Welcome to the session on ACCUPLACER Policy Development. This session will touch upon common policy decisions an institution may encounter during the development or reevaluation of a placement program. This session will highlight functionality available within the ACCUPLACER platform to assist with implementation at your institution.
Historically, former models of course placement emphasized the test scores, often to the exclusion of any other information. Students took placement tests, with little to no preparation or understanding as to how the results would be used, as part of a speedy registration process that minimized multiple trips to campus. The idea was to complete all steps necessary for registration as quickly as possible. At the same time, it wasn’t always clear how placement cut scores were determined, and even within the same college or university system, the same test score could result in very different recommendations.

The newer model of course placement starts with the premise that a test score is simply one piece of information available, and that in some instances, students have already documented college readiness and don’t need a placement test at all. Where a test is needed, students are strongly encouraged to prepare—or even required to participate in a mandatory assessment orientation. Finally the resulting scores are used in conjunction with other available information, particularly when a student might fall within a few points of the required cut score for a particular course.
Recognize that most of the work to be done is OUTSIDE the platform—most institutions have to create committees, review research and data, and allow for internal discussion for several months prior to actual go-live.

After your policy has been created and vetted through the necessary committees at your campus, then you are ready to begin your ACCUPLACER account setup. Allow plenty of time for a thoughtful planning process and time to set up and verify what you create prior to the beginning of testing.
A critical key first step is to ensure input and buy in is received from all stakeholders.

This group or committee will look at all aspects of the placement policy from which tests will be given, what exemptions will be allowed, will multiple measures be included in course placement decisions, and what evaluation will occur of the overall process.
Steps to get you started.
This list demonstrates steps to the implementation process.
Please note these steps are only suggested and you may add to or take away steps as needed on your campus. For a timeline template please contact your Senior Assessment Manager.
When looking at designing or revising a placement policy, several questions need to be considered beyond which tests will be administered to the students. Will background questions be utilized, do faculty need diagnostic information, Will the embedded calculator be allowed on the math sections?
What method will be used for developing course placement scores, is it possible to develop exemption policies for the recent high school graduate or even the returning adult—and what information is required to demonstrate that exemption? Are multiple measures going to be employed for those students who DO test? What kind of preparation is going to be required or provided to the student?
Policy Development and Management
The next section will show ACCUPLACER platform functionality that can assist institutions when developing and managing their policy.
Another feature of the ACCUPLACER platform is the ability to ask Background Questions of students either before or after testing. These can not only be used to gather statistical and demographic information but can be used in a branching profile to control the choice of tests for a student. This slide shows an example of using the response to a background question to choose the appropriate math test.
Are background questions to be included?
For what purpose?
Will those answers be reported out and to whom?
Will those answers impact placement recommendations?

The ACCUPLACER program allows the use of background questions before, during, or after test administration. You can choose to use standard background questions that are included in the platform, or you can create local questions specific to your institution. Beyond gathering specific local data or demographics about your test student population, background questions can be utilized several different ways in your placement policy. Background questions can be used to decide which tests will be administered, to determine career specific placement messages, or to incorporate ‘grit’ questions into placement decisions by weighting question responses that can then be factored into a course placement recommendation.
Will diagnostic assessments be included?
How will the results be used, and when will they be given?

Diagnostic tests also can be included in a placement policy. Will diagnostic scores be used for placement or to determine which skills students need to focus on prior to retesting.

Diagnostic tests can also be used in the first week of a developmental education course to give faculty a ‘snapshot’ of student skills in a particular section of a course.
Will students be allowed the use of the embedded calculator?

Some of the mathematics items within the online ACCUPLACER math tests have pop-up calculators for students to use when answering some of the math questions. The items were written so that the use of a calculator will not help the student answer the question, but is provided simply as a tool for the student to use.

If a math test question is configured to allow for the use of a calculator, the calculator icon will appear on the screen. This feature can be inactivated so that a calculator never appears for any question.
How will cut scores be recommended—who is involved in that process? What method will be used? How often and how will evaluation occur?

Given that institutions, students, and courses are so different, it is not possible to stipulate specific test cut scores for broad use across institutions. Instead, each institution should establish their own cut scores to facilitate placement decisions based on factors and data unique to their institution. Course Placement scores appropriate for each program should be considered and the College Board strongly recommends that multiple measures be used when placing students. For more in-depth information about establishing a placement policy, consider participating in other webinars: ACCUPLACER developing a placement policy, OR multiple measures – incorporating into your placement policy OR setting course placement scores.
Key Question: Will multiple measures be used—and what measures will be included?

While a number of institutions still rely on test scores alone, ACCUPLACER functionality allows the inclusion of background questions, major/program indicators, user defined fields, and composite scores in course placement recommendations. ACCUPLACER does not recommend particular cut scores, however the College Board does strongly endorse the use of multiple measures in developing placement recommendations. Cut scores alone are simply one piece of information useful in determining course placement, but research has shown that test scores in combination with elements such as High School GPA, or years since last math course, can often lead to more targeted placements. We strongly encourage institutions to investigate a multiple measures approach to course placement. This can happen in conjunction with the development of cut scores (which represent the academic skills) or after these scores have been established and institutions are interested in focusing on more sophisticated methods.

For more in depth information on the use of multiple measures please consider the webinar – Multiple Measures Incorporating into a placement policy.
Will there be an exemption policy—where some students are not required to assess?

Is there a retest policy? Is the latest score or the highest score used?

How long will test scores be viable? One year? Four years?

ACCUPLACER placement and diagnostic assessments are criterion-referenced tests that help institutions determine a student’s readiness for college-level coursework. The definition of readiness is unique to each institution and not pre-determined by ACCUPLACER. Each institution must engage in a deliberate and thoughtful process of establishing cut scores and be prepared to adjust those cut scores as needed, based on student performance data and end-of-course grades. No cut score lives forever, and institutions are encouraged to re-examine cut scores whenever there has been a significant shift in course content, student population, or performance data. At a minimum, a good rule of thumb is to review cut scores every three to five years.
What requirements are there around student engagement/preparation? Mandatory or recommended?
In what format? Workshops? Websites? Free? Paid?

In order to support student preparation prior to testing or retesting, ACCUPLACER provides sample questions and a free web based study app. In order to maximize use of diagnostic testing results, the Remediation Planner and MyFoundationsLab are available. The remediation planner is meant for a face to face discussion between a student and an advisor, faulty member, or tutor to review skills a student has and pinpoint skills he or she still needs to work on. Myfoundationslab is a Pearson product that is available to offer students an online intervention option. The content assigned to students in My foundations Lab is based on the results of the diagnostic tests.
Placement Validity Study – Importance of evaluating your placement program
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Please be assured that the College Board can help in this review process. Through a free service from our Research department, institutions can validate their placement policies, not just using cut scores, but also including up to five factors per course—which means multiple measures can also be evaluated. By reviewing the grades your students earn in courses they were placed into with your policy, you can determine if your policy is meeting the expectations of your institution.
User Resources
The ACCUPLACER Program offers a wide range of resources to support our users. Many of these are available on-demand 24/7.

Inside ACCUPLACER is the Resources option which contains a variety of tools including:

- Getting Started with ACCUPLACER includes a Quick Start Guide to account setup.
- The ACCUPLACER Program Manual includes information about the tests within the platform as well as information on testing policies and practices.
Resources designed to provide guidance on implementing various aspects of ACCUPLACER can be found on the public ACCUPLACER Resources page at the address shown. Those resources include:

- Information on use of Multiple Weighted Measures which is a process that incorporates use of background questions and external data to fine tune placement practices
- Documents on Intervention Tools That Work to provide evidence of effectiveness and suggestions on implementation
- Information on ACCUPLACER tests for students including both Sample Questions and the Web-Based Study App
- Details on the benefits and process of conducting a Validity Study to understand the effect of your chosen cut scores.
The ACCUPLACER Outreach Team provides professional development in many different formats. A listing of all the resources available is at the address shown.

- Some topics are presented through a live webcast. The Professional Development page provides a list of sessions available along with a link to register. Once registered, you will receive an email with instructions on joining the session.
- Many topics are available as on-demand videos and are available 24/7.
- The ACCUPLACER Account Setup presentation contains details of the process of setting up an ACCUPLACER account along with detailed step-by-step instructions. Also included are video demonstrations of each step in the process.
Outreach and Support Teams

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<th>The Outreach Team</th>
<th>ACCUPLACER Support</th>
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<td>• Senior Assessment Managers</td>
<td>• Staff dedicated to troubleshooting, problem solving, Q/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Provide service to institutions at the campus, system, and state levels</td>
<td>• Available 12 hours/day – 6 days/week</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consultation, training, professional development, and advocacy</td>
<td>• Phone: 866-607-5223</td>
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<tr>
<td>• On campus, face-to-face service</td>
<td>• Email: <a href="mailto:info@accuplacer.org">info@accuplacer.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Virtual service via webcast and phone</td>
<td>• Live chat</td>
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The ACCUPLACER Program has teams of staff members dedicated to providing support and service to our users.

The Outreach Team of Sr. Assessment Managers provides service to institutions at the campus, system, and state levels which can include consultation, training, professional development, and advocacy for student college readiness. Services can be provided through on campus, face-to-face events or virtually.

ACCUPLACER Support provides a staff of trained service agents ready to answer questions and resolve issues. Support is available 12 hours/day and can be contacted using a toll-free number, through email, and also live chat.