

South Carolina

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?

All South Carolina four-year colleges and universities and technical colleges endorsed the K-12 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards for mathematics and English language arts as a requirement for the state's Elementary and Secondary Education Act waiver application. The South Carolina State Board of Education and the state's Education Oversight Committee approved the standards for implementation in 2015-16. Legislation mandates a review of the standards at least every seven years.

Readiness Assessments

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

English I and Algebra I assessments in the End-of-Course Examination Program align with, and assess students on, the College- and Career-Ready Standards. All 11th graders take the ACT and WorkKeys, but these are not exit examinations. Each school district determines additional interventions if assessment results do not indicate readiness for college and careers. Postsecondary institutions uniformly use ACT, with benchmarks aligned to college readiness, but cut scores and other usage varies by institution. South Carolina Commission on Higher Education policy stipulates that students may earn dual and concurrent college credit as high school juniors and seniors with exceptions for students in earlier grades.

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?

South Carolina has no statewide policy concerning transitional courses or interventions, but schools offer courses for elective credit. Only teachers who have been trained on the SREB Math Ready and Literacy Ready courses teach the courses. The SREB courses align with the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards.

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?

South Carolina does not have statewide placement policies. Individual public postsecondary institutions determine their own placement policies and each designs a placement system that may include multiple measures, such as GPA, standardized test scores and high school coursework. A work group is reviewing existing processes and developing recommendations for statewide placement requirements.

Placement decisions are not tied to the junior year college- and career-assessment standards. Technical colleges use Accuplacer as the college placement exam and set their own cut scores based on needs of local service areas.

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?

The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education develops policy for developmental and remedial education for public institutions. By policy, South Carolina technical colleges are the only public institutions that offer developmental coursework. The use of corequisite courses, which allow the student to enroll in a credit-bearing course while receiving supplemental instruction, varies by institution. South Carolina has no state-level policies to monitor corequisite instruction or alternate instructional paths for students who are not college-ready.