

UC Board of Admissions and Relations with Schools (BOARS)

Statement on Basic Math for All Admitted UC Students

July 2013

All students admitted to the University of California, whether as freshmen or as transfer students, must demonstrate a minimal level of mathematical competence. For freshman applicants, demonstration of this minimal level of competence entails successfully passing three high school courses that, according to Senate Regulation 424.3.c, “must include the topics covered in elementary and advanced algebra and two- and three-dimensional geometry.”¹ The Mathematics section of the online “A-G Guide”² makes explicit reference to both the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics³ (CCSSM) and the Intersegmental Committee of Academic Senates (ICAS) “Statement on Competencies in Mathematics Expected of Entering College Students”.⁴ The most recent version of the ICAS mathematical competency statement makes clear the close alignment between it and the CCSSM. Both define the mathematics that all students should study in order to be college ready.

The ICAS “Statement of Competencies in Mathematics Expected of Entering College Students” has been jointly developed and adopted by all three segments of public higher education in California. Given the agreement between the ICAS statement and the basic elements of the CCSSM for high school⁵, BOARS believes that the basic mathematics of the CCSSM can appropriately be used to define the minimal level of mathematical competence that all incoming UC students should demonstrate.

The Common Core State Standards were adopted by the state of California in 2010, and K-12 schools are in the process of adjusting their curriculum and teaching practices to begin implementing Common Core as of the 2014-15 school year. Similarly, California community colleges (CCCs) have not yet fully developed math sequences that are aligned with the CCSSM. Rather, most CCCs continue to recommend the traditional Elementary Algebra – Intermediate Algebra sequence for students who have not demonstrated competence in high school mathematics.

It is current UC policy is that any transferable math or statistics course that may count toward the quantitative reasoning breadth requirement must have Intermediate Algebra or its equivalent⁶ as an explicit prerequisite. This prerequisite requirement allows Intermediate Algebra to serve as a proxy for the basic level of mathematical competence expected of all students attending UC.

¹ <http://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu/manual/rpart2.html#r424>

² <http://www.ucop.edu/aguide/a-g-requirements/c-mathematics/index.html>

³ <http://www.corestandards.org/Math>

⁴ <http://icas-ca.org/competencies-in-mathematics>

⁵ The CCSSM states that “The high school standards specify the mathematics that all students should study in order to be college and career ready. Additional mathematics that students should learn in order to take advanced courses such as calculus, advanced statistics, or discrete mathematics is indicated by (+).” The phrases “basic mathematics” and “college-ready content standards” in this document refers to those content standards that are not indicated by a (+).

⁶ http://info.assist.org/pdf/assist/2012_uc_tca_letter.pdf

