




To: Ben Passmore, Associate Vice President, Office of Policy Analysis and Research
Ting-Hsuan Hung, Office of Policy Analysis and Research

From: Laura Reynolds, Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs 

Re: Developmental Education Report: Scope and Effectiveness Response

Date: 7/29/24

The information below is offered in response to the June 28, 2024, request from the Office of Policy Analysis and Research (OPAR) relating to the availability and effectiveness of six areas of activities and initiatives in developmental education in mathematics and English on the University of Wisconsin-Platteville campus. Please let me know if you have any questions.

1. Pathways to credit-bearing courses

English: To address the delay in a student's progress toward graduation that comes from the need to complete remedial courses, the English program developed a four-credit college writing course (ENGLISH 1040) replacing its non-credit bearing remedial writing course ENGLISH 10 and combining the material of the required, first-semester college writing course (ENGLISH 1130) with an additional lab component. Students who pass ENGLISH 1040 proceed to the second semester college writing course, ENGLISH 1230, solidifying pathways to credit-bearing courses and emphasizing student progress and success.

Mathematics: In the fall of 2016, UW-Platteville changed the developmental course offerings to allow students with non-STEM majors to remediate mathematics while enrolling in Math General Education courses. That change has continued to support student progress and success, as many entering students continue to progress in general education while also receiving appropriate developmental support in mathematics.

As stated in 2021, faculty continue to monitor and assess the impact of this change while recognizing that post COVID enrollment and student learning needs are still actively emerging. Notably, in 2021-2023, the proportion of students placing into MATH 12 (Mathematical Problem Solving – 3 credits) increased – not unexpectedly the result of COVID-19's impact on learning and teaching. As we monitor fall 2024 placements, faculty have seen a decline in MATH 12 Developmental Math placements, possibly signaling a return to pre-COVID-19 levels of assessed learning.

2. Co-requisite developmental courses

English: UW-Platteville does not utilize the co-requisite developmental course for English 1040.

Mathematics: UW-Platteville does not utilize the co-requisite developmental model.

3. Summer bridge programs

English: UW-Platteville offers a summer bridge program through Academic Support Services. The program offers instruction in developmental writing through a voluntary, non-credit bearing writing intensive class administered by the university Writing Center.

Mathematics: UW-Platteville offers a summer bridge program through Academic Support Services. The program offers a mathematic module as a part of this program.

4. Placement practices, such as multiple placement measures

English: At the main campus, the Wisconsin English Placement test is used to determine whether a student enrolls in English 1040 or 1130. If a student receives a score below 11, they are placed into English 1040. Additionally, students who score higher than an 11 but want additional writing instruction may choose to enroll in English 1040 instead of English 1130. Enrollment in English 1040 at the branch campuses uses a multiple measures placement process that combines several student metrics to assess student readiness for English composition courses. The Wisconsin English Placement Test scores and reading sub-scores, ACT scores, high school GPAs, EDOC high-risk student statuses, student questionnaires and placement essays were used for the placement process.

Mathematics: UW-Platteville uses multiple placement measures, primarily utilizing the Wisconsin Math Placement exam, and scores are monitored for anomalies. The Math ACT test score, if provided, is utilized for borderline cases.

5. Additional support for students in developmental courses

English: Students in English 1040 have access to a variety of different forms of additional support. One primary support offered those needing developmental assistance is the additional writing support and feedback resulting from the 4-credit model – the additional contact hours allow students increased access to editing, content, and writing supports within the framework of their scheduled week. Additionally, these courses lower the ratio of instructors to learners, students receive more individualized feedback and frequency of interaction with the instructor. Finally, students in English 1040 also have full access to the Writing Center, providing them access to one-on-one tutoring free of charge.

Mathematics: UW-Platteville created the “Algebra Skills Center” (ASC), a tutoring area focused on supporting the success of students taking developmental mathematics. The ASC is open daily and provides free tutoring and supports student success relating to the learning of math concepts and skills.

6. Changes in curriculum, course instruction, or delivery mode

English: In 2016, the English program replaced the non-credit bearing developmental English course with English 1040. English 1040 has been taught by multiple faculty and instructors and has typically been taught face-to-face, as well as in an online format for students needing increased flexibility. Now additional changes have occurred.

Mathematics: Prior to the UW-System Math Initiative, UW-Platteville replaced existing developmental mathematics courses with Math 12 and 15. This change continues to serve the students and support success of those needing to develop math skills while allowing them to continue to make progress on their general education courses, providing they do not have a major in a STEM field.