

TEXAS STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Texas Success Initiative Plan
Effective Fall, 2006

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) prescribes that each institution of higher education shall adopt a developmental education plan to reflect the goals and objectives of the Texas Success Initiative. The Texas State Technical College (TSTC) Plan for the Texas Success Initiative is in effect with the Fall 2006 Term.

1. Provide for quality and accountability in the programs and courses designed to prepare students for collegiate-level studies.

The TSTC Success Initiative (TSI) program is designed to:

- assess students' readiness for post-secondary course work;
- provide appropriate interventions, services, and instructional activities to prepare students for success in college-level courses;
- prepare students to meet required prerequisites for college-level courses in the minimum amount of time possible; and,
- improve students' progress toward completion of degrees and certificates.

TSTC will engage in continuous development and evaluation of the TSI program through a series of performance indicators. These indicators will be tracked on a semester or annual basis as appropriate. Performance indicators will include, but not be limited to:

- the percent of students enrolled in developmental education courses who successfully complete their developmental courses with a passing grade;
- the percent of students assessed below college-level and participating in TSI activities who persist from semester to semester;
- the percent of students who complete TSI activities and pass their first academic college-level course with a grade of C or higher; and,
- the percent of developmental studies faculty who meet and/or exceed the required minimum standards for teaching credentials as specified by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

These performance indicators will be measured by the TSTC System Office and reported annually to the TSTC Management Council. Additional performance indicators may be evaluated, as requested or needed, to further analyze the effectiveness and quality of the developmental education program.

2. Promote improvement in, and the effective delivery of, the developmental education program.

The delivery and success of the TSTC TSI program is contingent on the collaborative and cooperative efforts of various instructional and support offices within and across all TSTC colleges and centers. These offices include but are not limited to Instructional Divisions, Admissions and Registrar, Counseling and Testing, and Institutional Research.

In order to insure consistent delivery of TSI activities, representative faculty and/or staff from each TSTC college will meet regularly to establish consistent, system-wide requirements and guidelines to fully implement the components of the TSTC TSI program. The specific responsibilities of these offices are described below.

Instructional representatives will, at a minimum:

- determine system-wide cut-scores for placement in developmental and core curriculum college-level courses;
- establish appropriate system-wide scores and/or other prerequisites required for advancement through the developmental course sequence;
- identify consistent course objectives and outcomes for developmental studies courses; and,
- develop system-wide consistent standards for any other curriculum activity related to the TSTC TSI program.

Counseling and Testing representatives will, at a minimum:

- assist instructional representatives in the determination of appropriate cut-scores for placement;
- identify and evaluate additional testing and/or assessment instruments or procedures not currently used by TSTC for possible adoption; and,
- establish system-wide standards for consistent and accurate counseling and advising of students.

Admissions and Registrar representatives will, at a minimum:

- develop consistent system-wide procedures for the admission and registration of students in compliance with TSTC TSI requirements.

Institutional Research representatives will, at a minimum:

- develop system-wide specifications for analyzing and reporting students' performance in TSI activities, in developmental education courses, and in subsequent college-level courses.

Other activities supporting the TSTC TSI Program may be developed or considered by college representatives as needs or changing requirements dictate.

3. Comply with State rules for the exemption or exception of certain students from Texas Success Initiative (TSI) requirements.

Each undergraduate student who enters TSTC shall be tested or shall present documentation of prior testing for reading, writing, and mathematics skills before enrolling in any course work. Acceptable testing instruments include any assessment instrument approved by the THECB for purposes of meeting TSI requirements. Students who fail to take the required test will be allowed to enroll only in developmental education courses until they take the examination. Certain students may be exempt from TSI testing requirements; however, these students may not be exempt from local college testing requirements for admission to specific program or enrollment in certain courses.

Exempt Students

Although students in these categories are exempt from TSI state mandated testing, they may be required to complete specific tests at TSTC to meet specific course and/or program requirements.

Students who meet one of the following criteria are exempt from TSI testing requirements. Exemption from TSI testing does not automatically relieve students' responsibility to meet specific course and/or program requisites as dictated by the local TSTC college:

- Present an official college transcript from a Texas regionally accredited institution of higher education indicating graduation with an associate or baccalaureate degree.
- Present an official college transcript from a Texas regionally accredited institution of higher education indicating successful completion of the TSI readiness standards as determined by that institution.
- Present an official college transcript from a regionally accredited private, independent, or out-of-state institution, indicating successful completion of college-level coursework equivalent to TSTC TSI college-level courses.
- Present scores from the ACT, SAT, or TAAS/TAKS instruments which are at or above the level prescribed by the THECB for TSI exemption. ACT or SAT scores used for this purpose are valid for five years after the date taken. TAAS/TAKS scores used for this purpose are valid for three years after the date taken. Current ACT, SAT, and TAAS/TAKS minimum scores for exemption are presented in the table in section 9.
- Present documentation indicating an active duty assignment in the armed forces of the United States, the Texas National Guard, or service in a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States with at least three years service prior to enrollment at TSTC.
- Present documentation indicating honorable discharge, retirement, or release from active duty in the armed forces of the United States, the Texas National Guard or a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States on or after August 1, 1990.
- Present documentation of a previous TASP exemption for:
 1. At least three college-level hours prior to Fall 1989;

2. Deaf students with three or more college-level hours prior to September 1, 1995;
3. High school graduation with 3.5 GPA in Recommended or Advanced Curriculum (effective September 1, 2001 to August 31, 2003);
4. Completion of TASP obligations via provision TEC51.306(u), dyslexia or other related disorders (effective September 1, 1995 to August 31, 2003).

Special Considerations

- Students with disabilities will take a test approved for TSI purposes with appropriate accommodations. Counseling/Testing Center personnel, in consultation with health professionals, will determine the test and appropriate accommodations.
- Non-native English speakers are required to be assessed in reading, writing, and math skills. An alternative test, such as TOEFL may be used to determine the level of English proficiency. Depending upon scores these students will be enrolled in non-credit English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, academic ESL courses, developmental courses, in reading and math, and/or college-level courses as appropriate until such time their English proficiency allows testing on an approved TSI instrument.

4. Provide advising program for students at every level of undergraduate courses and degree options appropriate for the individual student.

TSTC colleges provide a variety of counseling and advising options for students. These options may vary in scope and availability due to local resources. In general, all TSTC colleges offer the following general categories of counseling and advisement:

- Individual Advisement: Students requiring developmental studies will be individually advised regarding the courses necessary to ensure their readiness to perform at the freshman level. Each student will receive an individual TSI plan which provided specific course and/or non-course activities to meet TSI passing standards.
- Admissions Advisement: All new students are advised prior to first-time enrollment at TSTC. This advisement may include but is not limited to a general orientation to college, information regarding assessment and placement, and general degree/certificate advising.
- Orientation Classes/Sessions: All TSTC colleges provide either orientation session or orientation classes for first-time TSTC students. These classes and sessions are focused on preparing students for success in the collegiate environment.
- Registration Advisement: Students who have not met TSI standards may be required to speak with a counselor or program advisor for course approval prior to enrollment.
- In-class Advisement: Most instructors provide course-related advisement to students in their classes.
- Program Advisement: Program advisors conduct regular orientation and advisement sessions and offer registration advising to students each semester.
- Scholastic Standing Advisement: All TSTC colleges are encouraged to provide advising and intervention activities for students placed on Scholastic Alert (1st semester when term or cumulative GPA falls below 2.00). TSTC colleges are required to provide advising and intervention activities to students on Scholastic Probation. Suspended students who return to TSTC are required to participate in advising and intervention activities.
- On-Demand Advisement: Faculty, counselors, and paraprofessionals (at some colleges) are available during the semester to advise students on demand.

5. Specify when and what TSI developmental courses and activities are to be taken.

TSTC students who do not meet the TSI minimum passing standards are required to participate in developmental education courses or activities for at least one of their failed areas in their first semester. Students are required to continue participation in developmental education courses and/or activities until they are determined ready for enrollment in freshman-level academic coursework.

TSTC students who receive the Associate Degree must have met the minimum TSI standards in all three skill areas.

Developmental Education Enrollment Waiver

Students who have tested below the minimum passing standards on a approved TSI assessment instrument may be waived from enrollment in developmental education activities if they meet one of the criteria below.

- Level I Certificate Programs: Students whose only active program is a Level I Certificate program may be waived from enrollment in developmental education activities or courses. Students may change from one Level I certificate program to another and continue to be waived from developmental education activities, provided the courses are within the specified curriculum. Students in Level I Certificate programs are not waived from meeting individual course prerequisites.

TSTC colleges have the authority to require students in Level I Certificate programs to participate in developmental education activities in order to meet program requirements for basic skills and competencies.

- Non-Degree/Certificate Seeking Students: TSTC students may declare themselves to be non-degree or certificate seeking to claim a temporary waiver of TSI-required developmental education. While not having to take developmental education, non-degree students must still be assessed. Prior to enrollment in any college-level course, students must have taken an approved TSI assessment test or must have documented scores on file.

Upon accumulation of 12 semester credit hours, non-degree students must see a counselor or advisor prior to registration for review of course goals and to determine if the non-degree status is still appropriate.

- Temporary Circumstances: A student having extenuating special circumstances may appeal to the appropriate TSTC college administrator for a temporary waiver of enrollment in developmental education. The temporary waiver is granted for one semester only.

TSTC college officials are required to maintain appropriate documentation in support of any developmental education waivers granted to students. TSTC colleges are responsible for implementing appropriate tracking and follow-up procedures for students allowed to register with a developmental education waiver.

Developmental Education Courses and Activities

Developmental education at TSTC is defined as any activity which provides students the opportunity to improve skill deficiencies in reading, writing, and/or math. TSTC offers course-based developmental education in reading, writing, and math. These courses are designed to prepare students for college-level coursework and to provide them with communication and computational competencies necessary for success in the workplace. TSTC also offers a variety of non-course based developmental activities which may be prescribed for students who need customized assistance in meeting very specific skill deficiencies in one or more of the TSI areas.

The capstone developmental education course for each TSI area may include a requirement that students achieve a minimum score on a TSI approved instrument or other assessment instrument in order to pass the course. The decision to require a specific test score for successful completion of any capstone developmental education course is determined by each TSTC college's curriculum approval process. Colleges may charge the "Student Assessment Testing Fee" for TSI-related tests required in the capstone course.

The following courses comprise the developmental curriculum with 0050, 0100, and 0200 forming the standard sequence.

Reading

READ 0050 Basic Reading Skills

READ 0100 Reading Skills I

READ 0200 Reading Skills II

This is the capstone course for developmental reading.

READ 080X Reading Lab

This course is designed for students to participate in remedial studies on an individual basis. Course content is customized to each student's specific deficiencies. Semester credit hours vary depending on students' specific needs. Course may be repeated for credit. The last digit of the course number indicates the semester credit hours.

READ 0010 Supplemental Reading Activities

This is a non-transcripted 'phantom course' used to track students in non-course based developmental activities.

Writing

WRIT 0050 Basic Writing Skills

WRIT 0100 Writing Skills I

WRIT 0200 Writing Skills II

This is the capstone course for developmental writing.

WRIT 080X Writing Lab

This course is designed for students to participate in remedial studies on an individual basis. Course content is customized to each student's specific deficiencies. Semester credit hours vary depending on students' specific needs. Course may be repeated for credit. The last digit of the course number indicates the semester credit hours.

WRIT 0010 Supplemental Writing Activities

This is a non-transcribed 'phantom course' used to track students in non-course based developmental activities.

Mathematics

DMTH 0050 Basic Mathematics

DMTH 0100 Introductory Algebra

DMTH 0200 Intermediate Algebra

This is the capstone course for developmental mathematics.

DMTH 080X Mathematics Lab

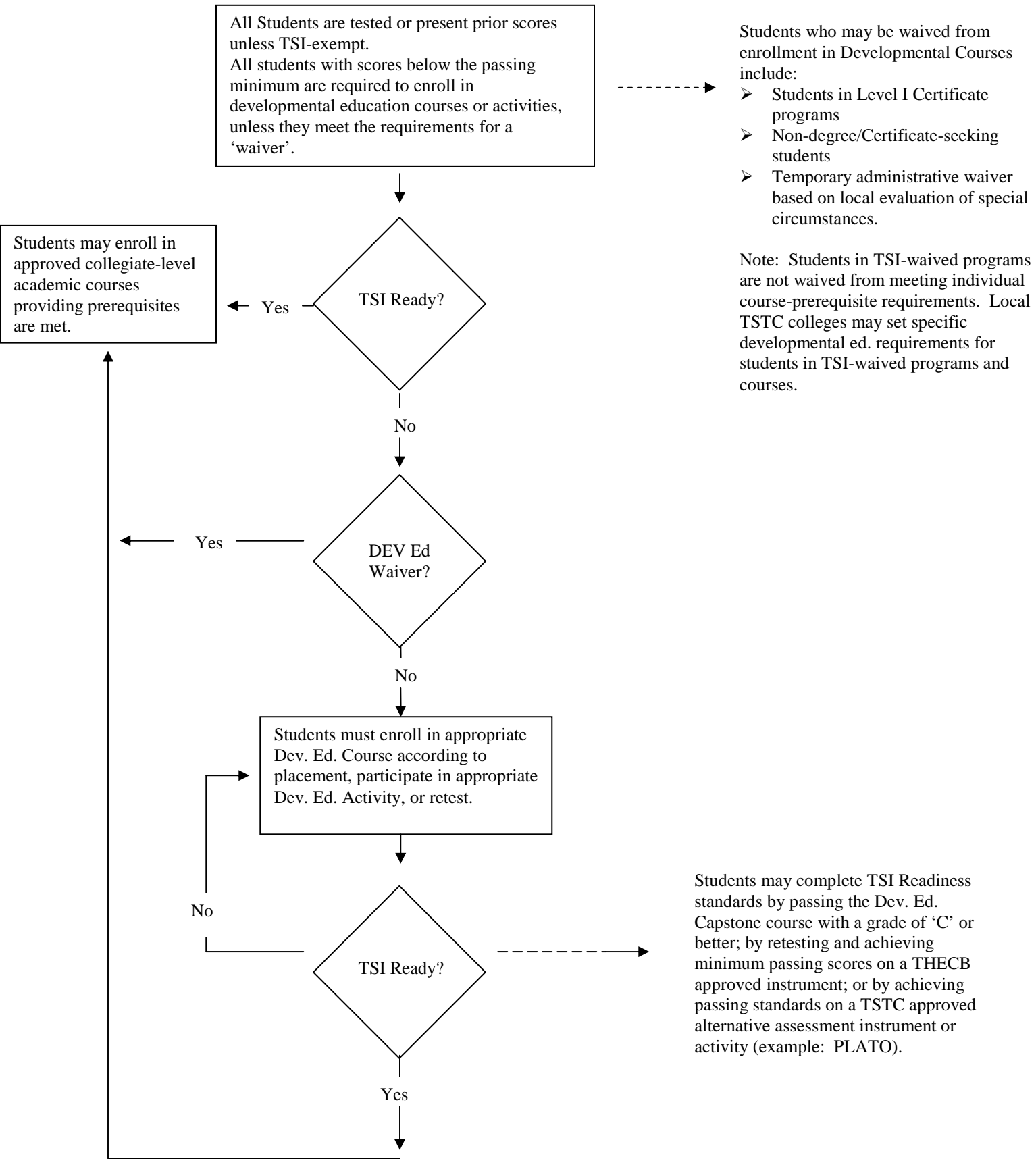
This course is designed for students to participate in remedial studies on an individual basis. Course content is customized to each student's specific deficiencies. Semester credit hours vary depending on students' specific needs. Course may be repeated for credit. The last digit of the course number indicates the semester credit hours.

DMTH 0010 Supplemental Mathematics Activities

This is a non-transcribed 'phantom course' used to track students in non-course based developmental activities.

A flowchart of the path for testing, retesting, enrollment in and completion of developmental education courses and/or activities is provided on the next page.

Flowchart for Testing, Retesting, Enrollment in and Completion of Developmental Education Courses and/or Activities for TSI Readiness Standards.



Students who may be waived from enrollment in Developmental Courses include:

- Students in Level I Certificate programs
- Non-degree/Certificate-seeking students
- Temporary administrative waiver based on local evaluation of special circumstances.

Note: Students in TSI-waived programs are not waived from meeting individual course-prerequisite requirements. Local TSTC colleges may set specific developmental ed. requirements for students in TSI-waived programs and courses.

Students may complete TSI Readiness standards by passing the Dev. Ed. Capstone course with a grade of 'C' or better; by retesting and achieving minimum passing scores on a THECB approved instrument; or by achieving passing standards on a TSTC approved alternative assessment instrument or activity (example: PLATO).

6. Specify when the student is ready to perform freshman-level academic coursework.

TSTC students who complete the capstone developmental education course with a grade of C or better for a specific skill area are deemed to be ready to perform freshman-level academic coursework. The capstone developmental education courses are:

READ 0200, Reading Skills II
WRIT 0200, Writing Skills II
DMTH 0200, Intermediate Algebra

TSTC students who master defined levels in PLATO are deemed to be ready to perform freshman-level academic coursework.

TSTC students who re-test on an assessment instrument approved by the THECB and achieve the minimum passing standard are deemed to be ready to perform freshman-level academic coursework. The length of time between retakes of a test will be determined by each TSTC college according to local needs and resources.

TSTC students who have passed a TSTC academic core component course (or transfer equivalent) for a specific skill area prior to Fall 2004 are deemed ready to perform freshman-level academic coursework.

TSTC students who have previous TASP statuses of RC (Remediation Completed), FB (Eligible for B or Better Track), PB (Passed B or Better Track) for a specific skill area prior to Fall 2004 are deemed ready to perform freshman-level academic coursework.

7. Establish standards for appropriate participation in developmental courses and/or activities.

TSTC's instructional programs are designed to prepare students for professional employment. Inherent in TSTC's instructional objectives are requirements for students to achieve the technical competencies, knowledge, and skills to enter the job market, as well as the development of a professional work ethic that reflects responsibility, initiative, and teamwork. In meeting these instructional objectives, TSTC recognizes the need for active student participation in all learning activities associated with program and course enrollments.

An essential component of the performance levels on which grades are based is 'student participation'. Participation and attendance requirements are in accordance with System Operating Standards for Grading and Attendance Records. These standards include specific requirements which give authority for faculty members to consider student participation in specific learning activities when determining final grades. The Operating Standards and Requirements also specify that TSTC college administrators and faculty have the responsibility to monitor student performance and notify students when they are failing to meet performance levels. Each TSTC college has implemented a monitoring and notification process to inform students when performance levels fall below the minimum for passing a course.

Regular attendance is necessary for satisfactory achievement. It is the responsibility of students to attend lecture and laboratory sessions in accordance with requirements of the course as established and communicated by the instructor. Faculty members are required to notify students at the beginning of each course of all participation requirements and the impact of those requirements on final grades. Faculty members cannot drop or award grades of 'W' for students based on non-attendance. Students who fail to meet performance requirements for a course within the allotted time frame receive failing grades.

Students enrolled in developmental education classes are required to meet participation requirements as specified by faculty members. Students who are notified that they are not meeting the minimum performance requirements must meet with the faculty member and/or appropriate counseling/advising staff to develop a plan for improvement before they must face a decision to withdraw or suffer the consequences of a failing grade. Students may be referred to learning labs, tutors, and/or additional resources to assist them in mastering course requirements.

TSTC Colleges should make every effort to insure that students complete needed developmental studies to meet TSI objectives. Only after proper advisement regarding the student's individual educational plan (IEP), may a TSTC administrator allow students to drop their last developmental education course.

8. Include provisions for transferring students.

Students who transfer to TSTC and who have not taken an approved TSI test at another institution must be assessed at TSTC to determine correct course placement. Students transferring from one Texas public institution to another should have been tested and/or exempted under current guidelines. Transfer students who have taken and failed a TSI test are required to provide an official transcript listing test scores and all developmental and college-level course work previously taken.

Students from private, independent, or out-of-state institutions must meet TSI requirements prior to being allowed to enroll in college-level courses. Students who earned a grade of “C” or higher in courses equivalent to TSTC’s academic core courses may use the transferred grades to satisfy TSI requirements. A student who has not earned a grade of “C” or higher in any or all of the three skill areas must be tested for the remaining skill areas and must comply with all other TSI requirements.

Transfer students who have successfully met the TSI readiness standards as documented on the official transfer transcript may enroll in college-level academic courses at TSTC. Students who have not yet met the readiness standards in one or more of the skill areas must comply with all TSTC TSI program requirements prior to enrolling in college-level academic coursework.

9. Specify the assessment instruments and performance levels to be used to assess and place students into a developmental education program or into college-level courses.

TSTC sets performance levels or 'cut scores' for placement of students into an TSI developmental education program or into college-level courses based on the following instruments:

- ACT
- SAT
- Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS)
- Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS)

TSTC also sets performance levels for placement purposes based on the following TSI approved tests:

- Texas Academic Skills Program (TASP)
- Texas Higher Education Assessment (THEA)
- ACCUPLACER
- ASSET
- COMPASS

The following assessment instruments may also be used by TSTC to set performance levels for placement purposes:

- Stanford-HI

Specific cut-scores for placement on these instruments and tests are specified in the four tables presented in this section of the TSI plan. Faculty members from developmental education and related academic disciplines review tests and cut-scores with counseling and testing personnel on an annual basis and make recommendations for changes as needed or required.

Placement scores for standardized instruments used to meet TSI exemption requirements are presented in the following table. Students using one of these instruments for TSI exemption must meet minimum scores in all sections of the test in order to qualify for exemption.

Instrument	SCORES FOR TSI EXEMPTION	
	Math Component Courses	Reading & Writing Component Courses
ACT Composite	23	
ACT Math	19	
SAT Composite	1070	
SAT Math	500	
TAAS Math	86	
TAKS Math	2200	
ACT Composite		23
ACT English		19
SAT Composite		1070
SAT Verbal		500
TAAS Writing		1770
TAAS Reading		89
TAKS Writing		3
TAKS Reading		2200

Students are placed in college-level or developmental courses according to the following scale.

MINIMUM READING SCORES FOR COURSE PLACEMENT				
TEST	READ 0050	READ 0100	READ 0200	TSI College-Level Reading Component Courses**
THEA/TASP (Reading)	100-149	150-199	200-229	230+
Accuplacer (Reading)	0-40	41-67	68-77	78+
Compass	0-43	44-60	61-80	81+
Asset	0-34	35-37	38-40	41+
SAT Verbal				500
ACT English				19
Stanford	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

MINIMUM WRITING SCORES FOR COURSE PLACEMENT				
TEST	WRIT 0050	WRIT 0100	WRIT 0200	TSI College-Level Writing Component Courses**
Essay *	0-2	3-4	5	6+
THEA/TASP (Writing)	100-160	161-199	200-219	220+
Accuplacer (Writing)	0-39	40-69	70-79	80+ and 5 Essay
Compass	0-44	45-52	53-58	59+ and 5 Essay
Asset	0-33	34-36	37-39	40+ and 5 Essay
SAT Verbal				500
ACT English				19
Stanford	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

* Colleges which use electronically graded essays may require a higher score for placement purposes.

MINIMUM MATH SCORES FOR COURSE PLACEMENT				
TEST	MATH 0050	MATH 0100	MATH 0200	TSI College-Level MATH Component Courses**
THEA/TASP (Math)	100-180	181-214	215-229	230+
Accuplacer (Arithmetic)	0-74	75-120		
Accuplacer (Elem. Algebra)	0-35	36-54	55-62	63+
Accuplacer (College Math)				35+
Compass (Elem. Algebra)	0-19	20-29	30-38	39+
Asset (Elem. Algebra)	0-22	23-29	30-37	38+
SAT Math				500
ACT Math				19
Stanford	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

** Colleges may set higher minimum scores as prerequisites for enrollment in specific college-level component courses.

- 10. Identify the core component courses eligible to be reported as the first college-level course in each of the three skill areas; colleges will establish and enforce appropriate prerequisites for enrollment in these courses.**

TSTC TSI Core Component Courses

TSTC has designated certain academic college credit courses as general education academic core courses. There is variation in the availability of these courses among the TSTC colleges; however, each TSTC college offers at least one of the courses in each category. The following academic courses are those determined to satisfy TSI reporting requirements for tracking performance in the 'first college-level course'.

WRITING

ENGL 1301 Composition I
ENGL 2311 Technical & Business Writing
ENGL 2314 Technical & Business Writing I

READING

GOVT 2301, 2302 U.S. Government
HIST 1301, 1302 U.S. History
HUMA 1301 Introduction to Humanities
PSYC 2301 General Psychology
SOC 1301 Introduction to Sociology

MATHEMATICS

MATH 1314 College Algebra
MATH 1316 Plane Trigonometry
MATH 1332 College Mathematics
MATH 1333 Math for Liberal Arts

Transfer Core Component Courses

Courses from regionally accredited institutions of higher education which are equivalent to TSTC's general education core courses, as defined in the Academic Course Guide Manual published by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board will satisfy TSI completion requirements provided students have submitted an official transcript indicating successful completion of these courses.

11. Provide mechanisms and standards to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of their instructional and administrative services.

Each TSTC college will incorporate review and evaluation standards into their local institutional effectiveness criteria. The review and evaluation will specifically address the effectiveness of the instructional and administrative services with regard to their practices supporting the developmental education program in the following categories:

- information provided to students;
- collection and availability of assessment data;
- student support services;
- program structure and organization;
- supplemental instruction;
- learning assistance programs/labs; and,
- developmental courses