

BOARD OF REGENTS
BRIEFING PAPER
Placement Policy – Continuous Enrollment

BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

The Board’s NSHE Placement Policy sets forth the guidelines for placement of students into remedial or college-level gateway mathematics and English courses (Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 1 of the *Handbook*). To ensure students complete these gateway courses as early as possible, the policy requires that all degree-seeking students must be continuously enrolled in appropriate mathematics and English courses until the institutional core curriculum mathematics and English requirements are completed. In addition, the policy provides an exemption from placement into remedial courses for students who meet college-ready benchmarks on the ACT, SAT and similar exams (as specified in the policy) and who remain continuously enrolled in an English course and a mathematics course in their senior year of high school unless an exception is approved on a case by case basis by an NSHE institution.

In working to fully implement this policy over the past year, institutions raised some questions with regard to continuous enrollment requirements and their ability to make decisions within the spirit of the policy designed to promote student success:

1. **Until Completion of Core Curriculum** – In some cases, it is not feasible for students to remain continuously enrolled in mathematics or English until the core curriculum is completed. Some students, for example, enter NSHE institutions in the Fall semester with one or more credits in mathematics or English and the subsequent course required is not offered until the Spring semester. It is not practical for these students to remain continuously enrolled.

System staff recommends revising the policy to allow institutions to authorize exceptions to this requirement if the exception does not affect the student’s ability to complete the gateway course within the first academic year.

2. **Senior Year of High School** – While an exception is included *on a case by case basis* to the requirement for continuous enrollment in mathematics and English in the senior of high school to guarantee the exemption from remediation, institutions would like the flexibility to provide such exceptions generally, rather than requiring an individual review of each student’s case. Situations in which this may apply include – but are not limited to – categories of students such as those who receive higher scores on the ACT or SAT exam or who have achieved a certain minimum GPA in high school.

System staff recommends removing the “on a case by case basis” phrase to allow institutions more flexibility while still encouraging high schools students to remain enrolled in mathematics and English in their senior year.

SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:

Amend Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 1 of the *Handbook* to remove the “on a case by case basis” language with regard to the requirement to remain continuously enrolled in an English course and a mathematics course in his or her senior year of high school unless an exception is approved. In addition, allow institutions to authorize exceptions to the requirement for continuous enrollment until core curriculum mathematics and English requirements are completed if the exception does not affect the student’s ability to complete the gateway course within the first academic year. (See the attached policy proposal.)

IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):

This policy revision is recommended through the work of the NSHE Gateway Course Success Implementation Teams.

BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

- The policy revisions retain the goals of the current policy to promote student success by staying continuously enrolled in mathematics and English both in their senior year of high school and until their core requirements in these are completed at NSHE institutions, while providing institutions the flexibility to address the exceptional circumstances that may come up. Such flexibility benefits the students and staff at the institutions working to implement Board policy effectively.

POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

None have been presented.

ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:

None have been presented.

COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:

- Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title #_____ Chapter #_____ Section #_____
 - X Amends Current Board Policy: Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 1
 - Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter #_____ Section #_____
 - Other:_____
 - Fiscal Impact: Yes_____ No X_____
- Explain:_____

POLICY PROPOSAL
TITLE 4, CHAPTER 16, SECTION 1
NSHE Placement Policy – Continuous Enrollment

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

Section 1. NSHE Placement Policy

The placement policies of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) are intended to ensure a foundation of knowledge and competencies that will assist students in successfully pursuing and attaining an academic degree. Students are strongly encouraged to prepare for the rigors of higher education prior to entering the NSHE.

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2. Initial Placement of Students into English and Mathematics Courses.

- a. Exemption from Remedial Instruction. Degree-seeking students who meet or exceed the minimum English or mathematics scores on any one of the college readiness assessments listed below must be placed into a college-level course in that subject and are exempt from being placed into any form of remedial instruction in that subject provided that the student:
 - i. Was continuously enrolled in an English course and a mathematics course in his or her senior year of high school unless an exception is approved [~~on a case-by-case basis by~~] an NSHE institution; and
 - ii. Enrolls in an NSHE institution after high school in any term (summer/fall/winter/spring) during the academic year following high school graduation.

Institutions may use other factors including high school transcript, grade point average, or additional testing to determine the appropriate first college-level course. Institutions are not required to honor initial placement decisions pursuant to this subsection for students who fail to remain continuously enrolled in required mathematics and English courses until the core mathematics and English requirements are completed.

....

3. [~~Unless an institutional exception is made,~~] ***To promote completion of gateway courses within the first academic year***, all degree-seeking students must be continuously enrolled in appropriate mathematics and English courses until the institutional core curriculum mathematics and English requirements are completed. ***Institutions may authorize exceptions to this requirement if the exception does not affect the student's ability to complete the gateway course within the first academic year.***