



ACADEMIC AFFAIRS GUIDELINES

Section 7:	Dual Credit, Credit by Exam, and Placement		
Title:	English and Mathematics Placement Guidelines		
Number (Current Format)	Number (Prior Format)	Date Last Revised	
7.6	XI.E	05/2017	
Reference:	BOR Policy 2:7 Baccalaureate General Education Curriculum BOR Policy 2:26 Associate Degree General Education Requirements		
Related Form(s):			

1. Policy Overview

1.1. The Board of Regents has developed a standardized placement process to ensure that entering students are placed into math and English courses most appropriate for their ability and background. The requirements for placement are set forth in BOR [Policy 2:7 – Baccalaureate General Education Curriculum](#) and BOR Policy 2:26 Associate Degree General Education Requirements. Both policies contain the same statement included below.

1.2. Academic Preparation

1.2.1. Effective Fall 2012, entering students must show evidence of their level of academic preparation prior to enrollment into their initial mathematics and English courses. All entering students seeking a baccalaureate degree must provide valid ACT/Smarter Balanced scores (within the last five years), or must take the ACT COMPASS or ACCUPLACER examination in the areas of writing skills, mathematics, and reading. All non-degree seeking students enrolling in English and mathematics courses must provide ACT/Smarter Balanced scores or must take the ACT COMPASS or ACCUPLACER examination in the areas of writing skills and mathematics. In addition to scores on these assessments, other information such as high school GPA and curriculum completed may also be considered as placement decisions are made.

1.2.2. Students enrolled prior to Spring 2000 who have already been placed into their initial mathematics and English coursework, and transfer students who have completed equivalent general education coursework in English and mathematics are exempt from this requirement.

Transfer students will be allowed to transfer their placement test scores and continue their sequence of courses in English and/or mathematics.

1.3. **Testing Accommodations:** Each institution shall give students prior notice that it will provide reasonable accommodations for test takers in keeping with institutional practices implementing the South Dakota Human Relations Act of 1972, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (refer to Board Policy 1:19).

2. Placement Goals

2.1. A placement system enables students to enroll in courses that suit their ability level and background. Students with deficits will receive the remediation they need to progress through the required general education mathematics and English courses with minimal risk of failure. Other students will be tracked into higher-level courses challenging their abilities without overwhelming or boring them. The fit between student ability and course level should increase retention, as students have a greater likelihood of succeeding in courses tailored to their capacity.

3. Testing Instruments

3.1. **ACT Assessment:** The ACT Assessment administered by ACT was selected as the primary instrument for the placement process. By using students' ACT Assessment scores, the placement process for entering students is streamlined through the elimination of the need for additional testing.

3.2. **Smarter Balanced:** South Dakota adopted the Smarter Balanced assessment to measure student performance on the Common Core State Standards in the areas of Math and English Language Arts. Beginning with high school Juniors assessed for the first time in April 2015, Smarter Balanced scores may be used when recorded on the official high school transcript. If a school district does not record the Smarter Balanced scores on the official high school transcript, students may submit valid score reports if earning "Advanced" or "Proficient" would result in placement beyond remedial/developmental coursework.

3.3. **Secondary Assessment: ACT COMPASS¹ and College Board ACCUPLACER**

3.3.1. The ACT COMPASS and College Board ACCUPLACER testing software have been selected as the secondary assessment instruments. Only those students who fall into one of the following categories are required to sit for the COMPASS or ACCUPLACER placement test:

3.3.1.1. Student does not have ACT Assessment scores in English and/or Math

¹ In June 2015 ACT Inc. announced that the ACT COMPASS would be discontinued after January 15, 2016 with data being available through ACT eCompass until December 31, 2016. Students with a valid COMPASS score may use the score to establish placement within the Regental for up to five years following the date of testing.

3.3.1.2. Student's ACT, COMPASS, or ACCUPLACER Assessment scores are more than 5 years old

3.3.1.3. Student challenges their course placement

3.3.1.4. Student wishes to enroll in Math 123.

3.3.2. The COMPASS testing system is a computer-based adaptive assessment program that uses modules that are self-paced allowing students to work at their own speed and comfort level. The tests are adaptive in that the questions are adjusted to the ability level associated with the responses to the previous questions. COMPASS provides immediate scoring, identifies student deficits, and can be equated with ACT scores. A tutorial program is used prior to testing to acquaint students with the navigation and response patterns. The COMPASS test does not have a time limit and the scores do not affect admission. Most students take about 20 – 40 minutes per section. The Regental universities operate the COMPASS testing system under a site license agreement with ACT.

3.3.3. The ACCUPLACER testing system is an internet-delivered assessment program that also uses self-paced modules allowing students to work at their own speed and comfort level. ACCUPLACER provides immediate scoring and can be equated with ACT scores. The ACCUPLACER test does not have a time limit and the scores do not affect admission. Most students take about 20 – 40 minutes per section. The Regental universities operate the ACCUPLACER testing system under a site license agreement with College Board.

3.3.4. Initial placement testing with ACCUPLACER will be based on the following:

3.3.4.1. The Elementary Algebra test will be administered to students with a Mathematics Index score lower than 1150, students with an ACT Math subtest score of 19 or lower (and no Mathematics Index score), and students who are at least 24 years of age and who have no valid ACT scores.

3.3.4.2. College Level Math test will be administered to all other students, unless the Mathematics Index score supports placement into Math 123.

3.3.5. When used to contest placement based on ACT or Smarter Balanced scores, a degree seeking student is allowed the opportunity to challenge placement using ACCUPLACER one time. Students using ACCUPLACER to establish eligibility in the dual or concurrent credit program may challenge an initial placement decision using ACCUPLACER; however they assume all costs associated with testing. Such students may attempt a maximum of one challenge exam per term per subject (i.e., one attempt per term in English and one attempt per term in mathematics).

4. Placement Process

4.1. Consistent Placement Process

4.1.1. A consistent placement process will be employed across the South Dakota Unified System of Public Higher Education, and pertain to both degree seeking and non-degree seeking students.

4.1.2. Institutions may pilot new remedial/developmental course structures that may require unique placement requirements if approved by the System Vice President for Academic Affairs. After three years of a pilot design data must be evaluated to determine appropriate changes to the system placement process or the consistent alignment of placement procedures will be re-established for pilot institutions.

4.2. Initial English Placement

4.2.1. First-Time Students with Valid ACT or Smarter Balanced Scores

4.2.1.1. For all students with valid ACT or Smarter Balanced Assessment scores, the English/Language Arts scores will be used to determine placement into the initial English course.

4.2.1.2. Placement is determined by the ACT, Smarter Balanced, COMPASS, and ACCUPLACER Placement Score matrix (Appendix A).

4.2.1.3. Valid ACT or Smarter Balanced Assessment scores are those scores that were earned by the student within five (5) years of the date of initial enrollment within the Regental system.

4.2.1.4. If a student has multiple ACT scores, the highest ACT English score are used for placement purposes.

4.2.2. First-Time Students without Valid ACT Scores

4.2.2.1. Students without valid ACT or Smarter Balanced Assessment scores must sit for the COMPASS or ACCUPLACER Writing placement exams.

4.2.2.2. Placement is determined by the ACT, Smarter Balanced, COMPASS, or ACCUPLACER Placement Score matrix (Appendix A).

4.2.2.3. Valid ACT or Smarter Balanced Assessment scores are those scores that were earned by the student within five (5) years of the date of initial enrollment within the Regental system.

4.2.3. International Students

4.2.3.1. International, non-native English speakers and immigrant, non-native English speaking students are not exempt from Board policies 2:7 and 2:26.

4.2.3.2. Each institution may develop a process for determining whether international students should be required to enroll in ESL courses prior to enrollment in ENGL 031, 032, 033 or 101.

4.2.3.3. Upon completion of required ESL coursework, international students will be tested using the COMPASS or ACCUPLACER writing placement exam to determine whether they are sufficiently prepared to enroll in ENGL 101 or require additional remediation. An example of an institutional process is provided in Appendix C.

4.2.4. Regental Student Placement in Pre General Education English Courses

4.2.4.1. Regental students seeking degrees from a Regental institution other than the Regental university offering the pre general education English course in which the Regental student enrolls, will be placed in ENGL 031, ENGL 032, or ENGL 033 according to the guidelines of the Regental university offering the course.

4.2.4.2. An exception will be made for the pre-general education English courses offered at University Center. At the University Center, all students being placed in a pre-general education English course will be placed in ENGL 033.

4.3. **Initial Mathematics Placement**

4.3.1. First-Time Students with Valid ACT Score and High School GPA

4.3.1.1. For all students with valid ACT scores and High School GPA, the Mathematics Index score will be used to determine placement into the initial mathematics courses (see Appendix B).

4.3.1.2. Placement into Math 123 requires both the approved Mathematics Index score higher and an appropriate ACCUPLACER Calculus score (see Appendix B).

4.3.1.3. Valid ACT or Smarter Balanced Assessment scores are those scores that were earned by the student within five (5) years of the date of initial enrollment within the Regental system.

4.3.1.4. If a student has multiple ACT scores, the highest ACT Mathematics score is used for placement purposes.

4.3.1.5. When calculating the Mathematics Index score the current High School GPA will be used for determining student placement. If a final GPA would result in a higher placement, students may request that institutions re-calculate the Mathematics Index to accommodate the higher level placement.

4.3.2. First-Time Students without Valid ACT Scores and/or High School GPA

4.3.2.1. Students without valid ACT must sit for the ACCUPLACER mathematics placement exams to determine placement into coursework.

4.3.2.2. Students without a high school GPA will be placed in all courses based on the appropriate ACT, ACCUPLACER, or Smarter Balanced score as depicted in Appendix B.

4.3.2.3. Valid ACCUPLACER scores are those scores that were earned by the student within five (5) years of the date of initial enrollment within the Regental system.

4.4. **Additional Student Classifications**

4.4.1. Transfer Students

4.4.1.1. Transfer students who have not completed the necessary general education coursework in English and/or mathematics from an accredited institution are subject to the placement requirements outlined in section IV.B.1 or IV.C.1. Transfer students who have official ACT, Smarter Balanced, COMPASS, or ACCUPLACER placement scores may transfer those scores from the first university. Students seeking to transfer English or mathematics courses from a South Dakota Technical Institute may do so under the current Technical Institute General Education Agreement. English or mathematics courses that are not covered in this agreement may not be used to establish initial placement within the Regental system.

4.4.1.2. Effective Spring 2006, if a mathematics course equivalent to MATH 101 has been successfully completed (a grade of A, B, C, or S), the student may follow the appropriate mathematics course sequence at the second university without additional placement testing.

4.4.2. High School Students Enrolling in Dual Credit Courses

High school students enrolling in dual credit English and/or mathematics courses are subject to the placement requirements outlined above for first-

time students based on the availability of valid ACT or Smarter Balanced scores.

4.4.3. Distance Education Students

4.4.3.1. Distance education students who have not completed the equivalent of ENGL 101 (per IV.A.4.b) and/or MATH 101 (per IV.B.4.b), are subject to the placement requirements outlined above for first-time students based on the availability of valid ACT or Smarter Balanced Assessment scores.

4.4.3.2. Those students without valid ACT or Smarter Balanced Assessment scores may take the appropriate COMPASS or ACCUPLACER placement exam at any one of the six Regental universities or at an approved testing site. Their scores will be sent to the institution offering the distance education course.

4.4.4. Non-Regental Students

The availability of the COMPASS or ACCUPLACER placement exam for students enrolling in courses at non-Regental institutions is determined by each Regental university. The Regental university may charge such students a fee to cover the costs associated with the administration of the placement exam.

4.4.5. Students with SAT Scores

4.4.5.1. For all students with valid SAT scores, the SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (formerly “Writing plus Critical Reading” or “Verbal”) and SAT Math exam scores will be equated to ACT English and ACT Math scores based on scoring information provided by ACT, Inc. and the College Board.

4.4.5.2. Placement is determined by the ACT, Smarter Balanced, COMPASS, or ACCUPLACER Placement Score matrix (Appendix A).

4.4.5.3. Valid SAT scores are those scores that were earned by the student within five (5) years of the date of initial enrollment within the Regental system

5. Exceptions

5.1. Placement into a Higher Course

5.1.1. Students who wish to enroll in courses that are higher than indicated by their placement scores may challenge their placement by sitting for the

COMPASS or ACCUPLACER examination. This provision may not be used to gain entry into MATH-123 or higher for those students without a qualifying Mathematics Index score or ACT mathematics subtest score.

5.1.2. A student who is still unable to earn the necessary prerequisite for enrollment in the higher course may request an exception by submitting a completed exception form to the Vice President for Academic Affairs or designee.

5.1.3. Students seeking an exception must provide evidence, to the satisfaction of the VPAA or designee of the university offering the course, that they have the necessary level of preparation to have a reasonable chance of successfully completing the higher level course. Evidence the VPAA or designee may take into consideration when deciding whether to grant an exception includes high school coursework, level of motivation, etc.

5.1.4. Exceptions must be approved prior to the official add/drop date for the term in which the student is enrolled.

5.1.5. Students challenging their placement must pay a testing fee as determined by SDBOR to cover the cost of COMPASS or ACCUPLACER testing.

5.1.6. Students are allowed one challenge using the COMPASS or ACCUPLACER when administered through a Board of Regents institution.

5.2. **Inappropriate Enrollment**

5.2.1. Unless granted an exception, students are required to enroll in the initial English and mathematics coursework indicated by the placement process.

5.2.2. Regental universities will use the prerequisite course checking function of the Colleague software to insure students are enrolled appropriately.

5.2.3. Students who disregard placement directives and are found to be enrolled in the incorrect course will be administratively withdrawn from that course and notified.

6. **Completion of Pre-General Education Courses in English and Mathematics**

6.1. Effective Fall 2003, students are required to complete pre general education courses in a timely manner (Board Policy 2:7). Pre-general education courses include ENGL 031, ENGL 032, ENGL 033, MATH 021, MATH 091, MATH 092, MATH 093, MATH 095 and MATH 101.

6.2. **Completion of Pre-General Education Courses**

6.2.1. Students placed in pre-general education courses must enroll in and successfully complete the courses within the first 30 credit hours.

6.2.2. If a student does not successfully complete the pre-general education course(s) within the first 30 credit hours attempted, a registration hold is placed on the student's record. In any subsequent registration during the next 12 credit hours attempted, the student must enroll in and successfully complete the pre-general education course(s).

6.2.3. If the pre-general education course(s) is not successfully completed within the first 42 credit hours attempted, the only course(s) in which a student may enroll is the pre-general education course(s); and the student's status is changed from degree seeking to non-degree seeking. This change will ONLY be in effect at the end of the Spring semester. (e.g. barring any other academic issues [e.g. academic suspension] students can enroll full-time in the Spring semester even though they may have more than 42 attempted credit hours) Students transferring from non-Regental institutions must enroll in pre-general education courses during the first 30 attempted Regental credit hours. These students may enroll in other courses concurrently with the pre-general education courses. If the student does not complete the pre-general education courses during the first 30 Regental credit hours attempted, during the next 12 credit hours attempted, the student must enroll in and complete the pre-general education course(s). If the student does not successfully complete the pre-general education course(s) within 42 attempted Regental credit hours, the only course(s) in which a student may enroll is the pre-general education course(s); and the student's status is changed from degree seeking to non-degree seeking. The Vice President for Academic Affairs may grant an exception. This change will ONLY be in effect at the end of the Spring semester. (e.g. barring any other academic issues (e.g. academic suspension) students can enroll full-time in the Spring semester even though they may have more than 42 attempted credit hours).

6.2.4. Students who are placed into MATH 021 are expected to successfully complete both MATH 021 and MATH 101 before enrolling in MATH 102. However, a student who performs exceptionally well in MATH 021 may petition the VPAA to bypass MATH 101 and enroll in MATH 102 as their next mathematics course. These students must sit for the COMPASS or ACCUPLACER Math placement exam and earn scores that meet or exceed the placement score necessary for enrolling in MATH 102.

6.3. **Credit Hours and Grades**

6.3.1. Credit hours for the pre-general education courses are included in the total number of credit hours attempted.

6.3.2. The grades assigned for courses numbered less than 100 will be RI, RS and RU.

SOURCE: AAC August 2016; May 2017 (Clerical).

Appendix A

ACT, Smarter Balance, COMPASS, and ACCUPLACER Placement Scores for English Effective Fall 2016

University	Course(s)	ACT Scores	COMPASS	ACCUPLACER	Smarter Balance
<i>Pre General Education</i>					
BHSU	ENGL 032 Basic Writing: 2cr/ENGL 101C Core English	ACT English: 1 to 17	Writing: 1 to 73	Sentence Skills: 0-85	0 - 2582
DSU & NSU	ENGL 033 Basic Writing: 3 credits*	ACT English: 1 to 17	Writing: 1 to 73	Sentence Skills: 0-85	0 - 2582
SDSMT	ENGL 033 Basic Writing: 3 credits*	ACT English: 1 to 12	Writing: 1 to 32	Sentence Skills: 0-52	0-2492
	ENGL 032 Basic Writing: 2 credits*	ACT English: 13 or 14	Writing: 33 to 48	Sentence Skills: 53-70	0-2492
	ENGL 031 Basic Writing: 1 credit*	ACT English: 15 to 17	Writing: 49 to 73	Sentence Skills: 71-85	2493-2582
SDSU	ENGL 033 Basic Writing: 3 credits*	ACT English: 1 to 13	Writing: 1 to 38	Sentence Skills: 0-52	0-2492
	ENGL 032 Basic Writing: 2 credits*	ACT English: 14 to 17	Writing: 39 to 73	Sentence Skills: 53-85	2493-2582
USD	ENGL 032 Basic Writing: 2 credits*	ACT English: 1 to 17	Writing: 1 to 73	Sentence Skills: 0-85	0-2582
<i>General Education</i>					
BHSU, DSU, NSU, SDSM&T, SDSU, USD	ENGL 101 Composition I	ACT English: 18 to 36	Writing: 74 to 100	Sentence Skills: 86-120	2583 or higher

*Depending on the university, enrollment in ENGL 031/032/033 may occur either concurrently or sequentially with ENGL 101.

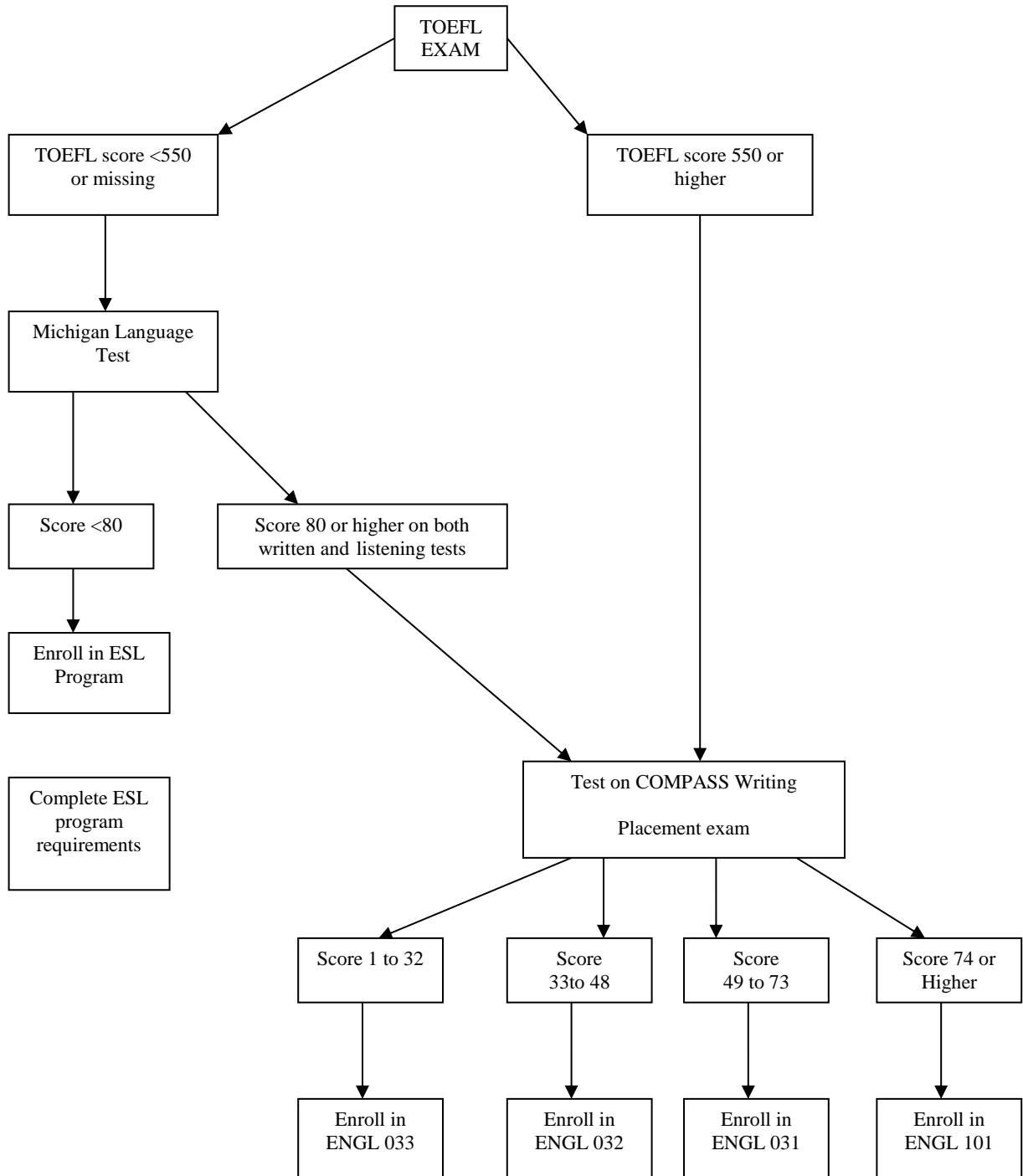
Appendix B

Mathematics Index, ACCUPLACER and Smarter Balanced Placement Scores for Mathematics Effective Fall 2016

<i>Course(s)</i>	<i>Mathematics Index (MI)</i>	<i>Accuplacer Score</i>	<i>Smarter Balanced</i>	<i>Only if no HS GPA is available and thus no MI is Available</i>
MATH 021	0 or higher	Elem Algebra 0 – 43	0 - 2542	ACT MATH 1 – 17 or SAT equivalent (see Appendix D)
MATH 095	0 or higher	Elem Algebra 0 - 75	0 - 2627	ACT MATH 1 – 19 or SAT equivalent (see Appendix D)
MATH 101 or MATH 102 w/092L or MATH 103 w/093L	950 or higher	Elem Algebra 44 - 75	2543 - 2627	ACT MATH 18 – 19 or SAT equivalent (see Appendix D)
MATH 102 or MATH 103 or MATH 104 or STAT 281 w/091	1150 or higher	Elem Algebra 76 - 120 or College Level 0 - 50	2628 or higher	ACT MATH 20 or higher or SAT equivalent (see Appendix D)
MATH 115 or MATH 120 or MATH 121 or MATH 201 or MATH 281 or STAT 281	1300 or higher	College Level 51 or higher	NA	ACT MATH 25 or higher or SAT equivalent (see Appendix D)
MATH 123 w/123L	1300 or higher AND Accuplacer Calculus 16 or higher	Accuplacer Calculus 16 or higher AND MI 1300 or higher	NA	ACT MATH 25 or higher AND Accuplacer Calculus 16 or higher
MATH 123	1300 or higher AND Accuplacer Calculus 19 or higher	Accuplacer Calculus 19 or higher AND MI 1300 or higher	NA	ACT MATH 25 or higher AND Accuplacer Calculus 19 or higher

Appendix C

Example of International Student Placement Process



Appendix D

ACT to SAT Conversion, Total Score

ACT ²	Old SAT	Redesigned SAT
36	1600	1600
35	1560-1590	1570-1590
34	1510-1550	1540-1560
33	1460-1500	1500-1530
32	1420-1450	1470-1490
31	1380-1410	1430-1460
30	1340-1370	1400-1420
29	1300-1330	1360-1390
28	1260-1290	1320-1350
27	1220-1250	1290-1310
26	1190-1210	1260-1280
25	1150-1180	1220-1250
24	1110-1140	1180-1210
23	1070-1100	1140-1170
22	1030-1060	1110-1130
21	990-1020	1070-1100
20	950-980	1030-1060
19	910-940	990-1020
18	870-900	950-980
17	830-860	910-940
16	790-820	870-900
15	740-780	830-860
14	690-730	780-820
13	640-680	740-770
≤12	≤630	≤730

Note: Test scores generated from the old SAT (January 2016 or earlier) should be concorded using the first SAT column above; test scores generated from the redesigned SAT (March 2016 or later) should be concorded using the second SAT column above. This table is subject to change following the periodic release of updated national norm data from test developers.

² Source: <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/higher-ed-brief-sat-concordance.pdf>

ACT to SAT Conversion, English Placement

ACT³ English	SAT⁴ Critical Reading (Old SAT)	SAT⁵ Reading and Writing (Redesigned SAT)
36	760-800	730-800
35	760-800	730-800
34	740-750	720
33	730	700-710
32	690-720	680-690
31	680	670
30	670	660
29	650-660	650
28	640	640
27	630	630
26	610-620	620
25	600	600-610
24	580-590	580-590
23	560-570	570
22	540-550	550-560
21	530	530-540
20	510-520	520
19	490-500	500-510
18	470-480	480-490
17	460	470
16	450	460
15	430-440	440-450
14	410-420	420-430
13	390-400	400-410
≤12	≤380	≤390

Note: Test scores generated from the old SAT (January 2016 or earlier) should be concorded using the first SAT column above; test scores generated from the redesigned SAT (March 2016 or later) should be concorded using the second SAT column above. This table is subject to change following the periodic release of updated national norm data from test developers.

³ Source: <http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/NormsChartMCandComposite-Web2015-16.pdf>

⁴ Source: <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/sat/sat-percentile-ranks-crit-reading-math-writing-2014.pdf>

⁵ Source: <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/understanding-sat-scores-2016.pdf>

ACT to SAT Conversion, Math Placement

ACT⁶ Mathematics	SAT⁷ Mathematics (Old SAT)	SAT⁸ Mathematics (Redesigned SAT)
36	780-800	760-800
35	780-800	760-800
34	780-800	760-800
33	770	740-750
32	750-760	720-730
31	740	710
30	720-730	700
29	700-710	680-690
28	690	660-670
27	670-680	640-650
26	640-660	620-630
25	620-630	590-610
24	590-610	570-580
23	570-580	550-560
22	550-560	540
21	540	520-530
20	520-530	510
19	510	510
18	490-500	490-500
17	470-480	480
16	440-460	450-470
15	390-430	400-440
14	330-380	360-390
13	280-320	320-350
≤12	≤270	≤310

Note: Test scores generated from the old SAT (January 2016 or earlier) should be concorded using the first SAT column above; test scores generated from the redesigned SAT (March 2016 or later) should be concorded using the second SAT column above. This table is subject to change following the periodic release of updated national norm data from test developers.

⁶ Source: <http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/NormsChartMCandComposite-Web2015-16.pdf>

⁷ Source: <https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/sat/sat-percentile-ranks-crit-reading-math-writing-2014.pdf>

⁸ Source: <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/pdf/understanding-sat-scores-2016.pdf>