

## Howard College Success Initiative

### Purpose

Howard College establishes this plan in accordance with the Texas Education Code, Section 51.306 and 51.403, to assess and correctly place undergraduate students entering our institution.

Students who do not have college-level skills in reading, writing, or math, as determined by initial testing, will be placed in a college preparatory program to improve any skill areas that are found deficient. As allowed by law, Howard College may require higher passing standards than established by the State.

### Minimum Passing Standards

**THEA** (230 Reading, 230 Math, 220 Writing)

**ASSET** (41 Reading, 38 Math, 40 Writing)

**COMPASS** (81 Reading, 39 Math, 59 Writing)

**ACCUPLACER** (78 Reading, 80 63\* Math, 5 on essay AND 80 on grammar OR 6 on essay)

\*College level math classes, including Math 1314 (College Algebra), may have a pre-requisite score of 80 and may also have a co-requisite requirement of Math 0101 if a student does not score an 80 on Accuplacer.

### Advising Process

Howard College students are required to see an advisor or counselor prior to registration. At this time students determine their intentions: non-degree seeking, Certificate Level I, Certificate Level II or associate degree, and will be advised according to their goals by an advisor specializing in their interest area. Faculty and staff who advise students will be given necessary training to pass along updates or changing information needed to properly advise students.

### Eligibility, Exemptions/Exceptions

Each undergraduate student entering Howard College, unless exempt or under exceptional circumstances, will be required to test for reading, writing, and math skills before enrolling in college-level courses. The students will take a state approved assessment test that identifies areas of deficiency for this initial test.

Exempted from requirements:

1. A student who meets qualifying standards on the SAT, ACT, TAAS, or TAKS. SAT and ACT exemptions are valid for a five-year period following initial test date. TAAS and TAKS scores are valid for a three-year period after initial test date;
2. A student who has graduated with an associate or baccalaureate degree from an institution of high education;
3. A student who transfers from a private or independent institution of higher education or an accredited out-of-state institution of higher education and who has satisfactorily completed college-level coursework with a C or better as determined by the receiving institution;
4. Level One Certificate Students;
5. A student who is serving on active duty as a member of the United States armed forces or as a member of the Texas National Guard;
6. A student who is currently serving as, and for at least the three-year period preceding enrollment, has served as a member of a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States; or
7. A student who on or after August 1, 1990, was honorably discharged, retired or released from:
  - a. active duty as a member of the armed forces of the United States or the Texas National Guard, or
  - b. service as a member of a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States;
8. A student who has attended any institution of higher education and has been determined to have met college-readiness standards by that institution (Howard College may recommend additional preparatory coursework if a student's additional assessment or performance at Howard College reveals a deficiency).

9. Casual student: A student who enrolls in a course for personal enrichment with no plans of completing a level two certificate or degree may take six (6) hours or less of non-restricted classes in a semester. A maximum of 12 hours can be taken under the "Casual Student" status.

Students will be required to follow the Success Initiative policy if they do not meet the above exemptions exceptions. The following categories require compliance:

#### **Associate Degree/Level Two Certificate**

Students enrolled in programs leading to a level two certificate or associate degree are liable under the Success Initiative and must meet the criteria for their plan.

The concurrent enrollment program allows high school students to enroll in college courses while still attending high school. Courses are taken in place of or in addition to the normal course load at high school. Students must have permission in writing from their high school principals or counselors and a high school transcript. These students must satisfy all assessment requirements specific to college courses prior to enrolling in college-level course work.

#### **Enrollment and Participation**

After initial testing, full-time students attending classes for the first semester must enroll in each area of English and math college preparatory course work in which they are found deficient. Part-time students (students enrolled in less than 12 hours) must enroll in at least one college preparatory course in deficient areas until college readiness has been met.

Full-time students attending classes for the first time who have **NOT** taken an assessment test or the results are not available to the college at the time of enrollment must enroll in college preparatory course work in writing, reading, and mathematics.

In subsequent semesters, full-time students must enroll in at least one college preparatory course in a deficient area until college readiness has been met. Course availability, sequencing, and placement may vary at each campus. Students must follow the preparatory plan and sequence as advised by preparatory faculty at each campus.

#### **Restrictions**

Students may be restricted from enrolling in certain courses until college readiness has been determined. Some courses may have co-requisite requirements depending on a student's level of academic achievement. Students should consult the preparatory department and/or the guidance and counseling office for specific campus and course restrictions.

#### **Required attendance and participation**

Students enrolled in college preparatory course work due to the Success Initiative policy are required to regularly attend and participate in class activities. Students who miss six (6) hours or more of class may be penalized and may fail the class due to lack of attendance. Instructors have the option to drop students for lack of attendance, or the instructor may choose to give the grade they earn. The instructor will state his or her attendance policy in the course syllabus. Students are responsible for keeping track of their attendance and, if needed, checking with their instructors to see if absences threaten the successful completion of a course.

#### **Withdrawal from College Preparatory Courses**

Students who are enrolled in college preparatory coursework during their first semester may not drop any preparatory course unless they are completely withdrawing from the district. In subsequent semesters, students may drop a college preparatory course only if they have continuous enrollment in at least one other required preparatory course. If the student drops all required preparatory courses, thus placing them out of compliance with continuous enrollment in required college preparatory education, they will be dropped from all other courses at Howard College. Students dropping all required college preparatory courses will not be reclassified (within the same semester) as casual students or have their programs

changed to level-one certificates to circumvent this policy. Students who withdraw from preparatory courses due to passing an approved assessment exam will be subject to the published refund schedule as stated in the Catalog.

### **College Preparatory Courses**

Students in preparatory reading, writing, and math, regardless of instructor, will be required to take a comprehensive final exam for each course.

#### **\* Math Courses:**

MATH 0330 - Math Essentials

MATH 0331 - Beginning Algebra

MATH 0332 - Intermediate Algebra

MATH 0333 - College Prep Algebra

MATH 0101-College Prep Math

#### **\* Reading Courses:**

ENGL 0301 - Success in College Reading I

ENGL 0302 - Success in College Reading II

ENGL 0101 – College Prep Reading

#### **\* Writing Courses:**

ENGL 0320 - Success in Grammar/Writing

ENGL 0321 - College Composition Prep I

ENGL 0121 – College Prep Writing

\* Some courses may not be offered at each campus. Students need to check class schedules each semester for course offerings.

### **Evaluation of Programs**

The purpose of the preparatory education program at Howard College is to prepare students for college-level work who are found deficient via a state approved test. Students may also be measured by the completion of their course sequence. These measures will be taken on a semester basis and the program will be thoroughly evaluated by all college preparatory personnel on a yearly basis. Mid-course changes in preparatory sequencing will be made on an informal basis when needed.

A survey instrument, such as the Best Practices Survey developed by Hunter Boylan, will be used to address the programs overall strengths and weaknesses, and also to address specific campus issues. The information will be used to address any problem areas within the program and instructors will meet to develop strategies for correction.

Student tracking will be accomplished through the Howard College Office of Institutional Research to determine student success in passing the prescribed assessment test and passing each level of college preparatory classes. This information will be evaluated and goals will be established based on this information.

### **ACCUPLACER**

Howard College administers the Accuplacer Assessment, a state-approved alternative exam for meeting the Howard College Success Initiative. Accuplacer is computerized and is not recommended for students that do not have adequate computer skills. Students should contact the testing center at each campus for information on the cost of this assessment. Students must wait at least two weeks prior to retesting in each subject area.