MEMORANDUM

Date: August 16, 2010

To: Provosts/Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs
   Vice Presidents for Student Affairs

From: Allison G. Jones
       Assistant Vice Chancellor

Subject: EPT/ELM Placement Test Requirements and Exemptions

EPT/ELM Placement Test Requirements and Exemptions

The California State University (CSU) requires all entering first-time freshmen to be assessed in English and mathematics prior to enrollment. The English Placement Test (EPT) and Entry Level Mathematics (ELM) Examination are designed to determine appropriate entry level skills for English language and mathematical computation. Therefore, the EPT/ELM placement tests may not be used to determine any student’s admission eligibility.

The EPT/ELM can be used only to determine whether students are prepared for placement into entry-level, credit-bearing coursework or into remedial classes. Since these placement tests are required for admitted students who are not otherwise exempt, campuses may not rescind admission should they fail to take these tests. However, campuses are permitted to prevent students from enrolling in classes until each of the tests is taken or until evidence of an exemption is provided.

EPT Proficiency Score Reset to 147 Effective Summer/Fall 2011

The English Placement Test (EPT) is designed to assess the level of reading and writing skills of students entering the California State University. According to Executive Order 665, the CSU EPT must be completed by all non-exempt entering undergraduates prior to enrollment in any course, including remedial courses.

Upon the recommendation of the California State University English Council, the EPT Development Committee, and the Early Start Task Force, the proficiency score on the EPT will be reset from 151 to 147 effective for matriculated students enrolling in summer/fall 2011. Comparable proficiency scores on the SAT and ACT have been reset to correspond to the proficiency score of 147 on the EPT. Exemptions from the EPT are granted only to those who present proof of one of the following (the new proficiency score levels for the EPT, SAT, and ACT are reflected):
• Students who score 147 or above on the EPT will be placed in college-level composition classes
• A score of 500 or above on the critical reading section of the College Board SAT Reasoning Test
• A score of 22 or above on the American College Testing (ACT) English Test
• A score of 3 or above on either the Language and Composition or Composition and Literature examination of the College Board Scholastic Advanced Placement Program
• Completion and transfer to CSU of the credits for a college course that satisfies the CSU General Education requirement in English Composition, provided such a course was completed with a grade of C or better
• A score of “Exempt” or “Ready for college-level English courses” on the CSU Early Assessment Program (EAP) taken along with the English Language Arts California Standard Test in grade 11

Students who score 147 and above on the EPT shall now be placed in General Education (GE) level composition classes based on the practice that has evolved on many CSU campuses over the last decade and on evidence from the 2008 Educational Testing Service (ETS) validity study of the EPT, which confirmed that students scoring 147 or above generally succeed in GE level classes. It is recommended that campuses consider continuing to provide support such as tutoring, writers’ workshops, or “stretch” courses for students scoring between 147 and 150 since such support has contributed to the success of students as demonstrated in the validity study. Students scoring below 147 are measurably less successful, indicating that they continue to need additional coursework in developmental reading and writing.

As the placement test itself has not changed, the proficiency in English of any first-time freshman for Fall 2011 who may have taken earlier administrations of the EPT, SAT, or ACT will be determined on these new proficiency scores rather than the previous higher proficiency requirements.

**Entry Level Mathematics (ELM) Examination Proficiency Score**

The Entry Level Mathematics (ELM) Examination is designed to assess and measure the level of mathematics skills acquired through three years of rigorous college preparatory mathematics coursework (Algebra I and II, and Geometry) of students entering the California State University (CSU). The CSU ELM must be completed by all non-exempt entering undergraduates prior to enrollment in any course, including remedial courses. Students who score 50 or above on the ELM will be placed in college-level mathematics classes.

Executive Order 1048, Early Start, June 11, 2010, asked the Mathematics Council and ELM Development Committee to review the ELM proficiency score and to recommend whether the ELM proficiency score should be reset by November 2010. If it is determined that the ELM proficiency score should be reset, comparable proficiency scores on the SAT and ACT will be reset to correspond to the proficiency scores established for the ELM.

Therefore, until notified otherwise, the existing exemptions from the ELM will continue to be granted to those students who present proof of one of the following:
• A score of 550 or above on the mathematics section of the College Board SAT Reasoning Test
• A score of 550 or above on a College Board SAT Subject Test in Mathematics (level 1 or level 2)
• A score of 23 or above on the American College Testing (ACT) Mathematics Test
• A score of 3 or above on the College Board Advanced Placement Calculus AB or Calculus BC exam
• A score of 3 or above on the College Board Advanced Placement Statistics examination
• Completion and transfer to CSU of a college course that satisfies the requirement in Quantitative Reasoning, provided such a course was completed with a grade of C or better
• A score of “Exempt” or “Ready for college-level Mathematics courses” on the CSU Early Assessment Program (EAP), taken in grade 11 in conjunction with the CST in Summative High School Mathematics or Algebra II
• A score of “Conditionally ready for college-level Mathematics courses” or “Conditional” on the CSU Early Assessment Program (EAP) taken in grade 11 along with the California Standards Test in Summative High School Mathematics or Algebra II, provided successful completion of a CSU-approved 12th grade math course that require Algebra II as a prerequisite

CSU campuses are requested to disseminate the above information in all its appropriate media, e.g., campus catalogs, campus website, admission and placement notification letters and information brochures, etc. The same information will also be published in all print and online publications managed by the Chancellor’s Office as well as at the CSU Mentor and Educational Testing Service (ETS) websites.

Questions concerning the requirements and/or exemptions on the EPT and ELM tests should be directed to Mr. Eric Forbes at (562) 951-4726 or eforbes@calstate.edu.

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