

TO: Academic and Student Affairs Committee
Montana Board of Regents

FROM: Jan Clinard
Director of Academic Initiatives

RE: Inter-related Policies on Admissions, Placement, and Remediation

DATE: September 19 – 21, 2007

The passage and implementation of Proficiency Admissions Standards (Mathematics in 2003 and Writing in 2004) have underscored the need to align all policies regarding the placement of students into college-level or remedial coursework. Within the Writing Proficiency Policy are directives to determine how this policy should be applied to exempted students and to determine how this policy should impact the writing placement examinations on campuses. To comply with these directives, I have met with staff from the campuses to draft the attached **Composition Placement Policy**. This draft represents broad agreement, and with some additional input to minor details, should be ready for Board approval in November.

With the Writing Proficiency Policy and its companion Composition Placement Policy, students who are fully admitted are considered ready for college-level coursework and those who are admitted provisionally are placed into remedial courses. The Mathematics Proficiency Admissions Standard did not include the concept of provisional admission, setting an admission threshold of 18 on the ACT, which generally places students into remedial mathematics courses on both two-year and four-year campuses. The Remediation Workgroup met jointly with the Mathematics Proficiency Steering Committee in April to remedy this problem and learn more about various math levels. As a result, the Math Committee drafted a revision to the **Mathematics Proficiency Admissions Standard**, which is attached. This standard sets a “full” admission standard at the college-ready level for the four-year programs and allows for “provisional admissions” for students who are likely to need only one remedial math course.

With both the Writing and Mathematics Proficiency Admissions Policies based on test scores and some discomfort with defining remediation in mathematics by referencing a text or course title (Intermediate Algebra), the Remediation Workgroup revised its definition of remedial coursework to include the same test scores that the admission standard proposes. The attached policy on **Remedial Education**, therefore, is tied to the Proficiency Admissions Standards and references placement in both subject areas.

Because these three policies depend on one another to achieve alignment of admissions, placement, and remediation, we hope that the Board will consider all of them at the November meeting. If you have comments or concerns about these interrelated policies, please share them with me in the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education.

MONTANA BOARD OF REGENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
Policy and Procedures Manual

SUBJECT: ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
DRAFT Policy 301.17 – Composition Placement

DRAFT

I. Board Policy:

- A. Composition Placement Policy is based on Writing Proficiency Policy 301.16, which sets thresholds for full admission to the four-year programs at Montana State University-Bozeman, Montana State University-Billings, Montana State University-Northern, The University of Montana-Missoula, Montana Tech of The University of Montana, and The University of Montana-Western. This placement policy applies to the programs listed above, as well as Montana University System programs with open admissions.
- B. This policy reflects the Montana Board of Regents' expectation that students should not be required to take multiple writing examinations as part of their initial matriculation in the System.
- C. This policy provides campuses with the flexibility to select assessment measures based on their own course offerings, course content, and predictive studies. Campuses must clearly communicate their placement practices to students, counselors, staff, and advisors.
- D. Students who earn the following **minimum** scores on tests taken during high school will be placed directly into a college-level freshman composition course without further testing:
 - 1. **7** on the Writing Subscore or 19 on the Combined English/Writing section of the Optional Writing Test of the ACT; or
 - 2. **7** on the Essay or 400 on the Writing Section of the SAT; or
 - 3. **3.5** on the Montana University System Writing Assessment (MUSWA); or
 - 4. **3** on the AP English Language or English Literature Examination.
- E. Students who score below the thresholds set in D, but at least 5 on the ACT or SAT essays or 2.5 on the MUSWA, will be placed into remedial courses unless they challenge this placement by taking one the following examinations on campus to determine appropriate placement:
 - 1. The MUS Placement Examination, modeled upon the MUSWA, adapted to the college writing context, and scored using the MUSWA process; or
 - 2. A campus-specific measure, such as portfolios, approved by the Writing Proficiency Steering Committee.
- F. Students will be placed into basic, developmental, or remedial courses if their writing scores are below 5 on the ACT or SAT or below 2.5 on the MUSWA or MUS Placement Examination.
- G. On campuses that offer an advanced composition course, students who earn the following minimum scores may be placed into those courses without further testing:

1. 11 on the Writing Subscore or 32 on the Combined English/Writing section of the Optional Writing Test of the ACT; or
 2. 11 on the Essay or 700 on the Writing Section of the SAT; or
 3. 6 on the MUSWA; or
 4. 5 on the AP English Language and Composition Examination.
- H. Students without writing placement examination scores, whose writing scores were earned more than three years before enrolling, or students exempted under Section H of Policy 301.16 Writing Proficiency (nontraditional students, summer-only, and part-time students) are placed into college-level composition by taking examinations offered by the two-year or four-year campuses and earning the minimum scores listed below. Students with scores below these thresholds are placed into remedial composition courses
1. 50 on the CLEP Subject Examinations in Composition; or
 2. 5 on the COMPASS E-Write Examination; or
 3. 90 on the COMPASS Writing Skills Test; or
 4. 71 on the COMPASS Writing Skills Test if a proficient essay is also submitted;
or
 5. 3.5 on the MUS Placement Examination, modeled upon the MUSWA, adapted to the college writing context, and scored using the MUSWA process.

II. History:

ITEM 89-003-R1195 Proficiency Admission Requirements and Developmental Education in the Montana University System, approved November 17, 1995; ITEM 107-109-RO500 Report from Joint K-16 Composition Standards Committee on Writing Proficiency Standards for Admission and Graduation from MUS, approved July 6, 2000; ITEM122-115-R0104 Writing Proficiency Recommendation, approved January 15, 2004; ITEM 129-109-R1105 Writing Proficiency Policy, approved November 16, 2005, ITEM 135-1110R0507 Revisions to Policy 301.16, Writing Proficiency, approved May 31, 2007.

MONTANA BOARD OF REGENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
Policy and Procedures Manual

SUBJECT: ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Policy 301.15 – Mathematics Proficiency Admissions Standards for Four-Year Programs

I. Board Policy:

A. Beginning in Fall 2010, any student seeking full admission to a four-year degree program at Montana State University- Bozeman, Montana State University-Billings, Montana State University-Northern, The University of Montana-Missoula, Montana Tech of The University of Montana, and The University of Montana-Western must satisfy the mathematics proficiency standard. That standard is as follows:

- ~~1. for Fall 2004 and Fall 2005, students must earn a minimum mathematics (quantitative) score of:
16 on the ACT
390 on the SAT, or
a score of 3 or above on the AP Calculus AB or BC Subject Examinations;~~
 - ~~2. for Fall 2006, students must earn a minimum mathematics (quantitative) score of:
17 on the ACT
420 on the SAT, or
a score of 3 or above on the AP Calculus AB or BC Subject Examinations;~~
 - ~~3. for Fall 2007 and the following years, students must earn a minimum mathematics (quantitative) score of:
18 on the ACT,
440 on the SAT, or
A score of 3 or above on the AP Calculus AB or BC Subject Examinations~~
1. a score of 21 or above on ACT Mathematics;
 2. a score of 500 or above on SAT Mathematics; or
 3. a score of 3 or above on the AP Calculus AB or BC Subject Examination or a score of 4 on the IB Calculus test.

B. A student whose mathematics score is 18-20 on the ACT or 440-490 on the SAT meets the mathematics requirement for admission without condition to any two-year degree program or provisional admission to a four-year degree program on any campus of the MUS.

C. A student whose mathematics score is below 18 on the ACT or 440 on the SAT may be admitted without condition to any two-year degree program of the MUS, but may not be admitted to a four-year degree program of the MUS.

D. In lieu of the indicators set out in paragraphs A and B above, students may offer CLEP Subject Examinations in selected topics [**College Algebra, College Algebra-Trigonometry, Pre-Calculus, Calculus, or Trigonometry**] if their scores on the examination meet or exceed the ACE Recommended Score for Awarding Credit of 50.

E. Alternately, students may be excused from any testing in mathematics and deemed proficient if they complete a *Rigorous High School Core* including four years of mathematics in high school (Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry & a course beyond Algebra II, as outlined in the matrix attached to this policy as Appendix I) with grades of C or better in all courses.

F. Students who have been denied full admission to a four-year program in the Montana University System because they do not meet the mathematics proficiency standard set out in this policy may prove that they have the appropriate proficiency in the following ways:

1. earn a C- grade or better in a college course entitled Intermediate Algebra ~~or Algebra for College Students~~, or in a college course that is the prerequisite to any of the courses described in ~~paragraph F.2 below~~ within 3 semesters or 32 credits of enrolling; or
2. earn a C- grade or better in a mathematics course that satisfies the general education program requirement described in Board Policy 301.10; or
3. earn a score of ~~18~~ 21 or above on the mathematics portion of the ACT or ~~440~~ 500 on the mathematics portion of the SAT; or
4. complete an A.A. or A.S., degree.

The above-described standards will also be used to determine mathematics proficiency when students move from two-year programs or campuses to four-year programs or campuses.

G. Institutions in the Montana University System have authority to use the 15% pool of first-time, full-time undergraduates, established by the Montana Board of Regents' Policy 301.1, Section I.E., to exempt students from the requirements of this Policy. The following categories of students are also exempt from the requirements of this policy:

1. non-traditional students (those who do not enter college for a period of at least three years from the date of high school graduation or from the date when they would have graduated from high school);
2. summer only students; and
3. part-time students taking seven or fewer college-level semester credits.

H. For Fall 2008 and 2009, the 2003 policy applies, granting full admission to students with minimum mathematics (quantitative) scores of:

1. 18 on the ACT,
2. 440 on the SAT, or
3. 3 or above on the AP Calculus AB or BC Subject Examinations

II. History

Math Proficiency Admissions Standards, approved July 10, 2003 (Item 119-104-R0503). Revised May 20, 2005 (Item 127-128-R0505), approval of math proficiency statement; editorial change June 30, 2006.

MONTANA BOARD OF REGENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION
Policy and Procedures Manual

SUBJECT: ACADEMIC AFFAIRS
DRAFT Policy 3XXXX – Remedial Education
Effective: XXX

DRAFT

I. Board Policy:

- A. Purpose. This policy has the following purposes:
1. Coursework should be available to students who continue their education in the Montana University System, but need to develop the foundational skills to succeed in rigorous, college-level classes.
 2. Remedial coursework should be identified for students, other institutions and the general public.
 3. Students should be clear about how that coursework will be used in their degree programs.
- B. A Description of the Coursework. In general, a remedial course is any course designed to help students achieve competency at the level required for full admission to a four-year baccalaureate program.
1. For purposes of this policy, remedial coursework is limited to mathematics and composition.
 2. Remedial mathematics courses are any courses that enroll students with an ACT mathematics sub-score below 21 or an SAT mathematics score below 500.
 3. Remedial composition courses are any courses that that enroll students with an ACT or SAT essay score below 7, a Montana University System Writing Assessment score below 3.5, or any other threshold score listed in Policy 301.16.
 4. The coursework described in this section of the policy is not considered college-level, does not earn college credit, and cannot be used to satisfy the requirements for an associate of arts, associate of science or baccalaureate degree.
- C. Identification of the Coursework. Remedial courses shall have course numbers that begin with a zero (0). (I.E., 0XX.)
- D. Providers of the Coursework. The following institutions in the Montana University System may offer remedial coursework and receive State general fund money for those courses:
1. the Colleges of Technology;
 2. the community colleges;
 3. The University of Montana-Western and Montana State University-Northern.

Other institutions in the Montana University System may provide remedial education, but they will not receive State general fund money for that service.

- E. Monitoring the Policy. The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education will produce an annual report on placement and remediation, using uniform data, including test scores and course enrollments, to evaluate and analyze remedial education in the MUS.

F. Associate of Applied Science Degrees or Certificates. Coursework defined as remedial by this policy may be appropriate for these credentials.

1. Coursework described as remedial in this policy may be included in an associate of applied science degree or certificate.
2. Credit will be awarded for the coursework when it is included in an associate of applied science degree; but based on the provisions of this policy, the classes will not transfer into an associate of arts, associate of science or baccalaureate degree.
3. Associate of applied science degrees may also require specialized coursework in mathematics and/or composition that target skills needed for the degree. Those specialized courses are numbered 1XXT; but the classes will not transfer into an associate of arts, associate of science or baccalaureate degree.

II. History

Item 89-003-R1195, *Proficiency Admission Requirements and Developmental Education in the Montana University System*, approved by the Board of Regents on November 17, 1995; *Evaluation of the Montana University System's Progress on Restructuring Goals*, Special Report to the Board of Regents, October 19, 2000 by James R. Mingle and Associates; *Registrar's Manual* (OCHE 2003), Interpretation of Item 89-003-R1195 and Mingle Report; Formation of Remediation Workgroup by the Board of Regents on September 28, 2006.