



SAN MATEO COUNTY
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE DISTRICT



Memorandum

To: SMCCCD VP Council

From: Mina Dadgar and Chase Fischerhall

Re: Summary of SMCCCD Faculty Recommendations for Placement

Date: Oct 25, 2016

Career Ladders Project (CLP) and RP Group had been contracted to convene English, Math, and ESL faculty to map the competencies for the Common Assessment and develop evidence-based placement criteria based on high school GPA and course grades (multiple measures). In this memorandum, we summarize: (a) English and Math faculty's placement decisions based on high school GPA and course grades; (b) English faculty's adaption of a guided self-placement tool; and (c) test instruments and cut-scores (ACCUPLACER for English ¹and ESL and ALEX PPL for math) developed for the interim period while the Common Assessment is delayed.²

Math Faculty Proposal: Placement Recommendations

1. Placing Students based on high School GPA/Grades (See Table A & Table B for Math Placement Criteria)

- i. Using High School GPA and specific course grades, all three colleges are in alignment for placing students in transfer level and below transfer, but not in levels above transfer (see Tables A & B).
- ii. Math faculty request removal of recency requirements for high school GPA/grades.
- iii. Math faculty recommend using students' self-reports of GPA/grades. This decision was adopted by faculty after reviewing research on accuracy of self-report data and also out of concern that all students have access to this placement mechanism.
- iv. Math faculty request that the outcomes of the new placement strategy be revisited in a year. Math faculty would also like to consider guided self-placement in a year as an additional instrument, when placement is revisited.

2. Placing Students based on ALEKS PPL (cloud-based assessment instrument) Adopted across the District for placement purposes in the CAI interim. Placement levels for courses will be adapted directly from the previously validated use of ALEKS at Skyline Summer Bridge. As a tool, ALEKS PPL has both diagnostic and

¹ While English faculty have selected ACCUPLACER cut scores, they have requested that the test be used as a last resort for placing students (after using high school grades/GPA and guided self-placement).

² As the CAI becomes available, it will replace other tests, but the use of GPA/grades (and Guided Self placement for English) can continue to be the primary way students are placed. This is compliant with the Chancellor's office memorandum on 9/30/2016 stating: "the measures chosen must be of different formats to allow students multiple opportunities to illustrate their knowledge and readiness."



placement capabilities. Faculty would like to make this tool available to all students but would like to employ GPA/course grades as measures for placement where possible. **Faculty liaison:** Miranda Wang.



Table A. Districtwide Math Placement Criteria using HS Course Grades and GPA for Transfer/below Transfer Level

<i>Course Number- Course Name</i>	<i>Qualifying Thresholds- No Recency Requirement</i>
Math 120 – Intermediate Algebra	Algebra 2 with a C or higher <i>and</i> GPA of 2.4
Math 110 – Elementary Algebra	Algebra 1 with a C or higher <i>and</i> GPA of 2.0
Math 190 – Preparation for Statistics	Algebra 1 with a C or higher <i>and</i> GPA of 2.0
Transfer level	Algebra 2 with a C or higher <i>and</i> GPA of 2.8

Table B. Math Placement Criteria using HS Course Grade and GPA for Math 222 and Math 251

<i>Course Number</i>	<i>CSM – HS graduate in last 3 years</i>	<i>Skyline and Cañada – no recency requirement</i>
Math 222	12 th grade: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>At least C in Algebra 2 or higher and cumulative GPA of 3.3 OR</i> • <i>At least C in Calculus or higher and cumulative GPA of 3.0</i> 11 th grade: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>At least C in Algebra 2 or higher and cumulative GPA of 3.4 OR</i> • <i>Took Calculus or higher, and cumulative GPA of 2.6</i> 	Trigonometry with a C or higher <i>and</i> GPA of 2.8
Math 251	12 th grade: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>At least C in Pre-Calculus or Trigonometry and cumulative GPA of 3.5 OR</i> • <i>At least C in Calculus and cumulative GPA of 3.1</i> 11 th grade: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>At least C in Pre-Calculus or Trigonometry and cumulative GPA of 3.6 OR</i> • <i>At least C in Pre-Calculus and cumulative GPA of 3.2</i> 	Pre-calculus with a C or higher <i>and</i> GPA of 2.8

English Faculty Proposal: Placement Recommendations

Summary of Recommendation for Placement in English

For placement, English faculty would like students to first use high school course grades OR GPA, then the guided self-placement survey, with ACCUPLACER only as a last resort. Please note that similar to Math, English faculty have recommended removing any recency requirements for students' high school GPA/grades.

1. High School GPA OR grades place students into transfer level 100 course (alignment across the district). For CSM and Skyline, GPA OR grade places students into transfer level English 105 (See Table C). At this time, Canada does not have a 105 course.



Table C. Placing Students into Transfer level English Courses based on HS Course Grades OR GPA

Level /Course	Cañada	Skyline	CSM
Placement Into English 100 (transfer level)	At least an 11 th grade cumulative 2.60 <i>or</i> B- in 11 th grade English composition or higher	At least an 11 th grade cumulative 2.60 <i>or</i> B- in 11 th grade English composition or higher	At least an 11 th grade cumulative 2.60 <i>or</i> B- in 11 th grade English composition or higher
Transfer Level (English 105) (transfer with co-requisite) <i>Only Applies to Skyline and CSM</i>	No co-requisite placement available (students with GPA below 2.6 <i>and</i> a course grade lower than a B- in 11 th grade English composition or higher course will be directed to the Guided Self-Placement Platform)	ENG 105 2.0 – 2.59 <i>or</i> C in 11 th grade English Composition or higher course	ENGL 105 2.0 – 2.59 <i>or</i> C in 11 th grade English Composition or higher course

- Guided Self-Placement (GSP) elected as a primary placement mechanism for those students who do not place into transfer level courses or for students who do not have the required HS course grade or GPA (available through either a transcript or self-reports).

At Skyline and CSM, a student entering with a cumulative high school GPA (11th grade) of 1.99 or below will receive a placement recommendation through the GSP tool and will enroll (with a counselor’s guidance) in one of the two possible courses (listed below). At Cañada, a student with a GPA of 2.59 or below will receive a recommendation through the GSP tool, and will enroll (with a counselor’s guidance) in one of the two possible courses (listed below). Skyline’s current GSP tool will be shared with CSM and Cañada for implementation.

Table D. Guided Self Placement tool, will place students who do not qualify for English 100 or English 105.

Level (relative to transfer level)	Cañada	Skyline	CSM	Qualifying GPA/Course Grade
	GPA under 2.6	GPA under 2.0	GPA under 2.0	Guided Self-Placement
-1	ENG 847	ENG 846	ENG 838	
-2	ENG 827	ENG 828	ENG 828	

- The Accuplacer testing tool will be available for those students who elect or need a placement test (i.e. can’t be placed by multiple measures already in place, not happy with the course options available through GSP tool, and/or need an additional measure). For cut-scores, please see Tables E1 and E2.

Tables E1 and E2. ACCUPLACER Cut-Scores for Students Unable to Place According to Measures in Tables C & D

Table E1.

Reading Comprehension	Sentence Skills	Skyline Course Recommendation	Cañada Course Recommendation
20-62	20-120	See Counselor	See Counselor
42-62	44-85	ENGL 828	ENGL & READ 826/ENGL 827
42-62	44-85	ENGL 828	ENGL & READ 826/ENGL 827



63-87	20-58	ENGL 828	ENGL 826
63-87	59-100	ENGL 846	ENGL & READ 836/ENGL 847
63-87	101-120	ENGL 105	ENGL & READ 836/ENGL 847
88-120	20-38	ENGL 828	ENGL 826/ENGL 827
88-120	39-65	ENGL 846	ENGL 836
88-120	66-85	ENGL 105	ENGL 836/ENGL 847
88-120	86-120	ENGL 100	ENGL 100

Table E2.

Reading Comprehension	Sentence Skills	CSM Recommendations
0-27	All Scores	See Counselor
28 to 41	All Scores	See Counselor
42 to 62	0 to 56	ENGL 828
42 to 62	57 to 80	ENGL 838
42 to 62	81 to 120	ENGL 838
63-87	0 to 52	ENGL 828
63 to 87	53 to 69	ENGL 838
63 to 87	70 to 120	ENGL 105
88 to 120	0 to 38	ENGL 828
88 to 120	38 to 48	ENGL 838
88 to 120	49 to 85	ENGL 105
88 to 120	86 to 101	ENGL 105
88 to 120	102 to 120	ENGL 100

ESL Faculty Proposal: Placement Recommendations

Students electing to enter ESL courses at SMCCCD will be directed to take the Reading Skills, Listening Skills, Language Usage, and Sentence Meaning assessments, producing four measures (discrete scores). Their scores will then be combined and averaged to determine a recommended course placement. ³

Table F. ACCUPLACER Qualifying Cut-Scores for Students Seeking Placement in ESL Courses

Tools: Accuplacer (4 tests) Scaled Scores of 0-120 (averaged)	Cañada (placement)	Skyline (placement)	CSM (placement)
*112-120	ESOL 400 (Counselor <i>may</i> recommend taking the English Assessment upon meeting w student)		
100-120	ESOL 400	ESOL 400* *Student strongly advised to take ESOL 875. Student may take ESOL 854 if there	ESL 400

³ Additional Measures, such as the TOEFL test are still on the table for future consideration, after the end of November implementation timeline (no determination yet).



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		could be benefit.	
83-99	ESOL 914/924	ESOL 840/854	ESL 828/848/858
58-82	ESOL 913/923	ESOL 830/853	ESL 827/847/857
30-57	ESOL 912/922	ESOL 820/852	ESL 826/846/856
16-29	ESOL 911/921	See counselor (adult school?)	See counselor (adult school?)
0-15	ESOL 800	See counselor (adult school?)	See counselor (adult school?)

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