CLEP at CSU: A Student-Centered Partnership
CSU and CLEP
The Academic Senate of California State University has unanimously endorsed a policy providing guidelines for the use of CLEP examinations as the basis for awarding general education credit. This policy applies to CSU students and to those planning to transfer to a CSU campus.

**Key dates:**

- **2/27/10** Proposed updates to CSU's Coded Memorandum for test acceptances was sent for review and feedback to statewide groups of faculty and staff involved in admissions, records, and articulation.
- **4/8/10** GEAC voted to endorse the memorandum and forwarded it to the full academic senate.
- **5/7/10** Senate plenary voted to accept the recommendations.
Credit-granting scores
• Qualifying credit-granting scores follow American Council of Education (ACE) Guidelines, with a passing score of 50 for each exam.
• CLEP foreign language exams allow students to earn more units with higher scores, indicating mastery of language proficiency equal to four-semester courses.

Using CLEP to grant CSU credit
• Most exams fulfill CSU General Education Breadth requirements.
• Institutions may not award less credit than described in the CSU coded memorandum.
• Each California State University campus determines how to apply CLEP scores toward credit in the major and campus GE.
• Credit-by-examination program serving a diverse group of students, including adults, non-traditional learners, and military service members
• More than seven million exams taken since 1967
• 1,600+ colleges administer CLEP
• 211,000 exams administered in 2009–10, including 76,500 administered to military service members
• Exam fee = $77.00
33 CLEP Examinations

**History and Social Sciences**
- American Government
- History of the United States I
- History of the United States II
- Human Growth and Development
- Introduction to Educational Psychology
- Principles of Macroeconomics
- Principles of Microeconomics
- Introductory Psychology
- Introductory Sociology
- Social Sciences and History
- Western Civilization I
- Western Civilization II

**Composition and Literature**
- American Literature
- Analyzing and Interpreting Literature
- College Composition
- College Composition Modular
- English Literature
- Humanities

**Science and Mathematics**
- Calculus
- College Algebra
- Precalculus
- College Mathematics
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Natural Sciences

**Business**
- Information Systems and Computer Applications
- Principles of Management
- Financial Accounting
- Introductory Business Law
- Principles of Marketing

**Foreign Languages**
- French Language
- German Language
- Spanish Language
New CLEP Composition Exams

College Composition
College Composition Modular

These exams are not included in the new CSU policy; CSU will review the new composition exams in 2010-11.

www.collegeboard.com/clepcomposition
About the CLEP Exams

Structure
- 33 computer-based exams.
- Mostly multiple-choice, essays, and listening sections for foreign languages
- Most are approximately 90 minutes in length.

Scoring
- “Rights-only” scoring (no penalty for wrong answers).
- Immediate score reports (except exams with essays).
- Scores based on American Council of Education (ACE) recommendations for credit-granting.

Development
- More than 600 faculty contribute to the development of and standard-setting for CLEP examinations.
- Standing faculty committees oversee ongoing test development, shape content, review data, set exam policies.
- Opportunities to participate in College Board ACES Placement Validity studies.
What does the recommended credit-granting score of 50 represent?

- A scaled score of 50 is used as the passing score—equivalent to a C in the comparable course—for all CLEP exams.
- Each exam undergoes a standard-setting study by a panel of college faculty who teach the equivalent course.
- The panel determines the skills and knowledge that a typical C student can demonstrate upon completing the comparable course. Then each exam question is evaluated for difficulty and relevance in light of that typical student’s abilities.
- CLEP scaled score range is 20-80. The final credit-granting score recommended by the panel is converted to a scaled score of 50.
California Faculty Involvement

Faculty serving on the CLEP exam development committees represent public and private universities and community colleges nationwide.

California faculty currently serving on CLEP committees:
• Peter Tannenbaum, Fresno State (College Math)
• David Carlson, CSU San Bernardino (American Literature)
• Marilyn Elkins, Cal State LA (College Composition)
• Carolyn Brown, University of San Francisco (Literature)
• Frank Bauerle, UC Santa Cruz (College Math)
CLEP Students
Who Takes CLEP?

- First-year students looking to accelerate their college path
- Adults returning to college
- Military service members – *CLEP exams are free*
- Veterans – *Depending on benefits, exam fees can be reimbursed*
- Students who are fluent in Spanish, French, or German
- Juniors or seniors who have not met lower-division requirements
- Transfer students
- Students struggling to finance their educations
- Home-schooled students
- International students who need to translate their overseas credit
2008 Survey of National Test Takers

45% have taken an online course

70% are working full- or part-time

45% are first-generation college students
Age Group
Exams Administered to National Candidates, 2009-10

Under 18, 8%
18-22, 38%
23-29, 22%
30-35, 11%
36 and older, 21%
Education Level
Exams Administered to National Candidates, 2009-10

- College grad, 12%
- High school grad, 9%
- College freshman, 14%
- College sophomore, 16%
- College junior, 11%
- College senior, 27%
- High school student, 11%
Ethnicity
Exams Administered to National Candidates, 2009-10

- White, 63%
- Latino, 20%
- Black/Afr Am, 8%
- Asian/Asian Am/Pac Isl, 5%
- Native Am/Am Ind, 1%
- Other, 4%
- Not reported, 1%
- Other, 4%

CollegeBoard
CLEP
Highest Volume CLEP Exams

National CBT, 2009-10

- Spanish: 26,500
- Analyzing & Interpreting Lit: 9,300
- English Comp w/ Essay: 7,600
- College Algebra: 7,700
- Introductory Sociology: 6,600
Connecting Students to CLEP on Your Campus

- Faculty & Advisers
- Test Center
- Admissions Office
- Registrar’s Office
- Adult &/or Veterans Office

Students
## Communicating the CLEP Opportunity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty &amp; Advisers</strong></td>
<td>• Advise students about including CLEP in their academic plan for satisfying general education and CSU transfer program requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Test Center</strong></td>
<td>• Provide information to students about the CLEP registration process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Test Center</strong></td>
<td>• Administer CLEP exams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Registrars</strong></td>
<td>• Receive CLEP scores; ensure that credit is applied to student transcripts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Admissions Office</strong></td>
<td>• Inform prospective and incoming students about CLEP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adult &amp;/or Veterans Office</strong></td>
<td>• Advise students about how CLEP fits in their degree programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Let veterans know that they may be reimbursed for CLEP exam fees.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Advising Students about CLEP

Connect your students to CLEP by advising them to follow these steps:

1. Review CSU’s credit-by-exam policy.
2. Talk to your adviser to determine how CLEP will fit into your degree program.
3. Determine which exam(s) to take.
4. Locate a CLEP test center by visiting: www.collegeboard.com/cleptestcenters
5. Schedule an appointment with the test center.
6. Prepare/review for the exam.
7. Take the exam.
## Getting the Word Out About CLEP

### Website
- Post CLEP policy on your website.
- Admissions
- Transfer
- Prospective students
- Test center
- Adult and veteran services
- Financial Aid

### Publications
- Make sure up to date credit policy is in your catalog and other publications for students and parents.

### Press
- Use a CLEP template to create a press release about CLEP opportunities and the new exams information

### Events
- Include CLEP policy in new student orientation packets.
- Provide policy info at events for transfer students.
- Add CLEP and test center information in your Blackboard messaging

### Organizations
- Inform student organizations and veteran groups about your CLEP policy.
CLEP Services for Students and Colleges

- CLEP website for professionals: professionals.collegeboard.com/clep
  - Information on test development, administering CLEP exams, advising students, self-paced CLEP 101 tutorials

- CLEP website for students: www.collegeboard.com/clep
  - Exam descriptions, test prep information, test center search, transcript request forms

- Order form for free publications for students: www.collegeboard.com/clepresources
CLEP Test Prep for Students

• CLEP prep center provides links to free online resources and textbook suggestions
• CLEP Official Study Guide, covering all 33 exams
• Downloadable study guides for each exam

www.collegeboard.com/clepprep
Benefits of CLEP
CLEP Makes a Difference to Students

91% said CLEP made a difference in their ability to complete their degrees

70% said CLEP made a difference in their ability to finance their degrees

2004 Survey of Students
Degree Completion: An Attainable Goal

CAEL/Lumina Study (March 2010): Fueling the Race to Postsecondary Success

Study of 48 institutions about prior learning assessment (2001-2008; 25 and above)

Persistence:
Completed 80 or more credits within 7 years
- PLA Student: 56%
- Non-PLA Student: 22%

Time to degree (PLA vs. Non-PLA)
- Bachelor’s Degree: Saved 2.5 to 10.1 months to attain degree
- Assoc. Degree: Saved 1.5 to 4.5 months to attain degree

Degree Attainment within 7 years
- PLA Student: 56% (43% Bachelors; 13% Assoc.)
- Non-PLA Student: 21% (15% Bachelors; 6% Assoc)
2010 study of Florida public institutions: preliminary results for CLEP students

- CLEP students graduate in less time than non-CLEP students.
- CLEP students have higher GPAs than non-CLEP students.
- Students earning credit through CLEP perform better in subsequent English courses than non-CLEP students.
Benefits of CLEP at CSU

Students

• **Opportunity:** Making the difference for access and persistence
• **Accelerate:** Students can earn 3-12 college credits for satisfactory exam scores
• **Save money:** Provides students a cost-saving financial incentive
• **Degree completion:** Maintain academic momentum and progress to degree completion.

Faculty/Staff

• **Rigor and relevance:** Faculty involvement in the test development process ensure that CLEP provides a reliable and valid measurement of student knowledge.
• **Success:** CLEP students perform as well as or better than their peers in subsequent course work.
• **Retention:** By accurately placing prepared, engaged, and motivated students, CLEP increases retention rates.
Contact

Chantel Reynolds
Senior Assessment Manager
creynolds@collegeboard.org
512.636.1436

CLEP Email: clep@collegeboard.org