



WNCC Administrative Procedure

Title:	Academic Skills Assessment
Division:	Educational and Students Services
Reference:	BP-614 Basic Skills Assessment
Number:	AP-614
Date of Approval:	March 15, 2023
Approval:	John Marrin, Interim President

Purpose

To ensure students are placed in courses that are appropriate for their individual levels of academic readiness.

Scope

This procedure shall apply to all students enrolling in a certificate, diploma, or associate degree program and those enrolling in a credit-bearing course that has a prerequisite or co-requisite.

Definitions

Co-requisite course: A course that is either recommended or required to be taken at the same time as another course.

Developmental course: A course that helps students master academic skills in reading, writing, math, and/or analytical skills that will assist students in advancing to upper-level coursework and beyond.

Prerequisite course: A course that must be successfully completed before enrolling in a subsequent, higher-level course. Prerequisite courses prepare a student to be successful in a related course. It is usually taught at a lower level and covers information, theories, skills, and vocabulary that are expected to be known and mastered before taking a higher-level course.

Procedure

Academic programs are designed carefully so students can achieve identified learning outcomes. Adequate placement and prerequisites and co-requisites are important parts of the curriculum

design. These requirements are not arbitrary, but provide a rational path through the curriculum, allowing students to master material that is needed in subsequent courses. The requirements apply to all students regardless of location or status, include dual-credit high school students.

Placement Assessment Requirements

WNCC requires that students meet specific standards of readiness in reading, writing, and math for most entry-level courses. Prior to enrollment, students must provide documentation of recent scores from the ACT, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), Accuplacer, or other approved assessment tool. The test scores cannot be more than three years old.

Accuplacer Assessment

If ACT, SAT, or other assessment scores have expired or are not available, students may take the Accuplacer, which is made available by appointment through the Testing Center at WNCC. If a student's schedule does not allow for in-person testing, remote testing is available through a third-party proctor for a small fee paid by the student.

Accuplacer testing at WNCC is available only for students planning to enroll at WNCC. Students who plan to attend another institution must request a voucher from that institution allowing WNCC to administer the test. Students may request a voucher from WNCC for remote testing at another institution, and the student is responsible for making all testing arrangements with that institution. Accuplacer testing for dual-credit students will be coordinated by the staff of WNCC's CollegeNOW! program.

The first Accuplacer test will be made available free of charge. Students are allowed one retest without charge, and the retest fee is waived only for re-testing students who provide documentation of a practice test score taken after the last formal exam. Additional retesting is available for a fee. In all cases, students must wait at least one week after taking the Accuplacer to retest.

Other Assessment Options

Multiple Measures Assessment

Recent high school graduates who are not satisfied with math, reading, or writing course placement based on a previous placement test score (Accuplacer, SAT, or ACT) may have their skills evaluated based on a multiple measures assessment using a combination of test scores and high school grade point average (GPA). Completing a multiple measures assessment may enable students to move up a course level and thus move through developmental courses more quickly or eliminate the need to take any developmental courses.

Students interested in pursuing a multiple measures assessment should contact the Career Pathways and Advising Center. Academic advisors in the center will determine if a student

possesses a combination of test scores and high school GPA to allow them to move forward; advisors will also notify the Registrar of the decision. Advising staff will document the assessment and note movement in the student's respective academic planner.

Students are required to present high school transcripts, either print or electronic, to begin the process; high school transcripts may be used only for three (3) years after graduation.

Second-Screen Assessment

If a student is not satisfied with math, reading, or writing course placement based on a previous placement test score (Accuplacer, SAT, or ACT) or believes the test score is not indicative of their actual skills in an area, a student may request a second-screen assessment. This involves a student taking a written test that is then evaluated by a WNCC faculty member or division chair to determine if the student possesses the proficiency necessary to succeed in a desired course. Students enrolled in high school dual credit courses are not eligible to complete a second-screen assessment.

After meeting with an academic advisor in the Career Pathways and Advising Center or division chair, a student may request the second-screen assessment which can be scheduled through the WNCC Testing Center or the division chair of the respective academic area. Second-screen assessments must be taken on or before the last Thursday prior to the start of the fall or spring semesters. A student is allowed to take a second screen assessment only one time in an academic area. There is no cost for a second-screen assessment.

For math placement: The assessment has a time limit of twenty-five (25) minutes. Calculators can be used on all math assessments except those for MATH-0070 (Basic Mathematics). The assessment is scored by the Math/Science Division Chair. Students who miss 0-1 of the first 10 questions and three (3) or less of the last 10 questions will be advised by the Division Chair about the possibility of moving to the next level.

For reading placement: The assessment has a time limit of thirty (30) minutes. Students must score an 80% or higher for movement to the next level. The assessment is scored by a designated Language and Fine Arts (LAAR) faculty member using the division approved exam and scoring sheet. Scores will be reported to the LAAR Division Chair who will then share the test results with the student.

For writing placement: The assessment has a time limit of sixty (60) minutes. Once students have completed their assessment, two designated Language and Fine Arts (LAAR) faculty members will serve as readers. Their assessments will be evaluated based on course outcomes for ENGL-1010 (English Composition I). Scores will be reported to the LAAR Division Chair who will then share the test results with the student.

The Career Pathways and Advising Center and the Registrar will be notified when a student has successfully completed a second-screen assessment and has chosen to move to the next course level. Advising staff will document the assessment and note movement in the student's respective academic planner.

Placement Assessment Requirements for International Students

Non-native English speakers must submit TOEFL scores demonstrating English proficiency. A score of 80 on the TOEFL will allow the student to take ENGL-1010 (English Composition I). A score below 80 would place the student in ESLX-0035 (Intermediate English for Academic Purposes). A student wishing to challenge their placement into ESLX-0035 is entitled to complete another evaluation for placement in a reading or writing course. If a student wishes to move up a course level in any of these areas, they may opt to complete an Accuplacer ESL Assessment.

Second Screen Assessment

After completing the TOEFL:

- Students need to schedule a meeting with advising staff in the Center for Advising and Career Services to confirm course-level placement.
- The Center for Advising and Career Services will explain course descriptions, course outcomes, and how the course fits into a student's respective plan of study.
- If placement is at a level below where a student believes their academic skills exist or if scores do not meet pre-requisite requirements, a student may request to take the entire suite of Accuplacer ESL, including reading, speaking, writing, and listening. These assessments can be scheduled through the WNCC Testing Center or the Division Chair in the academic area.
- The Accuplacer ESL Assessment must be taken before the start of each semester.
- Students are only allowed to take an Accuplacer ESL Assessment one time in each respective area.

Once the Accuplacer ESL Assessment is completed, it will be forwarded to the appropriate division chair. Students must score the following to move to credit bearing courses.

Reading	102
Sentence Meaning	106
Language Use	100
Listening	90
Writeplacer	Level 6

- The Center for Advising and Career Services and the Registrar will be notified when a student has successfully completed an Accuplacer ESL Assessment and has chosen to move to the next course level. Advising staff will document the assessment and note movement in the student's respective academic planner.

Prerequisite and Co-Requisite Courses

Students may not enroll in a course for which they do not meet the prerequisite(s) by the time the course begins.

Successful completion of a prerequisite or co-requisite course is achieved by earning a passing grade in the class. Students who do not successfully complete a required prerequisite course will not be allowed to register for higher-level courses.

If a course has a prerequisite and co-requisite requirement, it will be listed with the course description in the *WNCC College Catalog*.

Questions about prerequisite or co-requisite courses should be directed to the appropriate division chair, who will confer with the College Registrar.

Pre-Requisite Waivers

Some prerequisite and co-requisite courses can be satisfied by means other than enrolling in the course at WNCC and can be requested using the "Class Requisite Waiver Review" form (see Attachment A). Options include:

- Having taken and successfully completed the course at another accredited college or university. Students may request an evaluation of coursework from another institution when transcript documentation is presented.
- Earning certain scores on the Accuplacer placement exam or other approved assessment tools may satisfy a prerequisite or co-requisite requirement.
- Requesting special clearance when unique circumstances present themselves, such as significant experiential learning credit, military experience, or other applicable circumstances which show students' necessary competencies have been satisfied.

No person other than the Registrar or their designee (e.g., division chair) shall waive a prerequisite or co-requisite for a student. Before a prerequisite or co-requisite is waived for any reason, the "Class Requisite Review Request" must be completed and signed by the student and appropriate academic personnel.

Refusing Academic Advice

It is possible that a student may assert their right to enroll in a course despite performance on placement tests. Students enrolled in high school dual credit courses are not eligible to register for a course against academic advice.

1. A student wanting to enroll in a math, English, or reading class for which they are not qualified pursuant to test scores must take a) the second-screen assessment writing exam, b) a pre-test for the math class into which they wish to enroll, and/or c) a reading screen. Students then must meet with the respective division chair to review results and discuss enrollment options.
2. If after meeting with the division chair, a student continues to assert their desire to enroll in a math, English, or reading class for which they are not qualified pursuant to test scores, and a student may pursue a waiver through the “Enrolling Against Course Placement Advice Form” (see Attachment B). Pursuit of the waiver is not encouraged, and signature by or routing of the form by WNCC personnel does not indicate approval of or agreement with the student’s request.
3. After signatures are secure on the form, it will become a part of the student’s permanent academic record. The Career Pathways and Advising Center and the Registrar will be notified. Advising staff will document the assessment and note movement in the student’s respective academic planner.
4. A new form must be completed for each course for which an exception is pursued.

Attachment 614A: Class Requisite Waiver Review form

Attachment 614B: Enrolling Against Course Placement Advice form

Revising this Procedure

This Administrative Procedure supersedes any prior WNCC policy, procedure, guideline, or handbook on this subject matter.

WNCC reserves the right to revise this procedure, as necessary, and for the changes to become effective immediately.

Original Adoption Date: March 2020
Revision Date:
Sponsoring Division: Educational Services

Appendix 614A



Class Requisite Review Request

Please print and submit to the chair of the division in which the course you want to waive is housed. If you are seeking a prerequisite waiver, you cannot register for the course until the waiver is approved or the prerequisite is met.

YOUR INFORMATION

First Name: _____ **Last Name:** _____

Email Address: _____ **Student ID:** _____

Are your transcripts on file?

COURSE INFORMATION (Please list the course name and number for which you are requesting a pre-requisite waiver.)

Course name: _____ **Course number:** _____

Term (in which you want to enroll): _____ **Is this an online class?**

Please describe how you meet the prerequisite(s) for this class (attach additional page/s if needed):

Student signature: _____ **Date:** _____

APPROVAL/DENIAL

Request is: GRANTED _____ DENIED _____

Reason:

Faculty signature: _____ **Date:**

Request is: GRANTED _____ DENIED _____

Reason:

Division Chair signature: _____ **Date:**

Request is: GRANTED _____ DENIED _____

Reason:

Dean of Instruction Signature: _____ **Date:**

Appendix 614B



Enrolling Against Course Placement Advice

This is to certify that I, _____, a student at Western Nebraska Community College, am refusing the advice of my academic advisor regarding my course placement as the result of my placement test scores and wish to enroll in a higher level course than recommended by my placement test scores. The risks associated with doing so have been thoroughly explained to me. I release WNCC from any responsibility for all consequences which may result from my decision. These risks could include, but are not limited to, failure of the course for which I am choosing to register, a poor final grade in the course or subsequent courses, or failure to graduate on time.

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

Advisor signature: _____ Date: _____

Division Chair signature: _____ Date: _____

Dean's signature: _____ Date: _____