

# West Virginia

## 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?*

West Virginia was the fourth state to adopt the Common Core State Standards, and state law SB 59 (2013) provided flexibility for policy and rules. In 2016, the state began implementing the West Virginia College and Career Readiness Standards, a slightly revised version of Next Generation College and Career Readiness Standards the state adopted in 2014 with information from the Common Core standards.

K-12 and postsecondary education agree on the standards, but the readiness standards issue is unsettled because of the legislature's dissatisfaction with current standards. Bills introduced in the 2015 and the 2016 legislative sessions to immediately withdraw from the Common Core and the Smarter Balance Assessment Consortium did not pass.

### Readiness Assessments

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

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium test is the West Virginia Department of Education's summative assessment for all juniors. Administrative rule requires that schools use results of the comprehensive statewide assessment in grade 11 in English and language arts and mathematics to determine if the student has met college- and career-readiness standards and is exempt from developmental education placement. SBAC, Compass and ACT assess literacy and math skills. Policies of individual postsecondary institutions and partnerships with K-12 school districts govern whether students who make the cut score on the ACT may enter dual and concurrent credit courses in their junior year.

## 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?*

Statute requires schools to provide transitional courses in math and English in the 12th grade; West Virginia offers SREB's Readiness Courses as one option for students. Students who do not meet the state college-readiness benchmark must complete the Transition Mathematics for Seniors, a course designed for students pursuing a professional pathway. These courses align with college and career standards. Students who have completed Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry receive fourth-year mathematics credit for the mathematics transitional course. Institutions report data to the West Virginia Department of Education and assist in policy design and with best practices.

## 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?*

The state is reviewing placement policies and practices. Administrative rule specifies the minimum cut scores for required remediation systemwide. However, individual institutions have autonomy to determine criteria and set cut scores above the minimum. Actual correlation with student success determines qualifying scores. Students may not enroll at a public two- or four-year West Virginia public institution without required academic support unless they earn minimum scores. Placement content requirements vary for different majors; STEM majors require a higher ACT score.

Institutions apply the same standards, assessments and qualifying scores in determining the postsecondary readiness of rising seniors and for newly admitted college students. State-level data collection processes provide evidence of effectiveness of the placement process, and state-level review holds institutions accountable for appropriate and adequate placement processes.

## 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?*

Administrative rule states that students who do not satisfactorily demonstrate proficiency in math, writing and reading must remediate deficiencies through successful completion of specific developmental education courses, corequisite courses or other entry-level college credit courses that provide supplementary academic support programs or services. Students who complete transitional courses and meet the cut score on the ACT or Compass test do not need remediation.

Some institutions still offer developmental courses. However, Community and Technical College System institutions offer all corequisite coursework. Individual institutions have autonomy to decide criteria and requirements and to employ a range of strategies for supplemental instruction. Examples include intrusive advising, limitation of credit hours taken each semester, and increased student support services. Administrative Rule suggests strategies to address developmental skill deficiencies, including all forms of learning assistance, such as tutoring, mentoring, and supplemental instruction; personal, academic, and career counseling; academic advisement; and coursework. Rule also identifies multiple forms of academic support programs: modular course delivery; summer boot camps; extra class sessions, accelerated learning program model; paired courses, supplemental instruction; additional lab instruction; and tutoring. To monitor progress of students in alternative instructional options, the community college system uses data collection and review; some institutions monitor student performance with predictive analytics software. Increased success in pass rates provides evidence of effectiveness of alternative instruction options in the Community and Technical College System.