PLACEMENT TESTING

It is the intent of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board that Texas public institutions of higher education use the flexibility and responsibility granted under the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) rules to improve individualized programs to ensure the success of students in higher education. Effective with the Fall 2013 semester, all public colleges and universities shall assess the academic skills of each entering undergraduate student prior to enrollment of the student.

Beginning Fall 2013, the Student Assessment Center administers the New TSI Assessment Exam throughout the year. Information on test dates, registration deadlines, and general information is available upon request and/or can be found at http://www.southtexascollege.edu/go/tsi.

Call 1-800-742-7822 for information or contact the Student Assessment Center at the Pecan Campus: 956-872-3484, Mid-Valley Campus: 956-447-6602, or Starr County Campus: 956-488-6976 for more information or visit the web site at http://studentservices.southtexascollege.edu/testing/index.html.

Who Must Take the TSI Assessment Exam?

As of the Fall 2013 semester, all students who plan to enroll at South Texas College (STC) and students in high school enrolling in a college-level course MUST take the TSI Assessment Exam before enrolling in any college-level credit coursework.

Who Does Not Have to Take the TSI Assessment Exam?

• A student who has previously attended any institution and has been determined to have met readiness standards by that institution.

• Students who have achieved a sufficiently high score on ACT, SAT, TAAS/TAKS, STAAR End of Course Exams (EOC), or approved College Preparatory Courses in Mathematics and ELA. ACT, SAT, TAAS/TAKS, and STAAR EOC scores may be no more than five (5) years from the date of testing, completion of TSTC approved College Preparatory courses must be within two (2) year of high school graduation. See Placement Scale.

• Students who are enrolled in a certificate program of one-year or less (42 or fewer semester credit hours or the equivalent) unless required for a prerequisite.

• Students who have graduated with an associate’s or baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education.

• Transfer students from an accredited institution of higher education who have earned a “C” or better in a corresponding course (See Developmental Education Plan Procedures Guide).

• A student who on or after August 1, 1990, was honorably discharged, retired, or released from active duty as a member of the armed forces sent the United States or the Texas National Guard.

A student who is serving on active duty as a member of the armed forces of the United States, the Texas National Guard, or as a member of a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States and has been serving for at least three years preceding enrollment.

A student who successfully completes a college preparatory course under Texas Education Code §28.014 is exempt for a period of twenty four (24) months from the date of high school graduation with respect to the content area of the course. The student must enroll in the student’s first college level course in the exempted content area in the students first year of enrollment in an institution of higher education. This exemption applies only at the institution of higher education that partners with the school district in which the student is enrolled to provide the course. Additionally, an institution of higher education may enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with a partnering institution of higher education to accept the exemption for the college preparatory course.

When Must a Student Take the TSI Assessment Exam?

All students enrolling in credit programs at STC for the first time in the Fall 2013 and thereafter, must have scores from the New TSI Assessment instrument approved by the Texas Higher Education College Board by the First Class Day.

TSI Pre-Assessment Activity Requirement

THECB Rule 4.55 Assessment and Placement, section (B), requires all institutions offering the TSI assessment to provide students a pre-assessment activity(ies). South Texas College offers an online pre-assessment module that is available for students at www.onlineregistration.net/STC-pa. After completing the online module, students can print their Pre-Assessment completion page to show proof of completing their Pre-Assessment Activity.

The Pre-Assessment Activity is required for all students testing for the very first time. Students who have previously tested for TSI are not required to redo the Pre-Assessment Activity, but are highly encouraged to do so. Students who are testing for the very first time are required to submit proof of completion. Failure to do so may require the student to not be admitted or to reschedule until proof of completion.

Registration for the TSI Assessment Exam

To register for the TSI Assessment Exam, a student must fill out an STC Admissions form prior to the test administration. Once an Admissions form has been processed, the student may reserve a test date on-line through Marketplace at https://secure.touchnet.com/C20193_ustores/web/ and choose to test for TSI Assessment Exam. The TSI Assessment Exam is offered by appointment only via Market Place.

Please contact the Student Assessment Centers (Pecan: 956-872-3484, Mid-Valley: 956-447-6602, Starr: 956-488-6976) for more information.

Texas Success Initiative Test Content

TSI Mathematics and Statistics Test

The TSI Mathematics Test is a multiple-choice assessment with four basic content areas, or ‘strands’. Scores range from 310 to 390. Shown below are brief descriptions of each of the four strands.

Elementary Algebra and Functions

(6 items on the Placement Test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
The TSI Writing Test is an assessment that contains a multiple-choice section and an essay section. The multiple-choice section has four strands. Scores range from 310 to 390. Shown below are brief descriptions of each of the four strands.

**Intermediate Algebra and Functions**
(9 items on the placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Quadratic and other polynomial expressions, equations, and functions
- Expressions, equations, and functions involving powers, roots, and radicals
- Rational and exponential expressions, equations, and functions

**Geometry and Measurement**
(2 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Plane geometry
- Transformations and symmetry
- Measurement (linear, area, three-dimensional)
- Modeling and applications

**Data Analysis, Statistics and Probability**
(3 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Interpreting categorical and quantitative data
- Statistical measures
- Probabilistic reasoning

**TSI Writing Test**
The TSI Writing Test is an assessment that contains a multiple-choice section and an essay section. The multiple-choice section has four strands. Scores range from 310 to 390. Shown below are brief descriptions of each of the four strands.

**Placement Testing**

- Linear equations, inequalities, and systems
- Algebraic expressions and equations (other than linear)
- Word problems and applications

**Sentence Structure**
(5 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- All items in this category will be discrete items
- Items will cover topics such as subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, and verb tense.

**Agreement**
(3 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Items will cover topics such as subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, and verb tense.

**Intermediate Algebra and Functions**
(9 items on the placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)

**Essay Revision**
(8 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Items will ask students to revise parts of the essay to improve coherence, organization, word choice, rhetorical effectiveness, and use of evidence.

**Inferences in a Text or Texts**
(8 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Items will ask students to identify an appropriate inference about a single passage.
- Some items will require students to synthesize ideas by making a connection or comparison between two passages.

**Main Idea and Supporting Details**
(5 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Items will ask students to identify the main idea of a passage or comprehend explicit textual information in the passage.

**Literary Analysis**
(4 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- All items in this category will be passage-based items.
- Items will ask students to identify the main idea, as well as follow conventions of Standard English. The essay is also untimed, per THECB decision.

**TSI Reading Test**
The TSI Reading Test is a multiple-choice assessment with four basic strands. Scores range from 310 to 390. Shown below are brief descriptions of each of the four strands.

**Data Analysis, Statistics and Probability**
(3 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Interpreting categorical and quantitative data
- Statistical measures
- Probabilistic reasoning

**TSI Writing Test**
The TSI Writing Test is an assessment that contains a multiple-choice section and an essay section. The multiple-choice section has four strands. Scores range from 310 to 390. Shown below are brief descriptions of each of the four strands.

**Agreement**
(3 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Items will cover topics such as subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, and verb tense.

**Sentence Structure**
(5 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Items will cover topics such as subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, and verb tense.

**TSI Reading Test**
The TSI Reading Test is a multiple-choice assessment with four basic strands. Scores range from 310 to 390. Shown below are brief descriptions of each of the four strands.

**Main Idea and Supporting Details**
(5 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Items will ask students to identify the main idea of a passage or comprehend explicit textual information in the passage.

**Literary Analysis**
(4 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Items will ask students to identify the main idea of a passage or comprehend explicit textual information in the passage.

**TSI Writing Test**
The TSI Writing Test is an assessment that contains a multiple-choice section and an essay section. The multiple-choice section has four strands. Scores range from 310 to 390. Shown below are brief descriptions of each of the four strands.

**Data Analysis, Statistics and Probability**
(3 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Interpreting categorical and quantitative data
- Statistical measures
- Probabilistic reasoning

**TSI Writing Test**
The TSI Writing Test is an assessment that contains a multiple-choice section and an essay section. The multiple-choice section has four strands. Scores range from 310 to 390. Shown below are brief descriptions of each of the four strands.

**Agreement**
(3 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Items will cover topics such as subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, and verb tense.

**Sentence Structure**
(5 items on placement test; 12 items on diagnostic test)
- Items will cover topics such as subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement, and verb tense.
Feedback is provided on the following six dimensions

• Purpose and Focus
  The extent to which the writer presents information in a unified and coherent manner, clearly addressing the issue.

• Organization and Structure
  The extent to which the writer orders and connects ideas.

• Development and Support
  The extent to which the writer develops and supports ideas.

• Sentence Variety and Style
  The extent to which the writer crafts sentences and paragraphs demonstrating control of vocabulary, voice, and structure.

• Mechanical Conventions
  The extent to which the writer expresses ideas using standard English.

• Critical Thinking
  The extent to which the writer communicates a point of view and demonstrates reasoned relationships among ideas.

Payment for the TSI Assessment Exam

The TSI ASSESSMENT Exam fee is $29 for all three sections; or $10 for one section or $20 for two sections plus a $25 Reservation Fee. Registration for this exam is now done on-line through Student Marketplace https://secure.touchnet.com/C20193_ustores/web/

Please contact the Student Assessment Center (Pecan: 956-872-3484, Mid-Valley: 956-447-6602, Starr: 956-488-6976) for more information.

Mandatory Participation

Students required to take Developmental courses including College Success must attend scheduled classes.

If they drop or are dropped for non-attendance by their instructors, they are identified by the office of Admissions as non-compliant. Students who fail to comply with any of the following policies and procedures may be withdrawn from all of their classes and will not earn any college credit hours for the semester.

Dropping or Withdrawing from Developmental Course Work

Students under TSI requirements who have been assigned developmental courses due to initial placement Exam may not drop these courses.

Withdrawal from a developmental course must be associated only with withdrawal from the institution.