



NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

Thomas A. Stith III

President

NUMBERED MEMO CC21-024

TO: Community College Presidents
Chief Academic Officers

FROM: Dr. Kimberly Gold
Chief Academic Officer

SUBJECT: Direct Placement Policy Update for MAT 271 Calculus I

DATE: May 6, 2021

Due to difficulties in completing standardized testing under the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, the System Office issued guidance for additional temporary direct placement measures for MAT 271 Calculus I for the Summer 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021 semesters (see [Numbered Memo CC20-047](#) and [Numbered Memo CC-071](#)).

The MAT 271 Placement Team reconvened during the spring 2021 term and reviewed data and feedback from colleges for the temporary measures. The data clearly indicated that over half of students who placed using one of the temporary measures have been successful in MAT 271. Based on this information, the MAT 271 Placement Team determined that the MAT 271 Direct Placement Policy should be updated to include the temporary placement measures as permanent options.

The MAT 271 Placement Team also reviewed existing measures and recommended one additional modification to the existing permanent direct placement options. The recommended update reads as follows:

- A score of ~~27~~ **24** or higher on the ACT Math and a grade of C or higher in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study Pre-Calculus course or an equivalent course from another state.

This change is designed to bring greater alignment between the required scores on the standardized tests available to high school students. This change will place the required ACT score at the 74th percentile, which is similar to that of the required SAT score of 600 (75th percentile). Since the ACT is already provided free-of-charge to all North Carolina high school students, this change also promotes greater direct access to MAT 271 because more students

will have taken the ACT.

With the recommendations of the MAT 271 Placement Team, the updated MAT 271 Direct Placement policy reads as follows:

A student may place directly into MAT 271 if the student has met at least one (1) of the following criteria within the past five (5) years:

- *A score of 2 or higher on the AP Calculus AB Exam.*
- *A grade of C or higher in an AP Calculus course and an unweighted HS GPA of 3.0 or higher.*
- *A score of 90 or higher on the ACCUPLACER College-Level Math (CLM) test.*
- *A score of 46 or higher on the trigonometry section of the ACT Compass Math Placement Test.*
- *A score of 580 or higher on the old (prior to March 2016) SAT Math and a grade of C or higher in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study Pre-Calculus course or an equivalent course from another state.*
- *A score of 600 or higher on the new (March 2016 and beyond) SAT Math and a grade of C or higher in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study Pre-Calculus course or an equivalent course from another state.*
- *A score of 24 or higher on the ACT Math and a grade of C or higher in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study Pre-Calculus course or an equivalent course from another state.*
- *A score of 560 or higher on the SAT Subject Test in Mathematics Level 2.*
- *Local diagnostic exam or challenge exam which demonstrates proficiency in Pre-Calculus course(s) competencies.*
- *An unweighted HS GPA of 3.5 or higher and a grade of C or higher in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study Pre-Calculus course or an equivalent course from another state.*

The MAT 271 Placement Team also recommended a one-year review process to receive input from colleges before retiring the following placement measures from the list:

- *A score of 90 or higher on the ACCUPLACER College-Level Math (CLM) test.*

- A score of 46 or higher on the trigonometry section of the ACT Compass Math Placement Test.
- A score of 580 or higher on the old (prior to March 2016) SAT Math and a grade of C or higher in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study Pre-Calculus course or an equivalent course from another state.
- A score of 560 or higher on the SAT Subject Test in Mathematics Level 2.

The feedback from community college respondents indicated that the above measures were rarely (or never) used to place any students directly into MAT 271. The referenced standardized tests are all (or will soon be) defunct and no longer in existence. Their removal will streamline the placement measures and make it easier to use for advising students.

The MAT 271 Placement Team plans to reconvene in 2022 to make a more permanent recommendation after further discussion and examination of data.

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