.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>26</sup> MAC 1105 is a three-semester college credit course that is applied toward the six hours of general education requirements for Mathematics. *High School Remediation Opportunities, supra* note 17, at 10.

<sup>27</sup> *College Placement Determinations, supra* note 21, at 2-3.

<sup>28</sup> The term "college-preparatory instruction" means "courses through which a high school graduate who applies for any college credit program may attain the communication and computation skills necessary to enroll in college credit instruction." Section 1004.02(11), F.S.

<sup>29</sup> Section 1008.30(4), F.S.; rule 6A-10.0315(19), F.A.C.; *see also* rule 6A-10.033(1)(c), F.A.C. (defining the term "college preparatory credit" and identifying competencies for college preparatory instruction).

<sup>30</sup> Section 1008.30(4), F.S.; rule 6A-10.0315(20), F.A.C.

<sup>31</sup> Section 1008.30(4), F.S.

***What is the cost of college-preparatory courses to the student?***

For the first two times that a student enrolls in a college-preparatory course, the student must pay the same tuition and fees that he or she would be required to pay if enrolling in college credit instruction at the institution providing the instruction.<sup>32</sup> A student enrolled in the same college-preparatory class more than twice must pay 100 percent of the cost of instruction, unless granted a reduction in tuition and fees due to financial hardship or a one-time exception for extenuating circumstances by the institution's Board of Trustees.<sup>33</sup>

***What does it cost the state to provide college-preparatory instruction?***

According to the latest information available from the DOE, the cost to the state for college-preparatory instruction provided by FCS institutions after the receipt of tuition and fees was \$56,199,968 for the 2008-09 academic year.<sup>34</sup>

According to the latest information available from the Board of Governors, the cost to the state for college-preparatory instruction at FAMU after the receipt of tuition and fees was \$1,367,053 for the 2008-09 academic year.<sup>35</sup>

***What data is available regarding the college readiness of Florida's public high school graduates?***

The Commissioner of Education is required to annually report to the state board, Board of Governors, and Legislature on the performance of public high school graduates who enroll in public postsecondary educational institutions on college readiness assessments.<sup>36</sup> This information is provided on the DOE's website at the state, district, and individual high school levels.<sup>37</sup>

According to the latest data available, a total of 144,379 students graduated from public high schools statewide at the end of the 2007-08 academic year.<sup>38</sup> Of this population, 80,406 graduates (56%) attended a FCS or SUS institution in the 2008-09 academic year. The following

---

<sup>32</sup> Section 1009.23(1) and (3), F.S.; telephone interview with staff of the Board of Governors, State University System (Oct. 14, 2010); *see also* Postsecondary Tuition & Fee Policy – Florida College System Fact Sheet and Postsecondary Tuition and Fee Policy – State University System.

<sup>33</sup> Sections 1004.93(4)(d) and 1009.28, F.S.; Florida Board of Governors Regulation 7.001(12) (Dec. 10, 2009); Florida A&M University Regulation 3.017(4)(b)8. (July 1, 2010); *see also* Postsecondary Tuition & Fee Policy – Florida College System Fact Sheet.

<sup>34</sup> Email, Florida Department of Education, Division of Florida Colleges (July 22, 2010).

<sup>35</sup> Email, Board of Governors, State University System of Florida (July 20, 2010).

<sup>36</sup> Section 1008.37, F.S.

<sup>37</sup> Florida Department of Education, Office of Articulation, *Performance on Common Placement Tests*, <http://www.fldoe.org/articulation/perfCPT/default.asp?varAction=districtPSlattended> (last visited Oct. 13, 2010) [hereinafter *Performance on Common Placement Tests*].

<sup>38</sup> Florida Department of Education, *High School Feedback Report – 2008 Florida Public High School Graduates, District Comparison*, [http://data.fldoe.org/readiness/default.cfm?action=view\\_report\\_alldistricts&DisplayYear=2008&ItemNumber=1&SubItem=](http://data.fldoe.org/readiness/default.cfm?action=view_report_alldistricts&DisplayYear=2008&ItemNumber=1&SubItem=) (last visited Oct. 13, 2010).

chart sets forth data regarding the number of those graduates who scored at or above the minimum cut scores for Math, Reading, and Writing:<sup>39</sup>

<i>Institution Type</i>	<i># of Degree Seeking Students</i>	<i># Tested Math</i>	<i># Scoring at or above Math Cut Score</i>	<i># Tested Reading</i>	<i># Scoring at or above Reading Cut Score</i>	<i># Tested Writing</i>	<i># Scoring at or above Writing Cut Score</i>	<i># Tested All 3 Subjects</i>	<i># Scoring at or above Cut Scores</i>
FCS Institution	54,433	53,561	30,209 (56.4%)	53,905	37,260 (69.1%)	53,702	39,540 (73.6%)	53,129	24,764 (46.6%)
SUS Institution	25,973	25,973	25,190 (97%)	25,973	25,554 (98.4%)	25,973	25,512 (98.2%)	25,973	24,946 (96%)

Additionally, the DOE website offers “High School Feedback” reports that provide data at the state, district, and individual high school levels for high school graduates annually on various pre-graduation and post-graduation indicators.<sup>40</sup> The pre-graduation indicators include the percentage of graduates who:

- ❖ Scored above a Level 3 on the 10<sup>th</sup> grade FCAT in math and reading.
- ❖ Completed a college-preparatory curriculum.
- ❖ Completed at least one Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Advanced International Certificate of Education (AICE), or dual enrollment course.
- ❖ Enrolled in Algebra I or its equivalent in a Florida public school prior to 9<sup>th</sup> grade.
- ❖ Took the SAT, ACT, or CPT and scored above the minimum cut score.
- ❖ Were eligible for Bright Futures Scholarship awards.

The post-graduation indicators include the percentage of graduates who:

- ❖ Enrolled in FCS institutions, SUS institutions, technical education centers, Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida (ICUF) institutions, and out-of-state public or private institutions.
- ❖ Enrolled in college credit courses at a Florida public postsecondary institution or ICUF institution earning a GPA above 2.0.
- ❖ Successfully completed college-preparatory courses.

Each school district and high school is required to use the annual feedback reports to develop school improvement strategies aimed at improving student readiness for postsecondary education.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>39</sup> *Performance on Common Placement Tests, supra* note 37.

<sup>40</sup> Florida Department of Education, *Florida Public High School Graduates Report*, [http://data.fldoe.org/readiness/default.cfm?action=alldistricts\\_menu](http://data.fldoe.org/readiness/default.cfm?action=alldistricts_menu) (last visited Oct. 13, 2010).

<sup>41</sup> Rule 6A-10.038(6), F.A.C.

***Where may I obtain additional information?***

***Florida Department of Education***

Division of Florida Colleges

(850) 245-0407

<http://www.fldoe.org/cc/>

***Florida Department of Education***

Office of Articulation

(850) 245-0427

<http://www.fldoe.org/articulation/>

***Florida House of Representatives***

Education Committee

(850) 488-7451

<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov>