

# FAST FACTS

All Ohio public colleges and universities will offer pathways in mathematics that help students succeed, increase the percentage of students completing degree programs and promote the effective transfer of credits for students moving from one institution to another.

## Remediation-Free Standards

*Ohio public institutions expand array of common assessments to determine if students meet standards*

The numbers are staggering. Nearly one-third of freshmen in Ohio's public colleges and universities are not ready for college coursework. Typically, they begin by taking remedial classes in mathematics or English to prepare for college-level coursework. And one in 10 incoming freshmen is required to take both a remedial mathematics **and** remedial English class.<sup>1</sup>

Exacerbating the problem, our longstanding approaches to providing remedial support for these students have fallen short. As Complete College America (CCA) reports, for too many students, traditional developmental courses serve as a "bridge to nowhere." Nationally, 1.7 million beginning students each year take remedial courses, but most of them will never graduate. In Ohio, only 35 percent of students who take a remedial course graduate in six years, compared to 56 percent of all students.<sup>2</sup>

To assure consistency in college readiness determinations and course placement practices statewide, Ohio lawmakers directed the leaders of the state's public colleges and universities to establish the *Uniform Statewide Standards for Remediation-Free Status* along with related assessment threshold scores. In 2012, the institutional leaders agreed to a common set of standards and related assessment scores in mathematics, science, reading and writing, regardless of an institution's admissions selectivity.

### **College Readiness Assessments Expanded**

To assure currency of the assessments used to determine college readiness in Ohio, late in 2015 the Inter-University Council (IUC) provosts and Ohio Association of Community Colleges (OACC) chief academic officers directed a faculty panel to (1) identify existing large-scale standardized assessments used by Ohio's public institutions to determine college readiness as defined by the state's *Uniform Statewide Standards for Remediation-Free Status*; (2) evaluate the predictive validity of the identified assessments as determined by student success in courses subsequent to gateway courses; (3) evaluate the revised recommended college readiness score for the ACT Reading assessment and determine if the cut score for students earning Remediation-Free Status should be adjusted; and (4) recommend the array of large-scale standardized assessments to be used to determine college readiness.

*REMEDATION-FREE STANDARDS, continued on back page*

*From Ohio Revised Code Section 3345.061(F)*

Not later than December 31, 2012, the presidents, or equivalent position, of all state institutions of higher education, or their designees, jointly shall establish uniform statewide standards in mathematics, science, reading, and writing each student enrolled in a state institution of higher education must meet to be considered in remediation-free status. The presidents also shall establish assessments, if they deem necessary, to determine if a student meets the standards adopted under this division. Each institution is responsible for assessing the needs of its enrolled students in the manner adopted by the presidents. The board of trustees or managing authority of each state institution of higher education shall adopt the remediation-free status standards, and any related assessments, into the institution's policies. The chancellor shall assist in coordinating the work of the presidents under this division.

<sup>1</sup> Ohio Department of Education and Ohio Department of Higher Education (December 2015). Ohio Remediation Report. See [https://www.ohiohighered.org/sites/ohiohighered.org/files/uploads/reports/2015-Ohio-Remediation-Report\\_FINAL\\_123015.pdf](https://www.ohiohighered.org/sites/ohiohighered.org/files/uploads/reports/2015-Ohio-Remediation-Report_FINAL_123015.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Cited in Churchill, A. (2013). "Ohio's college remediation rate crisis – and what can be done." Thomas B. Fordham Institute

## How the faculty panel completed its work . . .

In fulfilling its charge, the 2015-2016 faculty panel:

- gathered information from Ohio public colleges and universities regarding institutional placement practices and large-scale standardized assessment utilization;
- evaluated the success of students placed using large-scale standardized assessments not currently identified in the *Ohio Statewide Uniform Standards for Remediation-Free Status*;
- evaluated the success of Ohio students who presented with ACT scores of 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23, respectively; and
- developed recommendations for assessments to be added to the *Uniform Statewide Standards for Remediation-Free Status* document as reported here.

### REMEDATION-FREE STANDARDS, continued from front page

The 2015-2016 review was prompted by multiple factors including the following: Ohio institutions' growing utilization of an array of assessments for placement purposes; the change in the national benchmark for college readiness on the ACT Reading exam; and the decision by ACT to eliminate its COMPASS assessment by the end of 2016.

Based on the faculty panel's work, the IUC provosts and OACC chief academic officers presented their recommendations for assessments to be added to the *Uniform Statewide Standards for Remediation-Free Status* in June 2016.

Their recommendations included the following:

- Remove the COMPASS Assessment for both English and Mathematics
- Increase the ACT Reading Sub-Score to  $\geq 22$  (previously  $\geq 21$ )
- Remove the Accuplacer Elementary Algebra Assessment while retaining the Accuplacer College-Level Mathematics Assessment
- Add the MapleSoft T.A. for Mathematics only, with a required score  $\geq 50\%$  correct responses
- Add the ALEKS for Mathematics only, with a required score  $\geq 46$
- Add the PlaceU (WebAssign) for Mathematics, with a required score  $\geq 18$

The university and college leaders also recommended that the remediation-free standards undergo another review in 2017 to consider additional recommendations, including but not limited to the potential for developing an Ohio Mathematics Assessment to determine readiness for all credit-bearing gateway mathematics courses, given the constraint of existing large-scale standardized assessments in evaluating readiness for courses other than college algebra.

In May 2016, the IUC and OACC presidents adopted the 2015-2016 recommended changes for implementation in the 2016-2017 academic year. There is no statutory deadline for approval of the recommendations by institutions' boards of trustees. However, each institution is responsible for assessing the needs of its enrolled students in the manner adopted by the presidents. Also, the board of trustees or managing authority of each state institution of higher education is required to adopt the remediation-free standards – and any related assessments – into the institution's policies.

The remediation-free standards and thresholds are **not** intended to replace college and university admissions policies; any admitted student who has earned remediation-free status in a subject will be eligible to enroll in a college credit-bearing course in that subject. However, institutions may still require placement examinations to determine the entering course that provides a student the best opportunity to succeed in her/his program of study.

