

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Temporary Placement Testing Policy Changes

Request:

NCCCS requests that the State Board of Community Colleges approve temporary placement testing policy changes, effective immediately upon approval.

Background:

On March 14, 2013, the State Board approved Testing Policies for the North Carolina Diagnostic Assessment and Placement (NCDAP) test. Since the new test went live on April 8th, approximately 10 colleges have fully implemented NC DAP while another 15-20 have begun testing the new assessment. Staff has tracked test results and gathered feedback from colleges. Three problems have been identified:

1. Students must complete the entire test, even if they do not plan to enroll in a program of study requiring MAT 161 or 171, leading to testing fatigue and increased test-taking time.
2. Test results indicate that the cut score needs to be re-evaluated.
3. Test results for DMA 070 and DMA 080 indicate test construction concerns.

In response to concerns about test length, College Board has agreed to split the assessment into two separate tests. Assessments for DMA 010 to DMA 050 will be Part 1 of the NC DAP; this change should be in place on the NC DAP testing platform by June 1, 2013. Due to significant concerns about the test constructs for modules DMA 070 and 080, the assessments for Part 2 of the NC DAP (DMA 060, 070, and 080) will be taken offline for additional evaluation.

Recommended Temporary Placement Testing Policy Changes:

The following temporary placement testing policy changes are recommended to the State Board of Community Colleges, effective immediately. To accommodate colleges that have already implemented the new NC DAP, the proposed policy changes provide two testing options for colleges.

Option 1

Colleges may administer ACCUPLACER Arithmetic & Elementary Algebra or COMPASS Pre-Algebra & Algebra placement tests to students. Colleges doing so must use the previous State Board-approved cut scores to place students into DMA modules (based on the developmental math crosswalk) or directly into curriculum math courses.

Instead of requiring students to retest, colleges that have already tested students with NC DAP may adjust NC DAP cut scores to place students appropriately.

Option 2

Colleges may administer the new NC DAP Part 1 (DMA 010-DMA 050) to place students into developmental modules or directly into college math courses below MAT 161. In doing so, colleges may set their own cut scores from 6 to 9 for DMA 010 – DMA 050. The college's cut score will apply retroactively to students who have already taken the test. For students planning to enroll in MAT 161 or higher, colleges will administer the ACCUPLACER Elementary Algebra or COMPASS Pre-Algebra placement test, in addition to NC DAP Part 1.

Next Steps:

The System Office and College Board will convene a group of math faculty and other college stakeholders to reevaluate the cut scores for NC DAP Part 1 over the summer and early fall. Staff will continue to collect data from the colleges opting to administer the NC DAP Part 1 to inform the cut score discussions. Final cut score recommendations will be presented to the State Board in October 2013.

Additionally, System Office and College Board will work with faculty to develop changes in the test construction for DMA 060, 070, and 080 to bring those assessments back online as soon as possible.

Contact Person:

Dr. Sharon Morrissey
Executive VP for Programs and CAO