

# CSN Mathematics Placement Information

## The ACCUPLACER Mathematics Placement Test:

The ACCUPLACER Mathematics Placement Test is used by the CSN Mathematics Department as the primary instrument to determine your placement into a mathematics course.

- It is given ONLINE using secure computers located in any of the CSN Testing Centers.
- The test questions are multiple choice.
- It consists of three parts entitled "Arithmetic", "Elementary Algebra", and "College-Level Mathematics." In general, you are first given the "Elementary Algebra" portion. However, depending on your answers to the questions, you may also have to take the "Arithmetic" or the "College-Level" portions.

The ACCUPLACER Mathematics Placement Test is a computer adaptive test. In such a test, each question is selected for you by the computer program depending on your answer to earlier questions. Therefore, some students will work more math problems than others. **In order for you to be placed into your desired math course, you MUST answer every question to the VERY BEST of your abilities. You cannot skip a question with the intention of working on it later because this means to the computer program that you did not know the question and because of this it might place you into a lower-level course!**

The ACCUPLACER Mathematics Placement Test was developed by the College Board and is nationally-normed. This means that a representative group of students throughout the nation, called the norm group, was given the test prior to its availability to the public. The scores of the students who take the test after publication are then compared to those of the norm group.

The College Board is a not-for-profit membership association, which creates nationally-normed tests that are accepted by all education-related Government agencies including the ones that provide financial aid. Among its best-known tests are the SAT, the PSAT/NMSQT, and the Advanced Placement Program (AP). The College Board employs individuals trained in a subject matter and in the art of writing tests, who are committed to the principles of excellence and equity.

## Sample Placement Tests:

The CSN Mathematics Department has written extensive sample tests to give you the best possible chance to place into your desired math course. You can find them on the CSN Mathematics Department Web Site at <http://www.csn.edu/pages/1682.asp> in the column entitled PLACEMENT INFO.

**The CSN Mathematics Department strong urges you to carefully study these tests BEFORE taking the ACCUPLACER Mathematics Placement Test because a less than desirable testing outcome will have dire time and monetary consequences for you.**

The College Board also provides sample placement tests. You can find them at [http://www.collegeboard.com/prod\\_downloads/student/testing/accuplacer/accuplacer-sample.pdf](http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/student/testing/accuplacer/accuplacer-sample.pdf)

## Who must take the ACCUPLACER Mathematics Placement Test?

The Accuplacer Math Placement Test MUST be taken by all students who HAVE NOT met prior CSN math prerequisites such as

- completion of a CSN math Course with a grade of C or better
- sufficiently high ACT or SAT scores \*
- sufficiently high CLEP Exam score \*\*
- sufficiently high AP or BC Calculus score
- transfer credits from another university or college completed with a grade of C or better \*\*

\* If you have completed the ACT and/or SAT test and you have a "sufficiently high" score on the math section, you may use these test scores for math placement. The scores must be less than two years old. Only official SAT/ACT forms are accepted or, alternately, a print-out from the high school testing location. In the later case, scores must be sealed in an envelope which must display the official letter head of the high school. You must NOT open the envelope! This must be done by the CSN Testing Center staff ONLY. Scores can also be faxed directly to a CSN Testing Center by the high school, but must be accompanied by a cover letter containing pertinent student information.

You can find the fax numbers at <http://www.csn.edu/administration/student/services/testing/index.asp>

\*\* If mathematics credit has been earned at another institution or by CLEP examination, you must bring a copy of the appropriate college transcript or CLEP Score Report AND a cover letter outlining the request to the Mathematics Office on either the Charleston Campus (H-Building, Suite 101) or the Cheyenne Campus (Main Building, Room 1029). You may also fax these documents to 651-5881 or 651-4825.

Please go to

[http://www.csn.edu/uploadedfiles/Academics/Divisions/Science and Math/Math/placement/placement\\_cutoffs.pdf](http://www.csn.edu/uploadedfiles/Academics/Divisions/Science%20and%20Math/Math/placement/placement_cutoffs.pdf) to find out what constitutes "sufficiently high" scores.

## Are there any Fees for taking the Accuplacer Mathematics Placement Test?

Application to the College of Southern Nevada is required before you can take the Accuplacer Mathematics Placement Test and there is no additional charge for the test. Students who are not applying for CSN admission, should contact the Testing Center for their testing fees.

You can find their phone numbers at

<http://www.csn.edu/administration/student/services/testing/index.asp>

## Challenging the Outcome of the ACCUPLACER Mathematics Placement Test:

Any student who is not willing to accept their Accuplacer Math Placement level may attempt to raise it by taking one or more Diagnostic Tests created by the CSN Mathematics Department. Tests exist for placement into any mathematics course. You will be given the appropriate test depending on your Accuplacer placement. Following are the guidelines for taking the Diagnostic Tests:

1. You must establish an initial Accuplacer placement before you can take a Diagnostic Test.
2. Diagnostic Tests can be taken on the same day as the ACCUPLACER Mathematics Placement Test. However, they can also be taken at a later time.
3. You must pass one Diagnostic Test before you can proceed to the next one.
4. Subsequent Diagnostic Tests do not have to be taken on the same day.
5. Only one attempt per session will be allowed for each specific Diagnostic Test.
6. You may retake a specific Diagnostic Test as often as desired, provided four months have passed between each attempt.

Please be aware that taking a Diagnostic Test is a privilege, not a right. See Nevada System of Higher Education Board of Regents Handbook, Title 4, Chapter 16, Section 1 at <http://system.nevada.edu/Board-of-R/Handbook/Title-4/T4-CH16.doc> [cvt.htm#t4c16s1](#)

### **How often can you take the Placement Test?**

If you are not happy with either the Accuplacer or Diagnostic Test results, you can repeat these tests after 4 months. NO EXCEPTIONS. Therefore, the CSN Mathematics Department strongly urges you to take these tests seriously and to practice the sample tests until you are comfortable with the mathematical concepts presented by them.

### **How long are the Placement Tests?**

The placement tests are untimed. However, plan to be at the Testing Center for at least one (1) hour. Suggestion ... a longer stay and hard work will increase your chances of placing into your desired math course.

### **Scheduling the Test:**

You do NOT need an appointment to take the ACCUPLACER Mathematics Placement Test. It is given on a walk-in basis at any CSN Testing Center. You can find a CSN Testing Center at <http://www.csn.edu/administration/student/services/testing/index.asp>

### **What do you have to bring to the Placement Tests?**

On the day you decide to take either the ACCUPLACER Mathematics Placement Test and the Diagnostic Tests, bring photo identification and a pencil. The testing center will provide scratch paper for computations. You are NOT allowed to use your own calculators. There is a calculator built into the ACCUPLACER testing software that will be displayed for certain questions. No calculator is necessary for the Diagnostic Tests.

### **Placement Test Regulations:**

In order to take the test, you must be an ADMITTED CSN student. That is, you must have completed a CSN Admission Form. You can pick up a paper copy at any Registrar's Office or you can find it online at <http://www.csn.edu/pages/694.asp>

The ACCUPLACER Mathematics Placement Test and the Diagnostic Tests are valid for one (1) year. You must take these tests again if you wait longer than one year to enroll in a math course.

Any student caught cheating \*\*\* on the Accuplacer Placement Test and any of the Diagnostic Tests will be immediately reported to the CSN Vice President of Academic Affairs for academic dishonesty. Students caught cheating on the Accuplacer Placement Test will have to wait 4 months before they are able to take the test again. Students caught cheating on any of the Diagnostic Tests will not be able to take another Diagnostic Test at CSN.

\*\*\* use of printed or online notes, books, or other reference materials  
use of an online tutoring service  
use of a tutor in the testing room  
use of a hand-held or online calculator other than the one given by the ACCUPLACER program

NOTE: The Testing Center staff WILL check the Web history!

## Placement Test Score Reporting:

Once you have completed a placement test, a score report is created. You will be given a copy of this report for informational purposes. The CSN Testing Center staff will also use this report to inform the CSN data base of your placement. Thereafter, you are restricted from enrolling in mathematics courses that are deemed inappropriate for your current level of mathematical knowledge.

## Placement Tests and Students with Disabilities:

If you have a DOCUMENTED disability, please let the Testing Center staff know. They will contact the staff at the Disability Resource Center to find out what accommodations to make for you. Attention ... a "documented disability" means that the CSN Disability Resource Center has evaluated your disability and found that you are in need of special testing accommodations. Please be aware that your claiming to have a math disability is not enough to provide special services.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

"Why do I have to take a Math Placement test"?

**Your test results will help you and your counselor work together to choose courses in which you will have the best chance for success.**

"If I place into a particular math course, does that mean the same as having passed its prerequisite course"?

**NO. The Accuplacer Mathematics Placement Test is not designed to verify in-depth concept knowledge in a particular area of mathematics. Instead, it picks some important concepts in the general area of arithmetic, algebra, and college-level mathematics to determine the extent of the students' concept recall and their LIKELY success in a certain mathematics course.**

"If the Accuplacer Mathematics Placement Test places me into a certain course, is this like a guarantee that I will pass this course"?

**No. The Accuplacer Mathematics Placement Test only determines the extent of the students' concept recall and their LIKELY success in a certain mathematics course. There are many other factors that influence your success in a course, such as your overall concept knowledge in the prerequisite course, your study habits, your work schedule, and your family and social life.**

"Are word translators allowed on the Math Placement test"?

**No. You must have enough English language knowledge to complete the placement test without a word translator.**

"How long are the Accuplacer/Diagnostic Test Scores good for"?

**1 year. If you have not taken the mathematics courses recommended by Accuplacer within one (1) year, you must take the Accuplacer Mathematics Placement Test again.**

"How long are the ACT/SAT Scores good for"?

**2 years. If you have not taken the mathematics courses recommended by your ACT/SAT scores within two (2) years, you must take the Accuplacer Mathematics Placement Test.**

"How long are the AP or BC Calculus Scores good for"?

**2 years. If you have not taken the next calculus course within two (2) years, you must take the Accuplacer Mathematics Placement Test.**

"I have taken my prerequisite course over 5 years ago. Can I still take the next course"?

**Yes. Currently, we do not have a time limit on prerequisite courses. However, it is strongly recommended that you retake this prerequisite course again to greatly increase your chances of successfully completing the subsequent course.**