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Chapter: Educational Program

Modification No. 005

Subject: **Assessment Testing, Course Placement, and Credit for Prior Learning**

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- I. Student success for all students is the primary goal of Montgomery College. Assessment of student academic skills and the placement of students in appropriate courses is an important mechanism by which the College supports student success.
- II. The Board of Trustees of Montgomery College endorses a process of assessment and placement so that students are able to enroll in courses for which they demonstrate academic readiness. The Board of Trustees further endorses a process by which students may be awarded credit for prior learning.
- III. The Board of Trustees authorizes the president to establish any procedures necessary to implement this policy.

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Board Approval: July 19, 1982; May 16, 1988; July 18, 1994; May 16, 2016; April 21, 2025.

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I. Scope and Applicability

- A. This policy and its procedures only apply to degree-seeking students.
- B. Students enrolling in credit or non-credit college courses for reasons other than pursuing a degree, such as personal or professional development, fulfilling prerequisites, or gaining specific skills, without intending to earn a degree at Montgomery College, are not required to undertake assessment for course placement.

II. Definitions

- A. ESL courses: Courses at Montgomery College or elsewhere that support proficiency in the English language. For the purposes of these procedures, ESL courses are used as a broad term and encompass non-credit ESL and credit ELAP courses.
- B. Students: for the purposes of this policy and its procedures, students mean degree-seeking students.

III. Multiple Measures of Assessment

At Montgomery College, we strive to place students in courses for which they are prepared to be successful. To that end, Montgomery College offers multiple measures by which students can be assessed for appropriate course placement, including but not limited to, nationally standardized assessment tests as well as additional assessment options available reflecting other indicators of success and equivalency considerations.

IV. Criteria for Mandatory Assessment

- A. Students planning to enroll in any course at Montgomery College with an English, ESL, or mathematics assessment level and/or prerequisite, who cannot demonstrate they have successfully met the assessment level and/or prerequisites via prior developmental or ESL courses taken at Montgomery College, or credit courses taken at Montgomery College or elsewhere, are required to be assessed for placement in one of the following ways:
  - 1. Through the relevant assessment(s) offered by Montgomery College.
  - 2. Through other approved measures of assessment.
- B. Student assessment and placement information will be recorded in the student information system so that it is available for academic advising and registration purposes.
- C. Assessment processes will be applied consistently and broadly recognized across the institution.

- D. Students requesting disability support services during the assessment process may obtain accommodations based on the submission of supporting documentation and as determined to be appropriate by a counselor in Disability Support Services.
- V. Course Placement
- A. Students may enroll in any courses for which they have the entry level skill requirements, assessment levels, and prerequisite courses.
- B. Students will be placed into mathematics and English or ESL courses based on the results of required assessments or on alternative assessment processes and metrics approved by Montgomery College.
- C. Students who require developmental courses in English and/or mathematics must enroll in the appropriate developmental course(s) and follow the developmental sequence. Once students enroll in a developmental course, they are expected to enroll in the next course in the sequence in the following semester until they complete their first credit course(s) in English and mathematics. Degree-seeking students are required to successfully complete their first credit course in English and mathematics prior to completing 24 credits at the College.
- D. Students who require ESL courses must enroll in the appropriate course(s) and follow the course sequence. Once students successfully complete a course, they are expected to enroll in the next course in the sequence in the following semester until they complete their first credit course(s) in English and mathematics. Degree-seeking students are required to successfully complete their first credit course in English and mathematics prior to completing 24 credits at the College.
1. While students requiring developmental and/or ESL courses are generally expected to progress through those course sequences, students who place into Montgomery College's academic ESL program (the English Language Academic Program, or ELAP) are given an additional diagnostic assessment on the first day of each course, and if the results of this assessment suggest the student is prepared for a higher-level course, they are given the opportunity to move up to that new level.
- E. Students who place into developmental mathematics, English and/or ESL courses should enroll in one or more of those courses during their first semester of enrollment.
- VI. Exemptions from Taking Assessment Test(s)
- A. Students already having a verified associate degree or higher from a regionally accredited US institution who are fully proficient in the English language are exempt from assessment and are initially placed at the minimum college-ready level (ENGL 101 and MATH 117 or 120) until their transcripts have been evaluated for potential transfer credit. Having a verified associate degree or higher does not automatically exempt students from other course requirements, and students must still meet any additional assessment levels or prerequisite

requirements for courses they wish to take.

- B. Visiting students from other regionally accredited US postsecondary institutions who are fully proficient in the English language, and who have official permission from their home institution to enroll, are exempt from assessment but must meet the prerequisite requirements for courses they wish to take.
- C. Personal interest students who are fully proficient in the English language are typically exempt from assessment testing for all courses with the exception of English and mathematics courses. However, students must meet specific course prerequisites and any other applicable requirements.
- D. The expectations for readiness are the same for all students. Any student who is classified as exempt from assessment testing must be prepared to demonstrate that they meet the applicable credit course prerequisite requirements and to demonstrate proficiency in the English language.

VII. Reassessment and Review of Placement

Students who believe that the results for assessment taken through Montgomery College do not provide an appropriate placement may submit a request for retesting. Students may not request retesting after classes have started.

VIII. Dual Enrollment Students

Dual Enrollment students (including those who are home-schooled) are required to be assessed for English proficiency or have an approved alternative method of assessment, and must also meet the prerequisite requirement(s) and assessment level(s) for each credit course they enroll in.

IX. Credit for Prior Learning

- A. Montgomery College recognizes the many ways an individual learns and may demonstrate such learning and has established procedures for accepting and awarding college credit for prior learning and subsequent award of advanced standing. This includes, but is not limited to, credit by standardized exam and MC credit by exam.
- B. Credit is awarded for qualifying scores on standardized exams, including:
  - 1. Advanced Placement Tests (AP), with a minimum score of 3.
  - 2. College-Level Examination Program (CLEP), with a minimum score of 50.
  - 3. International Baccalaureate (IB), with a minimum score of 5 on higher-level exams or a minimum score of 5 on standard-level exams combined with the IB diploma.
  - 4. Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education Diploma examination (Cambridge).
- C. MC Credit by Examination allows students to earn credit for a subject in which

they have acquired real-life experience, in accordance with the procedures set forth in College Procedure 53001: Academic Regulations and Standards. Students must be able to demonstrate they have gained knowledge that is comparable to that gained in a specified course. A "CE" following the course title in the official catalog also indicates those courses for which "credit by examination" is offered.

- D. Additional guidance including limits to maximum credit that may be earned in lieu of direct instruction at Montgomery College can be found in 53001: Academic Regulations and Standards.

X. Information Maintained Online

The Office of Academic Affairs will maintain and publish the following information on the College site:

- A. A complete list of all approved measures of assessment, together with any relevant expiration or lifecycle policies.
- B. The procedures for retesting.
- C. A list of qualifying scores on standardized exams, minimum qualifying scores, Montgomery College equivalencies, any expiration dates, and processes for requesting credit for prior learning.
- D. A list of courses which offer MC Credit by Examination ("CE").

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Administrative Approval: July 19, 1982; December 6, 1982; May 16, 1988; July 18, 1994; July 1, 1995; March 4, 1996; August 23, 1999; January 31, 2002; October 8, 2002; August 11, 2003; Administrative Correction February 12, 2008; August 13, 2010; June 24, 2013; June 17, 2016; May 20, 2025.