

Oklahoma

2016 College- and Career-Readiness Policies and Practices

The Southern Regional Education Board has long emphasized the critical need to strengthen students' readiness to succeed after high school. SREB's recommendations to improve readiness (SREB.org/Readiness) cover standards, assessments, transitional courses, postsecondary placement and remedial education. To support states' efforts, SREB compiled information through interviews of P-16 education agency staff and review of numerous documents to determine state progress as of fall 2016 on the recommendations. This state profile summarizes selected findings for each of the five areas. SREB plans to update this information annually.

Standards

Does the state have statewide college- and career-readiness standards in reading, writing and mathematics? Do K-12 and postsecondary education agree on the same standards?

In spring 2016, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education determined that the new English language arts and math Oklahoma Academic Standards implemented in 2016-17 were college-readiness standards. A review of nationally recognized ELA and math standards informed the decision. Education and K-12 faculty developed the new standards, and the Oklahoma Department of Education, the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technical Education and the Oklahoma Department of Commerce approved the standards.

Readiness Assessments

How does the state assess high school students' readiness? What are the options for students who do not meet them?

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education uses ACT subject scores to assess students' college-readiness. In 2016, the state legislature eliminated end-of-instruction testing; schools will use ACT and other high school assessments. Concurrent or dual enrollment courses are offered in the junior and senior year, and students must attain certain academic criteria to be eligible.

Transitional Courses and Interventions

Does the state require transitional readiness courses or other interventions for students who are not ready to succeed in college-level courses?

Oklahoma has no policy or statute concerning transitional courses or other interventions for students who do not meet readiness levels. Although a few teachers have been trained to teach the SREB Readiness Courses, the courses are not offered due to teacher shortages.

Postsecondary Placement

How do institutions place a student who is not ready for college-level work? Are the same standards, assessments and qualifying score levels applied statewide or systemwide? Are multiple criteria and measures used in placement decisions?

Oklahoma's assessment and remediation policy — the state's placement policy— has been in effect since 1991. The State Regents for Higher Education revised the policy in 2015 and implemented revisions in fall 2016. Institutions must submit an assessment plan for approval by the State Regents and annually report on the effectiveness of assessments.

Individual institutions have autonomy to determine placement criteria. The State Regents annually review institutional placement policies and practices. Assessments may include Compass, Accuplacer and a computerized individualized diagnostic tool. State Regents' policy encourages institutions to use multiple measures from previous student performance—such as high school GPA, specific course grades and class rank—in place of administering another assessment after the ACT.

Performance standards are based on empirical data from the ACT Course Placement Study using actual student performance outcomes. Placement requirements do not vary for different majors, but postsecondary institutions have autonomy to differentiate readiness skills by academic major and to determine criteria.

Remedial and Developmental Education

Are there state or system policies for remedial and developmental education in colleges? What curricular and support paths are available for students? Is corequisite instruction—an academic course taken in conjunction with another course—required or optional? How do institutions and the state monitor student progress? What evidence is available on the effectiveness of these interventions?

Since 1991, Oklahoma policy has required that a student who scores below a 19 composite on ACT enroll in remedial coursework. Effective fall 2016, revised policy allows remediation using methods other than a free-standing developmental education course. Each institution's assessment plan identifies remediation methods. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education supports a state system of corequisite models such as parallel supplemental courses, compression of the coursework into an intense shorter course, bridge courses taken before the student enrolls in the credit-bearing course, and supplemental assistance as part of the credit course. The state will implement corequisite models in fall 2017 and multiple math pathways in 2017-18. Colleges and universities must track or monitor student performance and report it annually. The State Regents for Higher Education will assess the effectiveness of alternative instructional options for students who are not college-ready.