

# **ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT POLICIES**

## **Los Angeles Valley College**



This report is part of a series of summaries that outlines the assessment and placement policies used across the nine community colleges that comprise the Los Angeles Community College District. The information presented in this report was collected from college websites and district documents.

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## Matriculation

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Los Angeles Valley College declares that “matriculation is a process that brings Los Angeles Valley College and a student who enrolls for credit into an agreement for the purpose of realizing the student's educational goal through the college's established programs, policies, and requirements.” There are five components of the matriculation process:

- ❖ **Admission:** Students who wish to enroll in courses at LAVC must complete an application, either online or on campus at the office of Admissions and Records. Students must complete and submit the application packet no later than two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester.
  - High school graduates, or students 18 years or older, who have never applied to LAVC, or have not attended classes in the last year, need to apply.
  - Currently enrolled high school students are welcomed to apply but need to obtain and complete a Supplemental Application for Admission of Students in Grades K-12.
  - LAVC asks international students to apply in person. If one is currently outside the U.S. an online option is available.
- ❖ **Assessment:** LAVC uses ACCUPLACER to place students in English, ESL and math courses. Assessments are offered in English, ESL, and math as well as non-remediation tests in chemistry, Ability to Benefit<sup>1</sup> and math competency.
  - Students must complete assessment testing prior to enrolling in English or math courses.
- ❖ **Orientation:** LAVC provides online orientation, which can be accessed through the school's website. The online presentation helps students get acquainted with the school by providing information about campus policies and procedures. Students are introduced to college majors and given information on how to register for classes.
- ❖ **Counseling and Advisement:** The counseling and advisement center at LAVC provides students with assistance assessing skills, identifying career goals, and selecting appropriate classes. Counselors and advisors are available to assist students in the following areas:
  - Student educational planning
  - Career assessment and exploration
  - Assistance with academic or personal problems
  - Transfer Alliance/Honors Program (TAP)
  - Veterans Counseling
  - Foreign Students Admission Counseling
  - Puente Program
  - Service Learning
  - Vocational Counseling
  - Valley College Accelerated Program (VCAP)

### ***Who is eligible for matriculation?***

- All new students are expected to participate in matriculation activities and take a personal development course prior to the completion of 15 semester units at LAVC.

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<sup>1</sup> In order to receive financial aid, students must be "academically qualified" for study at the post-secondary level. Students who possess a high school diploma or a GED certificate are considered to have met this qualification. However, students who did not graduate from high school or who do not have a GED must pass an Ability-To-Benefit Test prior to receiving financial aid. Student must be 18 years of age or older to test.

***Who is exempt from matriculation?***

- Students with a BA/BS or higher or those enrolling in six or fewer units and who have proof of concurrent enrollment at another college or whose educational goals are personal development.

## Registration

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Students may enroll in classes after completion of application, online orientation, and if necessary the appropriate assessment tests. Students select classes online.

While students are expected to devise a student educational plan, outlining a schedule of needed classes, it is unclear whether students need to meet with a counselor prior to selecting classes.

***Pre-requisites, co-requisites, and advisories:***

- A pre-requisite is a course or body of knowledge that enhances a student's chance of success in subsequent courses.
- There is no information about co-requisites and advisories.

## Assessment

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LAVC uses the ACCUPLACER test to place students in math, English, and ESL. Tests are also given in chemistry, Ability to Benefit, and math competency but are not used to place students in remedial coursework. Students must take the ACCUPLACER English and math assessment test before enrolling in any English or math classes. LAVC does not state whether completed math courses from other accredited colleges may be used for placement instead of assessment testing.

***Assessment test used to place students in math?***

- ACCUPLACER

***Who must take the assessment test?***

- Students who are pursuing a vocational certificate
- Students who are pursuing an associate's degree
- Students who are pursuing to transfer to a four-year university or college
- Students who are undecided about their specific goals and considering one of the above options

***Who is exempt from being assessed?***

- Students who have earned an associate degree or higher.
- Students who have completed less than 15 units of college courses for personal development.
- Students who have taken the appropriate pre-requisite course with a grade of "C" or better as documented on an official transcript. Students must submit a pre-requisite challenge form and transcripts from previous institutions. Forms are available in the Counseling Center and Office of Matriculation Services.
- Students who have completed a placement test at another college and are able to provide test results.

**How often can a student take an assessment test?**

- Students may retake an assessment test after one year has passed from taking the assessment. No retests are permitted if a student begins the sequence of courses they are originally placed in.

**What is the frequency with which tests are offered?**

- LAVC does not specify whether students may take assessment tests year round.

**Are sample test questions available?**

- Yes, LAVC provides students with practice ACCUPLACER ENL, ESL, and math tests online.
  - <http://www.lavc.edu/assessment/index.html>

## Cut Scores

Los Angeles Valley College cut scores used for math assessment from 2004–2009.

	Arithmetic Test			Elementary Algebra Test				College Level Math Test				
LAVC Cut Scores	<45.5	45.5 ≤AR <73.5	73.5 ≤ AR	EA < 35.5	35.5 ≤ EA < 45.5	45.5 ≤ EA < 60.5	60.5 ≤ EA	CM < 35.5	35.5 ≤ CM < 50.5	50.5 ≤ CM < 76.5	76.5 ≤ CM < 102.5	102.5 ≤ CM
Recommended course placement	105	112	113	Students must take Arithmetic test	113	115	120, 125	Students must take E. Algebra test	215, 225, 245	238, 240	260	265

## Student Background Questionnaire

Los Angeles Valley College uses the same student background questionnaire for both ENL and ESL students. **Questions that are bolded are treated as multiple measures.**

1. What documented disabling condition do you have, if any, that might affect the usefulness of your test scores as measures of your skills?
2. What is the highest level of education completed by your father or male guardian?
3. What is the highest level of education completed by your mother or female guardian?
4. How many hours per week do you plan to be employed while enrolled?
5. **What was the highest level of math you completed with a grade of “C” or better?**
6. **How long ago did you complete your last math class?**
7. What was your grade in the last English class completed?
8. Which of the following describes your best writing skill?
9. How many years of English did you complete in high school? Do not count a repeated year.
10. What was your high school grade point average?
11. What is your total household income (most recent tax year)?

12. Do you intend to apply for federal financial aid?
13. Do you have children who live with you?
14. If you are a high school student, what grade are you in?
15. How many hours per week do you plan to attend classes?
16. Are you a high school graduate?

## Multiple Measures

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Students can receive an additional two points on their math score through multiple measures, regardless of whether they speak English as a native language. The two questions that count as multiple measures are as follows:

Questions	Answers	Additional Points
Question 5: What was the highest level math you completed with a grade of "C" or better?	a.) Basic Math	0
	b.) Beginning Algebra	0
	c.) Geometry	0
	d.) Intermediate Algebra	+1
	e.) Trigonometry	+1
	f.) Pre-calculus or Calculus	+1
Question 6: How long ago did you complete your last math class?	a.) Currently enrolled	+1
	b.) 1 year or less	+1
	c.) 1 to 2 years	0
	d.) 3 to 5 years	0
	e.) More than 5 years	0
Total multiple measure points	Minimum and maximum total points added	0 to 2 points

## Course Challenge Petition

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A student without transcripts, or other proof of having met the pre-requisite course required for entry into a particular course, must submit a pre-requisite challenge. To do so, they must complete the following steps:

A student may challenge a pre-requisite if they have completed the course at another college.

### Procedure to file a Course Challenge Petition:

- Obtain and complete the Pre-requisite/Co-requisite Challenge form.
- Present completed form to the chair of the department through which the course in question is being offered.
- The chair will approve or deny the challenge, providing written reasons in the space provided on the Pre-requisite/Co-requisite Challenge Form, sign and date their response, and then return the form to the student.
- Challenge forms must be processed no later than the last day to add classes. Once challenge is approved, the student should take the form to the Pre-requisite Window (SSC Lobby) and request that he/she be cleared to enroll in the course in question.
- If the challenge is denied, and the student wishes to appeal the chair's decision, the student should:
  - Bring the form, signed and dated by the Chair, to the Pre-requisite Window (SSC Lobby).

- Academic Affairs will call a meeting of the Pre-requisite/Co-requisite Appeals Committee.
- The Appeals Committee will decide on the appeal within five business days of the time the appeal is filed. If the course is open, the student will be allowed to enroll in the class during the appeals process.
- If the Appeals Committee fails to render its decision by the end of the second week of classes, the student will be allowed to remain in the class. If appeal is denied student will be notified and dropped administratively.

### **LACCD Math Competency Exam**

The Los Angeles Community College District Math Competency Exam is for continuing students who have been attending LAVC prior to summer 2009. This exam was designed to meet the Math 115 graduation requirement for the associate's degree. The assessment center offers this exam by appointment only. The math competency exam may not be used to fulfill math pre-requisites. Students who wish to enroll in higher-level math courses must take the math assessment. Students must score a 15 or better to pass. Students, who score below a 15, must enroll in Math 115. You may only test once. No retests are permitted.

## **Counseling**

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Students are encouraged to make counseling appointments for long-term educational planning, career assessment/exploration, and assistance with academic or personal problems. Counselors are available on a walk-in basis Monday through Friday. Students are encouraged to set up in-depth counseling sessions in advance. These counseling sessions last approximately a half-hour. Students have the chance to specify what they need consultation on including:

- **General academic advisement:** Counselors assists students seeking to:
  - Continue their studies at either a four-year college or university
  - Obtain an associate's degree
  - Enroll in one of many certificate programs, associate degrees, or occupational certificate programs
  - Discuss academic probation and academic dismissal
- **Personal counseling:** In situations where personal concerns are having an adverse impact on the student's ability to do well in their classes, students may obtain personal counseling as part of a regular 30-minute appointment. Referrals are available for more in-depth, long-term counseling.
- **Student Educational Planning:** Counselors can provide an individualized list of required pre-requisite, major, general education, and elective courses for a student's specific educational goals.
- **Career assessment and exploration:** Counselors can offer a special-purpose series of one hour appointments that is specifically geared toward helping students decide on a career or major.
- **Transfer Alliance/Honors Program (TAP):** These counseling sessions consist of academically enriched general education courses in which both written expression and the critical analysis of ideas are stressed and have the possibility to secure a spot at four-year college or university.
- **Veterans Counseling:** This counseling service provides assistance to veterans and their dependents who are eligible for V.A. benefits
- **Foreign Students Admission Counseling:** Counselors work with international students to help them obtain I-20's so they may study in the United States on an F-1 Visa.

- **Puente Program:** This mentorship program is geared towards helping underrepresented students reach their educational goals.
- **Service Learning:** Counselors link students as volunteers with nonprofit agencies.
- **Career Technical Education (CTE) Counseling:** Assists students in three instructional programs:
  - CTE programs leading to an occupational certificate
  - An associate's degree program leading to an A.A. or A.S. degree. Students desiring an A.A. degree must complete major and appropriate graduation requirements including general education.
  - Transfer programs leading to the transfer to a four-year college or university with upper division junior standing in some particular majors.
- **Valley College Accelerated Program (VCAP):** The program offers college-level courses in an accelerated format. VCAP is set up to meet the needs of today's busy adults, enabling them to meet their employment and family obligations and earn a college degree.

### **Program Planning**

Average course loads range from 12 to 16 units. Students who demonstrate exceptional ability and wish to take more than 18 units may do so only with the approval of a counselor. Students on scholastic probation may be limited in the number of units they may carry, depending on the extent of their deficiencies. Although a counselor may assist students in planning their programs, students must assume full responsibility for compliance with instructions and regulations as set forth in the catalog, and for selecting subjects which enable them to achieve their objectives, whether that be graduation from the college, meeting the lower division requirements of a higher institution, or preparing for an occupation.

### **Career/Transfer Center**

The center provides services to assist students in selecting a major and vocational goal, preparing to transfer, or completing one of Valley College's occupational programs. Career testing is offered in conjunction with counseling to assist the student in self-understanding and decision-making. The career testing service offers tests of ability, achievement, interests, values, personality, and study habits. A library and computer lab provides information about occupations as well as transfer opportunities and requirements. Representatives from four-year colleges and universities are available to talk with students on a regular basis.

Note: Counseling is not required.

## **Sources**

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Los Angeles Valley College: Admission. (2012). Welcome to Admissions. Retrieved from <http://www.lavc.edu/admissions/index.html>.