

# **The California State University English Placement Test (EPT) and Entry Level Mathematics Examination (ELM)**

## **2015 INFORMATION BULLETIN**

The California State University (CSU) requires you to take the English Placement Test (EPT) and the Entry Level Mathematics (ELM) exam prior to enrollment in the CSU [unless you are exempt](#) by means of scores earned on other appropriate tests such as the CSU's Early Assessment Program (EAP) tests in English and Mathematics, the SAT, ACT, or Advanced Placement (AP).

The EPT and the ELM are not admission tests; instead, they determine eligibility to enroll in specific courses. If you are required to take the EPT and the ELM but fail to do so, you will not be allowed to register for General Education courses at the CSU. You may take the EPT, ELM or both at a campus near you or where you plan to enroll.

The CSU Early Start Program requires students who do not perform well on the tests, or are not exempt by other means, to strengthen their English and/or math skills the summer before enrolling in the freshman year. Students who score below 147 on the EPT and below 50 on the ELM will be required to participate in Early Start Program. For further information regarding Early Start, contact the CSU campus that you plan on attending or visit [www.csusuccess.org/earlystart](http://www.csusuccess.org/earlystart).

**Access the EPT/ELM Information Bulletin and  
Register for the Tests on the web at [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu)**

## Table of Contents

THE TESTS.....	4
ENGLISH PLACEMENT TEST .....	4
Purpose of the EPT.....	4
Are you exempt from taking the EPT? .....	4
ENTRY LEVEL MATHEMATICS TEST.....	4
Purpose of the ELM .....	4
Are you exempt from taking the ELM? .....	5
ABOUT EPT AND ELM REGISTRATION .....	5
How to register for the EPT and ELM tests .....	5
Admission Tickets .....	6
Change of Test Center or Test Date .....	6
Fees .....	7
Refunds .....	7
Special Arrangements .....	7
Walk-in Registration .....	8
Incomplete Registration .....	8
WHERE THE TESTS WILL BE GIVEN .....	8
TESTING SCHEDULE .....	8
WHAT TO BRING TO THE TEST .....	9
TEST ROOM REGULATIONS .....	10
Misconduct.....	10
Avoid testing errors.....	10
Leaving the testing room during the test.....	10
Canceling your scores.....	10
SCORE REPORTS .....	11
GENERAL Q&A .....	11
INQUIRIES ABOUT THE TESTS .....	12
COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT THE TESTS .....	12
CONFIDENTIALITY OF SCORES.....	13
SCORES ON THE EPT AND ELM .....	13
TEST RELIABILITY .....	14
STANDARD ERROR OF MEASUREMENT .....	14
EPT TEST DESCRIPTION .....	14
What scores will you receive? .....	15
TOPICS ON THE EPT TEST AND SAMPLE TEST QUESTIONS.....	15
Essay .....	15
Reading Skills .....	16
Composing Skills.....	19
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE EPT.....	22
ELM TEST DESCRIPTION .....	24
Content .....	24
TOPICS ON THE ELM TEST AND SAMPLE TEST QUESTIONS .....	25
Numbers and Data .....	25

<b>Algebra .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Geometry .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ELM .....</b>	<b>29</b>

Educational Testing Service, ETS, and the ETS logo are registered trademarks of Educational Testing Service.

The modernized ETS logo is a trademark of Educational Testing Service  
Copyright © 2014 by Educational Testing Service All rights reserved.



## THE TESTS

The California State University (CSU) systemwide placement testing program consists of the English Placement Test (EPT) and the Entry Level Mathematics (ELM) exam which assess skills in basic reading, writing, and mathematics. Both tests are printed and scored for the CSU by Educational Testing Service (ETS). Please read the following information carefully.

### ENGLISH PLACEMENT TEST

#### Purpose of the EPT

The EPT is designed to assess the level of reading and writing skills of entering undergraduate students so that they can be placed in appropriate courses. Undergraduate students who do not demonstrate college-level skills will be directed to courses or programs designed to help attain these skills. **The EPT is not a condition for admission to the CSU, but it is a condition of enrollment. Students may take the EPT only once.** The fee for taking the EPT is \$18. The fee is subject to change.

#### Are you exempt from taking the EPT?

The CSU English Placement Test must be completed by all entering undergraduates, with the exception of those who present proof of one of the following:

- A score of “Ready for CSU or participating CCC college-level English courses” on the CSU Early Assessment Program (EAP) taken along with the English Language Arts California Standards Test (CST) in grade 11
- A score of “Ready for CSU or participating CCC college-level English courses - Conditional” on the CSU Early Assessment Program (EAP) taken in grade 11, provided successful completion of the Expository Reading and Writing Course (ERWC), AP English, IB English or an English course approved for extra honors weight on the University of California “a-g” Doorways course list
- A score of 500 or above on the critical reading section of the College Board SAT Reasoning Test
- A score of 22 or above on the ACT English Test
- A score of 3 or above on either the Language and Composition or Composition and Literature examination of the College Board Scholastic Advanced Placement Program (AP)
- Completion and transfer to CSU of the credits for a college course that satisfies the CSU General Education requirement in English Composition, provided such a course was completed with a grade of C or better

### ENTRY LEVEL MATHEMATICS TEST

#### Purpose of the ELM

The ELM exam is designed to assess mathematics skill levels of entering CSU students typically covered in three years of rigorous college preparatory mathematics courses in high school. Those undergraduate students who do not demonstrate college-level skills will be directed to courses or programs designed to help attain these skills. **The ELM is not a condition for admission to the CSU, but it is a condition of enrollment.** It may be taken only **once** during each of the following time spans:

- (1) 10/19/14 – 1/10/15 inclusive;
- (2) 1/11/15 – 2/13/15;
- (3) 2/15/15 – 3/20/15;
- (4) 3/22/15 – 5/1/15;
- (5) 5/3/15 – 6/20/15;
- (6) 6/21/15 – 7/11/15;
- (7) 7/12/15 – 8/8/15;
- (8) 8/9/15 – 10/17/15;
- (9) 10/18/15 – 1/9/16 inclusive.

The ELM may also be taken once on February 14, 2015; March 21, 2015; and May 2, 2015. The fee for taking the ELM is \$18.

### Are you exempt from taking the ELM?

All entering undergraduates must take the ELM exam before enrolling in a course that satisfies the college-level mathematics requirement of the General Education-Breadth program. Exemptions from the test are given only to those students who can present proof of one of the following:

- A score of “Ready for CSU or participating CCC college-level mathematics courses” on the CSU Early Assessment Program (EAP), taken in grade 11 in conjunction with the CST in Summative High School Mathematics or Algebra II
- A score of “Ready for CSU or participating CCC college-level mathematics courses - Conditional” on the CSU Early Assessment Program (EAP) taken in grade 11 along with the California Standards Test in Summative High School Mathematics or Algebra II, provided successful completion of a CSU-approved 12<sup>th</sup> grade math course that requires Algebra II as a prerequisite
- A score of 550 or above on the mathematics section of the College Board SAT Reasoning Test
- A score of 550 or above on a College Board SAT Subject Test in Mathematics (level 1 or level 2)
- A score of 23 or above on the ACT Mathematics Test
- A score of 3 or above on the College Board Advanced Placement (AP) Calculus AB or Calculus BC exam
- A score of 3 or above on the College Board Advanced Placement (AP) Statistics examination
- Completion and transfer to CSU of a college course that satisfies the requirement in Quantitative Reasoning, provided such a course was completed with a grade of C or better

## ABOUT EPT AND ELM REGISTRATION

### How to register for the EPT and ELM tests

Registration is required for the test and can be accessed at [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu). The online registration system allows students to register to test at any CSU campus on any available test dates. Please visit [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu) for a list of campus test dates and test centers. If special circumstances make it impossible for you to take the test(s) at the first available administration, you must plan to meet the requirement at the next scheduled opportunity.

If you have taken the SAT, ACT, or the EAP (Early Assessment Program) and shared your results with CSU, the registration system will check those results to see if you are exempt from EPT, ELM or both. If you are exempt from taking the exams you will not be permitted to register. You will be provided with

information on how you are exempt and how to share that information with the CSU campus you will be attending. You may also be exempt if you took the Advanced Placement (AP) tests or if you have taken college level courses previously. The CSU campus you plan to attend will need to verify a previous course or AP exemption from EPT and/or ELM based on these scores. The registration system will not be able to access them. If you meet all of the qualifications for [exemption](#) from both the EPT and ELM, registration is not needed. If you are unsure if you are required to take the EPT and/or ELM, contact the Admissions Office or Testing Office of the campus you plan to attend for further guidance.

The registration system will ask for a Social Security number. CSU campuses use your Social Security number to identify your student records maintained during your association with the campus. International students who do not have a Social Security number should use a taxpayer identification number. Students without a Social Security number or taxpayer identification number should leave this field blank.

**The EPT can only be taken once.** If you have taken the EPT on a previous test date you will not be permitted to register to take the test again. If you believe you should be permitted to repeat the EPT, contact Educational Testing Service (ETS) at (925) 808-2142 or [EPT-ELMRequest@ets.org](mailto:EPT-ELMRequest@ets.org).

**The ELM may be repeated,** but not during the same testing period. See the list of testing periods under [“Purpose of the ELM”](#).

If you live outside of California and need to take the test(s) in your home state or country, register for the test(s) by selecting the Out of State Test Center. The out of state or country tests are scheduled for the second week of every month except for the month of May, which is the first week of the month. To register for an out of state test, you must register by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month before testing will take place. There is an additional, non-refundable fee for this service.

Payment will be required at the time of registration and must be made via credit card, e-check or PayPal. See below for the registration fees. Once you have completed your registration and payment has been verified, an e-mail will be sent confirming your registration and providing a link to your admission ticket.

*Note: If you began the registration process online, but did not complete the entire registration process you will **not** be registered for the test. Only complete registrations, including payment, will reserve a spot for you at the test center on test day.*

## **Admission Tickets**

Once you have completed your registration and payment has been verified, an admission ticket will be available. **You must print the admission ticket and take it with you to the campus on test day.** Your admission ticket will include a ticket number that you will be asked to enter on your answer document on the day of the test. In some instances, a CSU campus may decide to issue the ticket closer to the date of testing. In this case, an e-mail will alert you when the admission ticket is available to be printed.

If you lose your admission ticket, you can log back into the registration system to print a duplicate.

## **Change of Test Center or Test Date**

By logging back into the registration system, you can change your test center, your test date, or test type, but **requests must be made no later than 2 weeks before the original test date** (not including the day of the test or the day of your request). During the 2 weeks before the test date no changes may be made to your registration.

If you wish to receive a refund of your registration fee, you must cancel your registration 2 weeks prior to the test date for which you are registered. No refunds are available after the 2 week deadline. The additional fee for testing Out of State is non-refundable.

Please note, test center changes can only be made if there are still seats available at the new campus.

## Fees

ELM fee is \$18; EPT fee is \$18; EPT and ELM combined is \$36.

Additional Out of State Testing fee is \$75. This fee is non-refundable.

Duplicate Score Report fee (for tests taken more than one year prior to the request date) is \$25. For tests taken less than one year prior to the request date the duplicate score report is free.

Registration fees and the additional Out of State testing fee must be paid by credit card, e-check, or PayPal. Cash will not be accepted. Fee waivers are not available. If you cannot pay by credit card, e-check, or PayPal, please contact ETS at (925) 808-2142 or by e-mail at [EPT-ELMRequest@ets.org](mailto:EPT-ELMRequest@ets.org). All fees are subject to change.

**Note:** By paying by e-check, be aware that you are authorizing ETS at its discretion to use the information on your check to make a one-time electronic debit from your account for the amount of your check; no additional amount will be added. If you do not have sufficient funds in your account, you will be required to pay an additional service fee of \$20.00.

## Refunds

**Registration fees are only available for refund up until 2 weeks prior to the test date and the additional Out of State test fee is never refundable.**

## Special Arrangements

### Religious Observers

If your religious convictions prevent you from taking the EPT and/or ELM on the scheduled test dates, you must contact the Testing Office at the campus you plan to test at to make special arrangements **before** registering. You must provide a letter on official letterhead from an appropriate religious authority to the Test Office you plan to test at. **Contact the campus Test Officer for instructions on providing this letter.** Then, in the registration system you will need to select the appropriate checkbox for religious observance when registering for the test(s). **If you do not contact the campus Test Office at least 2 weeks before the test date to make these testing arrangements you may not get the accommodations you need and you will not receive a refund.**

### Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability and require special arrangements for taking the examination(s), you must contact the Testing Office at the campus you plan to test at to make special arrangements **before** registering. **Contact the campus Test Officer for instructions on providing the appropriate IEP paperwork.** Then, in the registration system you will need to select the appropriate checkbox for special accommodations when registering for the test(s). The EPT and ELM are available in Braille, large-print, and audio editions. **If you do not contact the campus Test Office at least 2 weeks before the test date to make these testing arrangements you may not get the accommodations you need and you will not receive a refund.**

**Registration and documentation must be completed by the registration deadline.**

## Walk-in Registration

Not all campuses are able to accommodate walk-in registration. After the registration deadline passes, the online registration system will indicate which campuses accept walk-in registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this option at the test site they are considering.

Walk-in registration may be available on a first-come, first-serve basis. **If you are not already registered for the test you will be admitted only if ample room and test materials are available.**

Walk-in registration requires you bring a completed Walk-In Registration form (provided by the campus Test Office), check or money order made out to "ETS", and current school or government issued photo identification in addition to the items listed under "[What to Bring to the Test.](#)" Payment by cash is not an option at any test registration center.

Note: If you plan to pay your walk-in registration fee with a check, be aware that you are authorizing ETS at its discretion to use the information on your check to make a one-time electronic debit from your account for the amount of your check; no additional amount will be added. If you do not have sufficient funds in your account, an additional service fee of \$20.00 will be debited electronically from your account. All walk-in registration fees are non-refundable and subject to change.

## Incomplete Registration

If you began the registration process online, but did not complete the entire registration process you will not be registered for the test. Only complete registration, including payment, will reserve a spot for you at the test center on test day.

## WHERE THE TESTS WILL BE GIVEN

The EPT and ELM are administered at the CSU campuses. For a list of CSU campuses and test dates please visit [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu). You may register to take the tests at whichever campus you choose. You are not required to take the tests at the campus you plan to attend. If you complete EPT and ELM requirements, you do not have to fulfill these requirements again if you transfer to another CSU campus.

If you live outside the state of California, **have been admitted** to a CSU campus, and need to take the EPT and/or the ELM before arriving in California, register for the test(s) by selecting the Out of State Test Center. Out of state testing is arranged for the second week of each month except May when it is scheduled for the first week. You must register by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month before testing will take place. There is an additional, non-refundable \$75 fee for testing outside of California.

## TESTING SCHEDULE

The amount of time required for the EPT and ELM is as follows:

### I. ENGLISH PLACEMENT TEST

Essay	—	45 minutes
-------	---	------------

#### Multiple-Choice

Section 1	—	30 minutes
-----------	---	------------

Section 2	—	30 minutes
-----------	---	------------

### II. ENTRY LEVEL MATHEMATICS TEST      90 minutes

Please note that the above schedule includes only actual testing time. Plan on a minimum of 2 ½ hours for the English Placement Test and a minimum of 2 hours for the Entry Level Mathematics Test. The additional time is required in order to check in when you arrive, distribute testing materials, give the



necessary instructions for taking the test, and collection of the testing materials at the end of the test. **You cannot be dismissed prior to the end of an EPT-only administration.** Students may be dismissed, one at a time, before the end of an ELM administration. However, in order to avoid disturbing fellow students, you may not be dismissed during the final 10 minutes of an ELM administration.

If you have any questions about the testing schedule, contact the CSU Test Office where you plan to take the test. The addresses and phone numbers for the Test Offices are on the [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu) website.

## WHAT TO BRING TO THE TEST

You **must** bring to the test:

- Your **printed** admission ticket. You will be asked to enter your Admission Ticket Number on your answer sheet during the test.
- Your Social Security number or taxpayer identification number (card is not required).
- Acceptable identification. “**Acceptable**” means a current school or government issued ID that includes a photograph or physical description written in English and your full legal name. **Note: The name on your ID must match the name you enter in the EPT/ELM account in the online registration system.** Examples of acceptable ID are: (1) current driver’s license with photo; (2) current school ID card with recognizable photo; (3) valid passport with your signature and current, recognizable photo; (4) a document on your high school’s stationary bearing your name and a brief physical description in English (height, weight, age, sex, eye color, and hair color). You must sign this document in the presence of your principal or school counselor, who must also sign it. You may be asked to sign this ID form again at the test center. **Unacceptable** ID includes (1) Social Security card; (2) credit card (including one with a photo); (3) parent’s driver’s license; (4) birth certificate (including wallet-size birth certificates). **You will not be admitted to the test without an acceptable ID.** The Supervisor **cannot** make exceptions to this rule.
- Several No. 2 lead pencils with erasers. When you take the test(s), you will be required to record your answers on a machine-processable answer sheet and must use a No. 2 pencil. Answer sheets and essays completed in ink cannot be scored. Specific directions for completing your answer document(s) will be given to you at the test center. It is your responsibility to bring No. 2 pencils to the test center and to make certain you understand and follow the directions for completing your answer sheet. Responsibility for accurately scoring your test(s) can be accepted only if your answer document(s) is completed according to directions.

You **may** bring to the test:

- A watch (without audible alarm)
- A bag or backpack (must be kept on the floor under your chair).

You may **not** bring to the test\*:

- Cell phones, smart phones, and other electronic devices
- Calculator
- Any clocks, timers, or watches that beep or have audible alarms.

Please note, to assist with test security some Test Centers limit what can be kept with the test taker while at the Test Center. Your admission ticket will list **additional items** that are not permitted at the test site.

\*Students found with any of these items in their possession or in their backpacks or bags will be dismissed and have their scores canceled.

## TEST ROOM REGULATIONS

### Misconduct

**You may not bring a cell phone, smart phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), calculator, camera, laptop, iPad, tablet computer, e-reader or pager into the testing room.** Books, rulers, papers of any kind, and recording or photographic devices are not allowed into the testing room. **You will be dismissed and your scores will be canceled if found with these items.** Eating, drinking, and smoking are **not** permitted in the buildings.

You will be dismissed from the test or your scores will be canceled if you work on one section of the test during the time allowed for another section; use notes or any of the prohibited aids; give or receive help during the test; attempt to take the test for someone else; fail, after being warned, to follow the test supervisor's instructions; cause undue disturbance; attempt to copy test materials; or remove test materials from the room. Test fees will not be refunded if you are dismissed or your scores are canceled due to misconduct.

ETS and CSU reserves the right to cancel any test scores if the test taker engages in misconduct or if there is a testing irregularity. Because there is an obligation to report scores that accurately reflect the performance of each test taker, test administration and test security standards have been designed to assure that all test takers are given the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities and to prevent some test takers from gaining an unfair advantage over others because of testing misconduct.

All testing irregularities as well as test scores believed to be earned under unusual or nonstandard circumstances are routinely reviewed.

### Avoid testing errors

When you are taking the test, be sure to mark your answers on the answer sheet and not in the test book. You may use the test book for scratch work, but you will not receive credit for any responses written in it. Both the EPT and ELM are scored according to right answers only, so there is no penalty for guessing.

Please note, if you fill in answers after time is called for that section, your test will be canceled.

### Leaving the testing room during the test

If you have to leave the room briefly during the test to use the rest room, you must have the supervisor's permission. Only one person at a time is permitted to leave the test in order to use the rest room. You will not be permitted to make up the time you lose.

Please note, if you are caught using a cell phone or electronic device during a break or trip to the rest room you will be dismissed and your scores will be canceled.

### Canceling your scores

If, upon completing the test, you decide that you do not want to have your scores reported, you may cancel it by informing the test supervisor (after the test session is finished) that you would like to have your score canceled. Test fees will not be refunded.

## SCORE REPORTS

EPT/ELM score reports from each test administration will be available online at [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu) under View Score Reports. If you registered online for the test, scores can be accessed from your registration account. Individual student paper score reports will no longer be mailed. Scores will be available on the dates listed at [www.ets.org/csu/registration/dates](http://www.ets.org/csu/registration/dates) for each test administration. Test scores are maintained permanently by ETS. The test scores from tests taken during or after March 2008 are available online at [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu). Your name, date of birth, and personal identification number (PIN) provided at the time of testing will be required to access EPT and/or ELM scores online.

Duplicate paper score reports are available at no charge for the first year after the test date. For students who tested more than one year from the date of the request, duplicate score reports can be ordered by sending a check or money order in the amount of \$25 times the number of duplicate score reports desired, payable to Educational Testing Service, accompanied by a letter indicating your name, date of birth, phone number or e-mail address, last 4 digits of your Social Security number, the date on which you took the test, and the address to which you want the duplicate score report(s) sent. Sign the check, or money order, and send it along with the letter to:

Educational Testing Service  
EPT/ELM Program  
PO Box 4004  
Concord, CA 94524-4004

## GENERAL Q&A

**Q Where do I go to register online for the EPT/ELM?**

**A** The EPT/ELM Registration site can be accessed at [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu).

**Q How do I know if I am exempt?**

**A** Read the "[Are you exempt from taking the EPT?](#)" and/or "[Are you exempt from taking the ELM?](#)" sections of this Bulletin.

**Q I received a letter that said I am exempt from the EPT/ELM. Where do I send my score report to prove this?**

**A** Contact the campus Admissions Office or Testing Office where you have been admitted for information on where to send your score report.

**Q Do I have to take the EPT/ELM at the college I plan on attending?**

**A** No. You may take the test at whichever campus is most convenient to you. On the day of the test, you will be able to select up to four campuses where you would like the scores to be sent.

**Q I am an international student. Do I need to take the EPT/ELM? Do my TOEFL scores fulfill the requirement?**

**A** Please contact the Testing Office or Admissions Office at the campus you plan to attend to find out if you need to take the EPT/ELM.

**Q I am testing tomorrow and I do not know where to go and I have not received my ticket.**

**A** The EPT/ELM registration system automatically sends a message to the e-mail address you provided during registration. This e-mail contains a link to the admission ticket information. You can also login to the EPT/ELM registration site and print an admission ticket. The admission ticket may be printed or reprinted before the test.

**Q When will I receive my test scores?**

**A** The test scores will be available online according to the schedule of Test Dates on the [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu) website under the Registration Information link. Registered students who enter their Admission Ticket Number on their answer sheet at the time of testing will be able to view their scores by logging into the EPT/ELM Registration website. At the time of testing, walk-in students will be asked to provide a Personal Identification Number (PIN) so you can retrieve your scores online at [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu).

**Q How can my scores be forwarded to a different CSU campus or a community college?**

**A** You may request an additional score report directly from Educational Testing Service by mail. See the [Score Reports](#) section on page 11 for more information.

**Q What if I forgot my PIN number?**

**A** You can retrieve your PIN number from the EPT/ELM registration system by clicking the “View Your Scores” link and entering your name, date of birth, and Social Security number exactly as it was entered on your answer sheet.

**Q I am using my four-digit PIN number. Why will it not allow me to sign in?**

**A** The PIN number needed to view your EPT/ELM score is a six-digit number that you entered on your answer sheet on the day of the test. You need to enter your first and last name, date of birth, and PIN number exactly as they were entered on your answer sheet or else you will not be able to sign in.

**Q The EPT/ELM scores website states an examinee could not be found. Why is that when I took the exam 2 weeks ago?**

**A** This message means that either you are trying to view your scores before they have been posted or you did not enter your first and last name, date of birth, and PIN number exactly as they were entered on your answer sheet. All scores are available according to the schedule of Test Dates at [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu) under the Registration Information link.

**INQUIRIES ABOUT THE TESTS**

Students register for EPT and/or ELM online at [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu). Most questions concerning whether or not you need to take the EPT/ELM or other questions regarding EPT/ELM status can be answered by your campus Admissions and Records Office. You should address questions about test dates to your campus Test Office. Your campus English and Mathematics departments can answer questions about placement and preparatory courses. Campus Admissions and Records and English/Mathematics department telephone numbers are in the campus directory. Test Office addresses and telephone numbers are listed at [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu) under the Registration Information link.

**COMMENTS, QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT THE TESTS**

If you wish to register a comment or complaint about either test conditions or a test question, you may do so with the test supervisor after the test. The supervisor will report your comment on an irregularity form and it will be reviewed.

Anyone who takes the EPT and/or the ELM has the right to ask questions and air concerns about the tests themselves and about how they are scored and to have such questions or concerns answered in a timely fashion. If you have questions and concerns, please write them down and send them to the address below. However, please read [“Scores on the EPT and ELM”](#) on page 13 before sending in questions about scores and what they mean.

Educational Testing Service  
EPT/ELM Program  
PO Box 4004  
Concord, CA 94524-4004

Test answer sheets and booklets are retained by ETS for 18 months. Essays are retained for 6 months. Although test security reasons make it impossible for ETS to provide you with copies of test materials (such as test books), you have the right to inspect a copy of your answer sheet and/or your EPT essay at the ETS branch office located at 2731 Systron Drive, Concord, California. Requests for inspection may be made to **(925) 808-2142** or, by e-mail, to [cgrueter@ets.org](mailto:cgrueter@ets.org).

Questions about EPT/ELM testing can be answered by the Testing Office of the campus you plan to attend. Contact information for the campuses can be found on the [www.ets.org/cs](http://www.ets.org/cs) website.

## CONFIDENTIALITY OF SCORES

ETS releases EPT and ELM scores only to the California State University Chancellor's Office and Systemwide Testing Coordinator, the campus Admissions and Records Office, the English and Mathematics departments, the Testing Office on each CSU campus, and the individual EPT and/or ELM test takers. Once a year, summaries of EPT/ELM passing rates are provided at [www.asd.calstate.edu/performance](http://www.asd.calstate.edu/performance), for those students who took the tests and enrolled in the CSU for the Fall term. In order to preserve the anonymity of the test candidates and to ensure the confidentiality of their scores, no individual names or scores are given. The California State University and Educational Testing Service abides by all federal and state laws protecting the confidentiality of student data.

## SCORES ON THE EPT AND ELM

Because the EPT and the ELM are placement tests, "cut scores" that were developed by CSU faculty members are used. If you score at or above these cut scores, you will be placed in regular, college-level English or Mathematics courses. If you score below these cut scores, you must participate in the CSU Early Start Program which requires you to take classes in the summer before freshman year that focus on strengthening your English and/or math skills. Students who score below 147 on the EPT and below 50 on the ELM will be required to participate in Early Start. For further information regarding Early Start, contact the CSU campus that you plan on attending or visit [www.csusuccess.org/earllystart](http://www.csusuccess.org/earllystart).

**EPT** –Your EPT total score is reported on a scale that goes from the lowest possible score of 120 to the highest possible score of 180. If your total score for the EPT is 147 or above, you are ready for college-level English. If you score below 147, you will be required to enroll in preparatory instruction to help you attain the skills needed to succeed in college-level English courses.

In addition to your total EPT score — the score on which placement decisions are based — you will also receive separate scores on the component parts of the EPT: Reading Skills, Composing Skills, and the Essay. The Reading Skills and Composing Skills scores are reported on the same 120 to 180 point scale on which the total score is reported. The Essay score is reported on a scale that goes from the lowest possible score of 0 to the highest possible score of 6. Blank or off-topic papers receive a score of 0. The essay is scored by at least one member of the CSU English faculty.

**ELM** - Your ELM total score is reported on an even number scale that goes from the lowest possible score of 0 to the highest possible score of 80. If your total score on the ELM is 50 or above, you are ready to enroll directly in a college-level quantitative reasoning course. If you receive a total scaled score below 50, you will be required to enroll in preparatory instruction to help you attain the skills needed to succeed in college-level Mathematics courses.

## TEST RELIABILITY

The EPT and the ELM tests that you will take are similar, but not identical, to the tests that are administered on different testing dates. Although the exact questions may differ, the *format* and the *types* of questions asked are identical from one test to another.

Reliability refers to the consistency of test scores over administrations. For example, on a reliable test, a student would be expected to get the same score regardless of when the student took the test and when the test was scored.

Reliability is measured on an index score of 0 to 1, where 1 means that the test has perfect reliability. Reliability indexes between .80 – 1.00 indicate a highly reliable test.

The EPT and ELM are highly ‘reliable’—you will earn pretty much the same score no matter which edition of the test you happen to take.

On average, the reliability of the EPT is .89 and the reliability of the ELM is .80, which suggests that both tests are reliable enough to ensure that the EPT and the ELM will yield consistent placement decisions across different editions of either test.

## STANDARD ERROR OF MEASUREMENT

If you were to take the EPT or the ELM several times (with no new learning taking place between tests), it is highly unlikely that you would get exactly the same score each time you took the test.

This is because when you take a test such as the EPT or the ELM, several things above and beyond your proficiency in English and Mathematics skills influence your responses—you may not be able to concentrate, you may mark your answer sheet in the wrong place even if you know the correct answer, or you may guess the correct answer to some of the questions that are difficult for you. Because of these things, it is perfectly normal for your score to be a little different every time you take the same test.

Mathematically speaking, your ‘true score’—or the score that represents the *perfect* measure of your proficiency in English or Mathematics—is the average score you would receive if you took the same test over and over again lots of times. Any test score you get (no matter what test you take) is only an *approximation* of your true score.

Testing experts have a way of calculating how far (higher or lower) your actual score is likely to be from your true score. This calculation is called the “standard error of measurement,” or SEM. The SEM for the EPT is between 3 and 4 points on the score reporting scale of 120 to 180. That is, your actual score will typically fall between 3 and 4 points on either side of your “true score.” The SEM for the ELM is between 5 and 6 points on the score reporting scale of 0 to 80.

## EPT TEST DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the English Placement Test is to determine whether you are prepared to undertake college-level work in reading and writing. The results of the test will be used to place you in an appropriate course.

The English Placement Test requires one hour and 45 minutes to administer and contains the following three sections:

Essay	45 minutes – one assigned topic
Reading Skills	30 minutes – 45 multiple-choice questions

Composing Skills 30 minutes – 45 multiple-choice questions

The first section asks you to write an essay. The next two sections, made up of multiple-choice questions, assess your ability to comprehend and interpret reading material and your understanding of sentence construction and paragraph development.

### What scores will you receive?

- **Total Test Score** — Your Total Score is the combined scores of all three sections. It will indicate whether you have the skills in English that will permit you to perform according to the standards expected of you in regular college English courses. A low Total Score indicates that you should enroll in a class or workshop designed to improve your English skills.
- **Reading Skills Score** — Your score on the Reading Skills section of the test will indicate whether you are reading on a college-entry level or whether you should receive special instruction in reading.
- **Composing Skills Score** — Your score on the Composing Skills section of the test will indicate your ability to select sentences that establish clear meaning, your knowledge of sentence structure according to the conventions of standard written English at the college-entry level, and your ability to recognize statements that support or help develop a given idea.
- **Essay Score** — Your score on the essay will indicate whether you have the skills necessary to write in-class papers or examinations in college.

The following sections describe the EPT and provide sample test questions similar to those found on the actual test. More detailed information about EPT test specifications can be found in the CSU publication *Focus on English*, available in your guidance counselor's office and in the Test Offices and English departments located on all CSU campuses. *Focus* is also available on the Web at [www.calstate.edu/sas/publications/documents/focusonenglish.pdf](http://www.calstate.edu/sas/publications/documents/focusonenglish.pdf).

## TOPICS ON THE EPT TEST AND SAMPLE TEST QUESTIONS

### Essay (45 minutes)

The English Placement Test begins with the essay assignment. You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay on the topic specified in the essay booklet. Do not write on a topic other than the one specified; an essay on a topic of your own choice is not acceptable.

The EPT essay topic presents a paragraph-length passage in the form of an argument: in other words, the author of the passage makes a claim that he or she supports with reasons and evidence. You will be asked to analyze and explain the ideas presented in the passage and then evaluate those ideas in light of your own experience, observations, or reading. Because the writing assignment requires you to analyze the author's ideas in developing your own position on the subject, it integrates the critical reading and expository writing skills that are both essential to college-level work.

Below is a sample EPT essay topic.

**Directions:** You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay on the topic assigned below. Before you begin writing, read the passage carefully and plan what you will say. Your essay should be as well organized and as carefully written as you can make it.

“Advertisers frequently use the testimony of a celebrity to support a claim: a football star touts a deodorant soap, an actress starts every day with Brand A coffee, a tennis pro gets stamina from Brand X cereal, a talk-show host drives a certain kind of car. The audience is expected to transfer approval of the celebrity to approval of the product. This kind of marketing is misleading and insults the intelligence of the audience. Am I going to buy the newest SUV because an attractive talk-show host gets paid to pretend he drives one? I don’t think so. We should boycott this kind of advertising and legislate rules and guidelines for advertisers.”

-Sue Jozui

Explain the argument that Jozui makes and discuss the ways in which you agree or disagree with her analysis and conclusion. Support your position by providing reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

**Scoring your essay:** The CSU faculty member who rates your essay will expect you to write a well-organized essay, one in which you develop your ideas clearly and logically. Sentence and paragraph structure, usage, and grammar also contribute to your final essay score. Each essay is read and scored holistically by at least one faculty member using a scoring guide that helps to define degrees of writing proficiency. A score of 0 is given to essays not written on the assigned topic. For more information about the scoring process, including a copy of the EPT scoring guide, please see the CSU publication *Focus on English* at [www.calstate.edu/sas/publications/documents/focusonenglish.pdf](http://www.calstate.edu/sas/publications/documents/focusonenglish.pdf).

### Reading Skills (30 minutes)

The Reading Skills section consists of 45 multiple-choice questions. Some questions, based on short passages, ask you to identify or interpret ideas stated directly or indirectly in the text. Other questions assess your ability to determine the word that best fits the meaning of a sentence. Still other questions ask you to identify the logical relationship between sentences.

The directions for each type of question and a few sample questions follow. Remember that the actual test will present a total of 45 questions covering these three types of questions. Five questions, usually some of each type, are being given for field-testing purposes and will not count toward your score.

**Directions:** Each passage below is followed by questions based on its content. Answer all questions following a passage on the basis of what is stated or implied in that passage.

#### Questions 1-3

The search for a workable panacea is not new. Spanish explorers sought the Fountain of Youth. Millions of Americans used to seek health and contentment in a patent medicine called Hadacol. During the past two decades, however, more and more people have been turning to various branches of psychology for magic solutions, hoping that psychology can take care of any hang-up, cure the common cold, or solve the riddle of existence.

- From the whole passage one can infer that the word “panacea” means
  - utopia
  - religion
  - cure-all
  - life style



2. According to the passage, what do the Fountain of Youth and Hadacol have in common?
- (A) Neither really existed.  
 (B) Both brought their discoverers great fortunes.  
 (C) Both helped to end the search for magic solutions.  
 (D) Both were thought to have great power.
3. What does the passage call into question?
- (A) People's expectations for psychology  
 (B) People's uses of the lessons of history  
 (C) The relationship between psychology and medicine  
 (D) The legitimacy of the field of psychology

### Questions 4-5

Americans have given a new meaning to the term "spectator sports" by sometimes "attending" a game without making it into the stadium. Starting with the plans for the pregame tailgate parties in the parking lot, fans orchestrate every facet of the outing. When a cheer from the stands signals the beginning of the game, these fans rush to the car radio or peer intently into a portable television. Despite dedicated thermos emptying, dial twisting, and extensive planning for the next outing, they sometimes even manage to learn who won.

4. The passage implies that the spectators mentioned are most interested in
- (A) getting publicity for themselves  
 (B) turning the sports event into a social occasion  
 (C) analyzing the important plays of the game  
 (D) using all means possible to be informed
5. The author uses the phrases "dedicated thermos emptying" and "dial twisting" to suggest that these spectators
- (A) are usually intense and enthusiastic  
 (B) tend to take technology for granted  
 (C) spend much time on activities other than watching the game  
 (D) probably enjoy the game more than do those inside the stadium

**Directions:** For each of the following questions, choose the best word or phrase to substitute for the underlined portion containing gliff, a nonsense word.

#### Example:

Though Mr. Rivera is a gliff man and could live anywhere he chooses, he still lives in the small house in which he was born.

- (A) a careful  
 (B) a wealthy  
 (C) an ambitious  
 (D) a strong

A B C D

6. The water looked fine for swimming, but in fact the currents in the river were gliff.
- (A) contaminated  
 (B) soothing  
 (C) treacherous  
 (D) unnoticeable
7. Many of the problems we have with our natural resources could be gliffed if all of us did what we could to conserve those resources.
- (A) avoided  
 (B) defined  
 (C) publicized  
 (D) understated

**Directions:** In each of the following questions, the two underlined sentences have an implied logical relationship. Read each pair of sentences and the question that follows, and then choose the answer that identifies the relationship.

**Example:**

Donna is six feet tall.

Her cousin is two inches shorter than she is.

In relation to the first sentence, what does the second sentence do?

- (A) It provides an example.  
 (B) It makes a comparison.  A  B  C  D  
 (C) It notes an exception.  
 (D) It provides emphasis.

8. The Historic Dominguez Rancho Adobe, usually visited by those in search of tranquility, became a political battleground.

The cities of Compton and Carson each claimed ownership of the estate.

In relation to the first sentence, what does the second sentence do?

- (A) It introduces a new subject.  
 (B) It gives supporting evidence.  
 (C) It provides contrasting information.  
 (D) It makes an assumption.

9. Last year the goal of the Red Cross was to provide area hospitals with 80 million pints of blood.

This year the goal is to provide 100 million pints.

In relation to the first sentence, what does the second sentence do?

- (A) It gives a reason.
- (B) It draws a conclusion.
- (C) It states a consequence.
- (D) It makes a comparison.

### **Answers to Sample Questions in the Reading Skills Section**

- |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|
| 1. C | 4. B | 7. A |
| 2. D | 5. C | 8. B |
| 3. A | 6. C | 9. D |

### **Composing Skills** (30 minutes)

The Composing Skills section consists of 45 multiple-choice questions. In this section, your composing skills are assessed in several different ways. One kind of question asks you to read a statement and restructure it. Another asks you to select which version of a sentence is worded clearly, logically, and correctly. A third type presents a paragraph with a missing sentence; you must choose a sentence that logically begins, develops, or concludes the ideas in the paragraph. Finally, a fourth type of question presents a topic and asks you to select the information that most clearly supports the topic.

Below are the directions for the various types of questions and examples of each. Remember that in the actual test, this section will have 45 questions. Five of these questions, usually some of each type, are being given for field-testing purposes and will not count toward your score.

**Directions:** The following questions require you to rewrite sentences in your head. Each question tells you exactly how to begin your new sentence. Your new sentence should have the same meaning and contain the same information as the original sentence.

**Example:**

The student senate debated for two hours and finally voted down the resolution.

Rewrite, beginning with

Having debated the issue for two hours, ...

The next word or words will be

- |                        |                       |                       |                                  |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| (A) the issue          |                       |                       |                                  |                       |
| (B) it                 |                       |                       |                                  |                       |
| (C) the student senate | A                     | B                     | C                                | D                     |
| (D) a vote             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

1. Photographers, hoping to get good shots of the colorful birds, accidentally damaged the birds' nesting grounds.

Rewrite, beginning with

The birds' nesting grounds were accidentally damaged . . .

The next words will be

- (A) in the hopes of photographers who
- (B) and photographers hoped
- (C) by photographers who
- (D) by hoping that photographers

2. A panel of distinguished judges was selected by the trustees of the Smithsonian Institution to decide which inventions had been most beneficial to our society.

Rewrite, beginning with

The trustees of the Smithsonian Institution . . .

The next word or words will be

- (A) with their selection of
- (B) in deciding
- (C) selected
- (D) had been the

**Directions:** In each of the following questions, select the best version of the underlined part of the sentence. Choice (A) is the same as the underlined portion of the original sentence. If you think the original sentence is best, choose answer (A).

**Example:**

Ancient Greeks ate with their fingers, wiped them on pieces of bread, and tossed them to the dogs lying under the table.

- |                      |                       |                       |                                  |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| (A) tossed them      |                       |                       |                                  |                       |
| (B) tossing them     |                       |                       |                                  |                       |
| (C) tossed the bread | A                     | B                     | C                                | D                     |
| (D) they tossed      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

3. After the enormous mud slide of May 1983, about 3 million cubic yards of rock and soil were removed from the Pacific Coast Highway, and they required a fleet of 30 bulldozers and 7,700 pounds of explosives.
- (A) and they required
  - (B) and it required
  - (C) a job requiring
  - (D) a job where it required
4. On his second voyage, Captain Cook found that Tahitian breadfruit, which becomes rich in vitamin C after long storage, and this helped his crew members resist scurvy.
- (A) storage, and this helped
  - (B) storage, helped
  - (C) storage and helped
  - (D) storage, helping

**Directions:** Each of the following questions presents a passage with a missing sentence indicated by a series of dashes. Read each passage and the four sentences that follow it. Then choose the sentence that can best be inserted in place of the dashes.

5. ----- Being elected to the House of Representatives brought her national prominence in 1972, but she had a noteworthy record before that. In 1966 she became the first African American woman to serve in the Texas Senate, where she was named outstanding first-term Senator and was later elected Senate President pro tem.
- (A) Barbara Jordan spoke with a style that was at once matter-of-fact and eloquent.
  - (B) A believer in effecting change through the political system, Barbara Jordan supported certain pieces of key legislation.
  - (C) Barbara Jordan was only one of many outstanding women elected to national office.
  - (D) For many years, Barbara Jordan was a leading political figure.
6. Sign language is a complex system of manual communication used by deaf people. ----- Signs made with the hands are often used simultaneously with other movements, such as facial expressions, eye movements, and shifts of the body. For example, questions can be signaled by raising the eyebrows and tilting the head back.
- (A) More than a person's hands, however, are involved in conveying meaning.
  - (B) Americans and the British, on the other hand, use different sign vocabularies.
  - (C) Thomas Gallaudet was instrumental in the development of American Sign Language.
  - (D) People who are not deaf may learn sign language in order to communicate with deaf friends or family members.

7. As school populations decline, more and more schools will have to be closed. Then the empty buildings will pose a problem to their immediate neighborhoods. — — — — —.
- (A) Perhaps the school population is declining because the size of the average family is declining.  
 (B) We should all realize that nothing is so important as the education of our children.  
 (C) It would therefore be wise to begin planning as soon as possible for the best future use of these buildings.  
 (D) Therefore, no single neighborhood should be held responsible for what it cannot avoid.

**Directions:** Each of the following questions presents a topic and four sentences. Select the sentence that provides the best support for the topic presented.

8. Many people who have extensive collections become extremely knowledgeable about what is in them.
- (A) Collecting sculptures and paintings can be an expensive hobby, even for very wealthy people.  
 (B) Chester Nakamura became an expert on samurai swords by researching his own collection.  
 (C) Sara Johnson's private collection of rare books is so extensive that she had to add a large library to her home.  
 (D) Doing something and knowing about it are two different things.
9. Louise is older than most other applicants to medical school, but no one can doubt her desire to attend.
- (A) Some schools have witnessed a rapid increase in the number of female applicants.  
 (B) Over 42,000 people applied to medical schools last year.  
 (C) She has read several journal articles having to do with headaches.  
 (D) She worked as a hospital orderly for several years to earn the money for tuition.

### **Answers to Sample Questions in the Composing Skills Section**

- |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|
| 1. C | 4. B | 7. C |
| 2. C | 5. D | 8. B |
| 3. C | 6. A | 9. D |

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE EPT**

**Q Is this an admission test?**

**A** No. The results of the test will not affect your admission to any CSU campus.

**Q I have not yet been admitted. Can I still take the test?**

**A** Yes. It does not matter when the EPT is taken, so long as it is taken before the deadline set by the campus at which you seek to enroll. You **must** take the test before you can enroll in CSU General Education courses.

**Q I have completed freshman English at another university. Do I need to take the EPT?**

**A** The EPT is not required if you have completed and transferred a campus-acceptable four-quarter or three-semester unit college English composition course with a grade of C or better. You should contact the Admissions Office or Testing Office on the campus where you plan to attend to confirm you have a transferable course.

**Q Do I need to take the EPT if I did well on tests such as the SAT, AP, or ACT?**

**A** No. A score of 500 or above on the critical reading section of the College Board SAT Reasoning Test exempts you, while a 3, 4, or 5 on either the Language and Composition or the Composition and Literature examination of the College Board Advanced Placement (AP) Program gives you six units of credit and exempts you from the EPT. Also, a score of 22 or higher on the ACT English Test will exempt you. See page 4 for other grounds for exemption.

**Q I have a high GPA in my high school English classes. Do I still have to take the EPT?**

**A** Yes. GPA is not a consideration in determining whether or not you have to take the EPT. The only grounds for exemption are those listed on page 4 of this *Bulletin*.

**Q I am still unsure whether I am required to take the EPT. What should I do?**

**A** The staff of the Admissions Office or the Test Office of the CSU campus that you plan to attend will be able to answer your questions.

**Q Can I retake the EPT test?**

**A** No. The EPT test can be taken only once.

**Q Why are you testing English?**

**A** Unless you read well enough to understand your textbooks and write well enough to complete essay tests and term papers, you will have difficulty in your other subjects. Reading and writing skills are basic.

**Q What is the relationship of this test to the graduation requirements of my college?**

**A** The CSU Board of Trustees has called for a graduation requirement in student writing proficiency for all degree candidates. The EPT will help you prepare to meet that requirement at your campus by giving you descriptive information about your reading and writing skills.

**Q How do I prepare for the test?**

**A** The test assesses an examinee's reading and writing skills. You develop these skills with steady practice over a period of years. However, it is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the kinds of questions and writing topics that you will find on the test. There are practice materials available at [www.csuenglishsuccess.org](http://www.csuenglishsuccess.org).

**Q I have had English in high school. Shouldn't I be ready for college-level reading and writing?**

**A** Yes, but if you have not had very much practice in writing essays or in careful reading, you still might benefit from special instruction.

**Q Suppose I don't do well on the test?**

**A** The CSU Early Start Program will require students who do not perform well on the test to start remediation during the summer before the freshman year. Students who score below 147 on the EPT will be required to participate in Early Start. The campus that you plan to attend will send you additional information regarding Early Start if you are required to participate in the program.

**Q Will I have to pay for extra help if I receive a low score?**

**A** If you receive a low score, and are not exempt through one of the other pathways, you will be required to participate in the Early Start Program. If you qualify for financial aid, the Early Start Program fee will be waived.

**Q I will be out of the country on the first test date available. What do I do?**

**A** You must take the test at the next opportunity. It is to your advantage to take the test as soon as possible, and you **must** take it before you can enroll in CSU General Education courses.

**Q Do I have to take the test at the campus I will be attending?**

**A** No. It is not a requirement to take the test at the campus you plan to enroll. Plan to take the test at the CSU campus most convenient to you. On the day of the test, you can select to have your scores reported to up to four CSU campuses.

**Q How much time do I have to complete the test?**

**A** You have 45 minutes to complete the essay portion and 60 minutes to complete the combined multiple-choice portion (30 minutes for each of the two sections). If you are taking the ELM test at the same sitting, be prepared to test an additional 90 minutes for the ELM.

**Q How do I receive my test scores?**

**A** Registered students who enter their Admission Ticket Number on their answer sheet at the time of testing will be able to view their scores by logging into the EPT/ELM Registration website. At the time of testing, walk-in students will be asked to provide a Personal Identification Number (PIN) so they can retrieve their scores online at [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu). The test scores will be available according to the list of dates on the [www.ets.org/csu/registration/dates](http://www.ets.org/csu/registration/dates) website.

**Q How long are my EPT testing materials and scores retained by ETS?**

**A** ETS retains essays for 6 months and answer sheets and test books for 18 months. Although essays and answer sheets (not test books) are available for review at the ETS office in Concord, they may not be returned to students. EPT scores are available from 1977 to the present.

## ELM TEST DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the Entry Level Mathematics exam is to measure your mathematical preparedness for college level courses. It consists of 50 multiple-choice questions. Only 45 of these questions contribute toward your score. The remaining 5 questions, scattered throughout the test, are included for field testing for possible use on future versions of the test. Students will be allotted 90 minutes to complete the test.

The ELM placement test described in this *Bulletin* made its debut at the March 23, 2002 administration. This test reflects the desire of the CSU mathematics and mathematics education community to build a placement test that assesses mathematical skills needed for campus General Education (GE) programs in quantitative reasoning and that serves the needs of entering students planning both quantitative and non-quantitative courses of study.

### Content

The ELM placement test is predicated on the idea that students are responsible for mastering the content of three years of high school mathematics. The test places a major emphasis on working with numbers and data, algebra, geometry, and problem solving. The test provides geometric formulas for reference in support of its purpose to assess understanding of mathematical concepts and problem-solving skills, rather than recall of facts.

See “Topics on the ELM Test and Sample Test Questions” on page 25 for a list of the topics covered by the placement test and the proportion of the test devoted to each of the three major content areas: Numbers and Data, Algebra, and Geometry.

Calculators are not allowed for the ELM placement test. The placement test is designed to emphasize quantitative reasoning and problem solving rather than computation.

You will almost certainly benefit from reviewing the topics listed below for the ELM, especially if you have not taken a mathematics course during the past year. You can find some sample questions for practice in this *Bulletin*. You can find more information about the test and more practice questions — 50 of them — in



the CSU publication *Focus on Mathematics*, which is available at [www.calstate.edu/sas/publications/documents/focusonmath.pdf](http://www.calstate.edu/sas/publications/documents/focusonmath.pdf). Additional ELM practice test questions can be found at [www.csumathsuccess.org](http://www.csumathsuccess.org).

## TOPICS ON THE ELM TEST AND SAMPLE TEST QUESTIONS

### Numbers and Data (approximately 35%)

- ✓ Carry out basic arithmetic calculations
- ✓ Understand and use percent in context
- ✓ Compare and order rational numbers expressed as fractions and/or decimals
- ✓ Solve problems involving fractions and/or decimals in context
- ✓ Interpret and use ratio and proportion in context
- ✓ Use estimation appropriately
- ✓ Evaluate and estimate square roots
- ✓ Represent and understand data presented in tables, pie charts, bar and line graphs, histograms, or other formats for presenting data visually used in print and electronic media
- ✓ Interpret and calculate the arithmetic mean
- ✓ Interpret and calculate the median
- ✓ Make estimates and predictions based on data

### Algebra (approximately 35%)

- ✓ Evaluate and interpret algebraic expressions
- ✓ Simplify algebraic expressions
- ✓ Express relationships among quantities using variables
- ✓ Use properties of exponents
- ✓ Perform polynomial arithmetic (add, subtract, multiply, divide, and factor)
- ✓ Perform arithmetic operations involving rational expressions
- ✓ Solve linear equations (with both numerical and literal coefficients)
- ✓ Solve systems of linear equations in two unknowns
- ✓ Solve linear inequalities
- ✓ Solve problems in context that are modeled by linear equations
- ✓ Solve quadratic and rational equations (with both numerical and literal coefficients; real solutions only)
- ✓ Solve problems in context that are modeled by quadratic equations
- ✓ Solve equations involving absolute value (in one variable)
- ✓ Solve inequalities involving absolute value (in one variable)
- ✓ Find and use slopes and intercepts of lines
- ✓ Use constant and average rates to solve problems in context (using appropriate units)

### Geometry (approximately 30%)

- ✓ Find the perimeter, area, or volume of geometric figures (including triangles, quadrilaterals, rectangular parallelepipeds, circles, cylinders, and combinations of these figures)
- ✓ Calculate the ratio of corresponding geometric measurements of similar figures (e.g., if the perimeters are in a 3:2 ratio, the areas are in a 9:4 ratio)
- ✓ Use the Pythagorean Theorem
- ✓ Use properties of congruent or similar geometric objects
- ✓ Solve geometric problems using the properties of basic geometric figures (including triangles, quadrilaterals, polygons, and circles)
- ✓ Determine angles in the plane (using properties of intersecting lines, parallel lines, and perpendicular lines)

- ✓ Identify and plot points on the number line
- ✓ Identify and plot points in the coordinate plane
- ✓ Plot points on the graph of a function determined by an algebraic expression
- ✓ Graph linear functions in one variable
- ✓ Graph quadratic functions in one variable
- ✓ Relate basic information about a function to features of its graph (e.g., linearity, positivity or negativity, increasing or decreasing)
- ✓ Find the length or midpoint of a line segment in the coordinate plane

**Sample Questions (15)**

1. The pilots of an airline have signed a new two-year contract. For the first year of the new contract, current salaries will be reduced by 25 percent. For the second year, these reduced salaries will be further reduced by 10 percent. What percent of their current salaries will the pilots earn during the second year of the new contract?

(A) 35%    (B) 65%    (C) 67.5%    (D) 72.5%    (E) 75%

Topic — Understand and use percent in context

2. The number of atoms of platinum (Pt) in the universe is estimated to be 1.4 times the number of atoms of silicon (Si) in the universe. The number of atoms of silver (Ag) in the universe is estimated to be 0.33 times the number of atoms of silicon in the universe. Based on these estimates, the number of atoms of platinum in the universe is approximately how many times the number of atoms of silver in the universe?

(A) 0.24    (B) 0.46    (C) 1.07    (D) 1.73    (E) 4.24

Topic — Carry out basic arithmetic calculations



3. In the picture above, the perimeter of the starfish is 30 centimeters. This original picture is to be enlarged in both dimensions to an image that is similar to the original picture. If the area of the enlarged image is 9 times the area of the original picture, what is the perimeter in centimeters of the starfish in the enlarged image?

(A) 30    (B) 90    (C) 180    (D) 270    (E) 2,430

Topic — Calculate the ratio of corresponding geometric measurements of similar figures

4. Abraham's physics class has 40 students, and his class had an average (arithmetic mean) score of 75 on the midterm. Anita's physics class has 20 students, and her class had an average score of 81 on the same midterm. What was the average score of all the students in both physics classes on the midterm?

(A) 77    (B) 77.5    (C) 78    (D) 78.5    (E) 79

Topic— Interpret and calculate the arithmetic mean

5. The average price of gas increased by 10 percent during one year. If  $x$  represents the average price of gas at the beginning of the year and if  $y$  represents the average price of gas at the end of the year, which of the following is true?

(A)  $x = 0.1y$     (B)  $y = 0.1x$     (C)  $y = x + 0.1$   
 (D)  $y = 1.1x$     (E)  $x = 1.1y$

Topic — Express relationships among quantities using variables

6. Over the last thirty years, the speed of microprocessors has become approximately 4 times faster every 3 years. Based on this information, microprocessors made today are approximately how many times as fast as microprocessors made 9 years ago?

(A)  $4 \cdot 3$     (B)  $3^4$     (C)  $4^2$     (D)  $4^3$     (E)  $\left(\frac{4}{3}\right)^3$

Topic — Interpret and use ratio and proportion in context

7. As a scooter salesman, Gerardo keeps track of how many scooters he sells each week. In his first four weeks on the job, he sold 9, 4, 7, and 6 scooters. In his fifth week, he sold  $k$  scooters. If the median number of scooters sold per week for the five weeks is equal to 7, which of the following must be true?

(A)  $k \leq 4$     (B)  $k \leq 7$     (C)  $k \geq 7$     (D)  $k \leq 9$     (E)  $k \geq 9$

Topic — Interpret and calculate the median

8.  $\left(\frac{1}{32}\right)^{-2} =$

(A)  $2^{-10}$     (B)  $2^{-7}$     (C)  $2^3$     (D)  $2^7$     (E)  $2^{10}$

Topic —Use properties of exponents

9. Right circular cylinder  $A$  has radius  $r$  and height  $h$ . Right circular cylinder  $B$  has radius  $2r$  and height  $\frac{h}{2}$ . What is the ratio of the volume of cylinder  $A$  to the volume of cylinder  $B$ ?

(A) 1 to 1    (B) 1 to 2    (C) 1 to  $\sqrt{2}$     (D) 2 to 1    (E) 2 to  $\sqrt{2}$

Topic—Solve geometric problems using the properties of basic geometric figures.

10. An airline overbooks a certain flight by selling 20 percent more tickets than the total number of seats for people. The airline sold 180 tickets for the flight. How many people with tickets will not have a seat on the flight?

- (A) 20      (B) 24      (C) 28      (D) 30      (E) 36

Topic—Understand and use percent in context

11. If  $3(4x + 5) = 5$ , then  $\frac{4x + 5}{3} =$

- (A) 5      (B)  $\frac{3}{5}$       (C)  $\frac{5}{3}$       (D)  $\frac{5}{9}$       (E)  $\frac{9}{5}$

Topic—Simplify algebraic expressions

12. The rectangular floor of a closet is 3 times as long as it is wide. If the distance from one corner of the floor to the opposite corner of the floor is 10 feet, what is the area of the floor in square feet?

- (A) 25      (B) 30      (C) 50      (D)  $\frac{100}{3}$       (E)  $10\sqrt{3}$

Topic—Solve geometric problems using the properties of basic geometric figures

13. If  $\frac{1}{2}st = 1 - t$ , what is  $t$  in terms of  $s$ ?

- (A)  $\frac{1}{s}$       (B)  $\frac{1}{4}s$       (C)  $\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{4}s$       (D)  $\frac{2}{s+1}$       (E)  $\frac{2}{s+2}$

Topic—Solve linear equations

14. Which of the following is a factor of  $16x^3y + 4x^2y^2 - 42xy^3$ ?

- (A)  $2x + 3y$       (B)  $2x + 7y$       (C)  $4x + 3y$       (D)  $4x - 3y$       (E)  $4x + 7y$

Topic—Perform polynomial arithmetic (add, subtract, multiply, divide, and factor)

15. The rear wheel on a certain cyclist's bike has a circumference of 2,108 millimeters.

The cyclist rode in a 200-kilometer race without the rear wheel slipping. Of the following, which best estimates the number of complete revolutions of the rear wheel during the race? (1 kilometer =  $10^6$  millimeters)

- (A) Slightly less than 10,000 revolutions  
(B) Slightly less than 100,000 revolutions  
(C) Slightly more than 100,000 revolutions  
(D) Slightly less than 1,000,000 revolutions  
(E) Slightly more than 1,000,000 revolutions

Topic—Use estimation appropriately

## Answers to Sample Questions on the ELM test

- |      |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. C | 6. D  | 11. D |
| 2. E | 7. C  | 12. B |
| 3. B | 8. E  | 13. E |
| 4. A | 9. B  | 14. E |
| 5. D | 10. D | 15. B |

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ELM

### **Q Is this an admission test?**

**A** No. The results of the test will not affect your admission to any CSU campus.

### **Q I have not yet been admitted. Can I still take the test?**

**A** Yes. You may take the ELM anytime, so long as it is taken before the deadline set by the campus where you wish to enroll. You **must** take the test before you can enroll in CSU General Education mathematics courses.

### **Q Do I need to take the ELM if I did well on tests such as the SAT, AP, or ACT?**

**A** No. If you scored 550 or above on the mathematics section of the SAT Reasoning Test, 550 or above on a College Board SAT Subject Test in Mathematics (Level 1 or Level 2), 23 or above on the ACT mathematics test, 3 or above on an AP mathematics test (Calculus AB, Calculus BC, or Statistics) you are exempt from the ELM examination. Transfer students may be exempt through transferred coursework. See page 5 of this *Bulletin* for more exemption details.

### **Q What about the UC/CSU Mathematics Diagnostic Testing Program (MDTP) tests? I took one of those and did well. Do I have to take the ELM test?**

**A** Yes. However, those are rigorous tests and are excellent indications of mathematics skills. If you scored well on the MDTP intermediate algebra examination, you should do well on the ELM examination.

### **Q I have a high GPA in my high school mathematics classes. Do I still have to take the ELM?**

**A** Yes. GPA is not a consideration in determining whether or not you have to take the ELM. The only grounds for exemption are those listed on page 5 of this *Bulletin*.

### **Q I am still unsure whether I am required to take the ELM test. What should I do?**

**A** The staff of the Admissions Office or the Test Office of the CSU campus that you plan to attend will be able to answer your questions.

### **Q Can I retake the ELM test?**

**A** Yes, but **not** during the same testing period. For a list of the testing periods see "[Purpose of the ELM](#)" section.

### **Q May I use a calculator during the ELM exam?**

**A** No. The questions on the ELM do not require involved computation. Rather, the test includes problems that emphasize quantitative reasoning and problem solving.

**Q Why are you testing mathematics?**

**A** With science and technology playing an increasingly important role in our society, all college-bound students — not just those who show special aptitude or interest — must have an adequate grasp of mathematics. More and more undergraduate majors require some proficiency in mathematics, and many require either calculus or statistics or both.

**Q What is the relationship of this test to the graduation requirements of my campus?**

**A** Basic mathematics provides the necessary background for the CSU General Education quantitative reasoning requirement, which consists of a course at the level of College Algebra or higher. Such a course is required for graduation. Completion of the ELM requirement is prerequisite to that course.

**Q How do I prepare for the test?**

**A** Studies have shown that if you do not continue to use the mathematics you have learned, you may have trouble recalling simple principles. If you have taken less than three years of college preparatory mathematics or have not used your mathematics knowledge in some time, additional work and review may be necessary. Sample ELM questions are available on pages 26 through 28 of this *Bulletin* and at [www.csumathsuccess.org](http://www.csumathsuccess.org).

**Q I had plenty of mathematics in high school. Shouldn't I be ready for college-level mathematics?**

**A** Yes, but if you have not had very much practice in using your mathematics recently, you will benefit from a review.

**Q Suppose I don't do well on the test?**

**A** Students who do not do well on the tests, and are not exempt through other accepted pathways, will be required to participate in the CSU Early Start Program during the summer before the freshman year. Students who score below 50 on the ELM will be required to participate in Early Start. The CSU campus you plan to attend will send you additional information if you are required to participate in the Early Start Program.

**Q Will I have to pay for extra help if I receive a low score?**

**A** **If you receive a low score, and are not exempt through one of the other pathways, you will be required to participate in the Early Start Program.** If you qualify for financial aid, the Early Start Program fee will be waived.

**Q I will be out of the country on the first date available. What do I do?**

**A** You must take the test at the next opportunity. It is to your advantage to take the test as soon as possible, and you **must** take it before you can enroll in a CSU General Education mathematics courses.

**Q Must I take the test at the campus I will be attending?**

**A** No, it is not a requirement to take the test at the campus you plan to enroll. Plan to take the test at the CSU campus most convenient to you. On the day of the test, you can select to have your scores reported to up to four CSU campuses.

**Q How do I receive my test scores?**

**A** Registered students who enter their Admission Ticket Number on their answer sheet at the time of testing will be able to view their scores by logging into the EPT/ELM Registration website. At the time of testing, walk-in students will be asked to provide a Personal Identification Number (PIN) so they can retrieve their scores online at [www.ets.org/csu](http://www.ets.org/csu). The test scores will be available according to the dates on the [www.ets.org/csu/registration/dates](http://www.ets.org/csu/registration/dates) website.

**Q How long are my ELM testing materials and scores retained by ETS?**

**A** ETS retains answer sheets and test books for 18 months. Although answer sheets (not test books) are available for review at the ETS office in Concord, they may not be returned to students. ELM scores are retained for the life of the program and are available from 1983 to the present.