

Institutional Analysis, Assessment & Reporting

What Percentage of New Freshmen Have Test Scores that Indicate They Need Developmental Work in Math and/or English?¹ Research Report 2006-02

Marcia J. Belcheir, PhD.
Associate Director

Boise State University
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Students who are under the age of 21 and wish to attend Boise State University must submit test scores as part of the application process. These scores are first used to determine admissions and then used to place students in their first English and mathematics courses. In order to enroll in a credit-bearing English course as their first English course (e.g., ENGL 101), students must score above 17 on the ACT English, 440 on the SAT Verbal, or 67 on the Compass Writing tests. In order to enroll directly in a mathematics course that will satisfy graduation requirements (e.g., MATH 124), students must obtain a score of at least 19 on ACT Mathematics, 460 on SAT Quantitative, or 45 on the Compass Algebra test.

Using Fall 2003 and Fall 2004 new freshmen as our group of interest, we found that 85% had passing scores in English and 66% had passing scores in math. A total of 579 freshmen or 15% needed to begin in ENGL 90. In mathematics, 1,188 needed to begin in MATH 15, 25, or 108. (Additional students without test scores will also place themselves in remedial courses.)

If we limit the group to only students who were 19 or younger (N=2667), we found an improvement in pass rates. For the just-out-of-high-school group, 87% met the English requirement and 71% met the math requirement.

¹ Reference: Remedial for FA 03 and FA04 Frosh.sas