

FAQ – SB 1720 – Developmental Education

Questions submitted by the HCC Community.

Responses provided by Craig Johnson.

Category – Gateway/Gatekeeper Courses	
<p>Question</p> <p>"Gateway" or "Gatekeeper" courses? Both terms are used. Gatekeeper: noun, "an attendant at a gate who is employed to control who goes through it." Collins English Dictionary, "a person or thing that controls entrance or access," Random House Kernerman Webster's College Dictionary. Are these courses now seen as being those who are able to "go through" college, are they the "thing" that will "control access"? If so - who are the "gatekeepers"? The courses themselves? College administrators? The full-time and adjunct faculty who teach those courses? Legislators?</p>	<p>Response</p> <p><i>Gateway</i> courses are those that are seen as opening course work into a program or meta-major. For all meta-majors, ENC 1101 has been chosen by the state as a gateway course. A variety of different math courses function as gateway courses. In the QEP we viewed such courses in much the same way.</p>
<p>Question</p> <p>Points 21 and 22 refer to "gatekeeper" courses. How are these defined – are they the same as the "Gateway" courses that are part of the HCC SACS QEP initiative? Is it the intention that these courses now serve as that – gatekeepers – and be determining factor whether students move on to higher level courses?</p>	<p>Response</p> <p><i>Gatekeeper</i> is a term generally used based on the history of student performance in the course. If it is a tough course that students must get through in order to move on through or to complete program, it may become known as a gatekeeper. Some courses like college algebra or even intermediate algebra have been seen as both.</p>
Category – Math/Algebra/Calculus	
<p>Question</p> <p>Cluster 3 has recently introduced a course, MAC1106 combined college algebra/precalculus, to provide an accelerated option for calculus-bound students that combines MAC1105 college algebra and MAC1140 precalculus algebra into a 5-credit course that takes advantage of the commonality between them to create one smooth advanced algebra course. This makes much better sense than the current combined course, MAC1147 precalculus algebra & trigonometry, which combines the very disparate MAC1140 precalculus algebra and MAC1114 trigonometry into a very fast-paced 5 credit course that actually has to rely on students having excelled already in high</p>	<p>Response</p> <p>I think that we will be able to make the argument to the state that MAC 1106 is a gateway course. We need to remember to put it in our plan.</p>

<p>school trigonometry and involves a sharp transition (though it varies greatly among instructors) that can result in students who were doing well in one part to suddenly perform quite poorly. For comparison, the pathways are as follows: MAC1105 --> MAC1140 --> MAC1114 --> MAC2311 (non-accelerated, 14 credits) MAC1106 --> MAC1114 --> MAC2311 (combines the algebras into a 5-credit course) MAC1105 --> MAC1147 --> MAC2311 (combines the higher algebra with trigonometry into a 5-credit course) The question that I have is will we be able to include MAC1106 as a gateway course for the STEM meta-major as well as any other that would have students taking Calc I or higher (perhaps health sciences and education if it includes those interested in math education majors).</p>	
<p>Category – College Level Skills</p>	
<p>Question How are we to ensure that students who do not have college-level skills are successful in college level courses, particularly gateway courses, without lowering the standards and expectations in those courses?</p>	<p>Response That is the challenge. We cannot let the answer become grade inflation and lowered standards. In reality, we would expect that many of these students will not be as successful as we would like them to be. If that is seen over time, maybe the legislature will reconsider.</p>
<p>Question The only pre-req for taking any of the gen. ed. humanities courses at HCC is "college-level reading and writing skills required." How will these changes affect that expectation?</p>	<p>Response Those students exempt from taking the placement test or from taking developmental courses will be considered college ready in both reading and writing and will be able to register for those courses if they chose to do so. So it is very likely that we will have a number of underprepared students in such classes.</p>
<p>Question Am understanding this right the statement in all of our program descriptions and course requirements that state "College level reading and writing required" will no longer be necessary? If so is that something we need to change or can we leave it as is?</p>	<p>Response We can leave the statement, and it still does matter to those students who are not exempt. We may need to consider other appropriate pre-requisites for a number of courses.</p>

<p>Question Two-thousand (2XXX) courses are not “entry-level” courses – they are sophomore level courses. So, especially in light of the proposal to do away with pre-reqs re: college level skills, which classes are being defined as “entry-level”? Are students going to be required to complete “entry-level gateway” courses like ENC 1101 prior to taking higher-level courses?</p>	<p>Response These exempt students are considered college ready and at college level. So any 2000 level course that has no prerequisites beyond the college level reading, writing and mathematics required would be open to these students. We as a college could create some new prerequisites through the academic affairs process.</p>
<p>Category – General</p>	
<p>Question Is this legislation what had been discussed during previous in-service presentations or has it been modified since then?</p>	<p>Response It has been finalized and modified since the last in-service.</p>
<p>Question Can HCC promote an advising culture that touts the success of our developmental program, based on evidence, and advises students to take placement tests?</p>	<p>Response Yes – we plan to.</p>
<p>Question Similar legislative changes have been made in other states. What changes (in service delivery) have been made by community colleges in those states (Conn., etc.)? Are we obtaining information from those colleges to work toward a best practice model for HCC?</p>	<p>Response We still need to do the research on this. I know that some have done work with two-term gateway courses in which the developmental portion was taught during the first.</p>
<p>Question Will faculty have access to scores for those students who choose to take the placement test so that we can see if they test into developmental courses? This would allow us to advise our students in particular areas and also have some justification when a student does not pass a class due to that deficiency.</p>	<p>Response I am not sure of the answer to this question at this time.</p>
<p>Question Similar changes have been made in other students (eg. Conn). What challenges have those community colleges had?</p>	<p>Response See answer number 9.</p>

