Developmental Education and Texas Success Initiative

Original Implementation: April 18, 2000
Last Revision: October 18, 2010 April 15, 2014

The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) is a program administered by the Center for College Readiness Division of P-16 Initiatives at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The objective of the program is to ensure that students are prepared academically to succeed in higher education.

The TSI program requires each institution of higher education to assess the academic skills of each entering undergraduate student to determine the student’s academic readiness before initial enrollment in freshman-level academic coursework. The THECB designates particular diagnostic instruments approved for assessing students’ skills in reading, writing and mathematics. The TSI Assessment is the diagnostic instrument for non-exempt students. The Division of P-16 Initiatives publishes current exemption standards at its website: www.thecb.state.tx.us/.

Entering undergraduates may earn exemption from TSI assessment by supplying certain scores on designated assessment instruments, such as SAT, ACT, or Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). Other students may earn exemptions through prior study at private or out-of-state institutions, or through qualifying military service.

The purposes of this policy are to:

- articulate Stephen F. Austin State University’s (SFA) requirements regarding TSI assessment and developmental coursework;
- promote quality and accountability in developmental education and advising;
- provide for effective delivery of the developmental education program; and,
- ensure that all students receive assistance in becoming ready to succeed in freshman-level academic coursework.

Exemption from Testing
The assessment requirements of the TSI program do not apply to a student who:

- has graduated with an associate or baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education;
- has transferred to SFA from a private, independent, or accredited out-of-state institution of higher education after satisfactory completion of college-level coursework as designated by SFA;
- is serving on active duty as a member of the armed forces of the United States or the Texas National Guard;
• is currently serving as a member of a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States and has been serving for at least the three-year period preceding SFA enrollment; was honorably discharged, retired or released from active duty as a member of the armed forces of the United States or the Texas National Guard on or after August 1, 1990;
• was honorably discharged, retired, or released from service as a member of a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States on or after August 1, 1990;
• is enrolled at SFA in a non-degree-seeking status;
• has achieved certain scores as determined by THECB on the SAT or ACT and has enrolled at SFA within five years of achieving those scores;
• has achieved certain scores as determined by THECB on the exit-level assessment required for public high school graduates in Texas and has enrolled at SFA within three years of achieving those scores; and,
• has satisfied all readiness requirements at another Texas institution of higher education and has supplied appropriate documentation of that status.

Testing Requirements

SFA accepts scores from any assessment instrument designated by THECB. Each undergraduate student must supply assessment scores in reading, writing, and mathematics, or demonstrate qualification for exemption from such assessment, prior to initial enrollment.

Under exceptional circumstances, a student may be allowed to enroll in certain freshman-level courses for one semester without TSI assessment scores. (Enrollment restrictions based on prerequisites and other entry criteria will limit courses for which the student is eligible.) The student must then supply TSI assessment scores by the end of the first semester of enrollment. Examples of exceptional circumstances include a documented illness, injury, or emergency that prevented testing, or necessary delays in providing appropriate accommodations for a student with a documented disability.

Developmental Education Program and Advising

For each student who fails to meet the minimum passing standards as set by THECB, SFA will provide individual advising regarding developmental education necessary to ensure the readiness of that student in performing freshman level academic coursework. SFA will also assist in developing an individual plan for academic success.

TSI Advising Program
Individual advising will be provided to each student who has not yet demonstrated readiness in reading, writing, and/or math. The student’s TSI advisor will assist the student in developing an individual plan for achieving college readiness. This plan will include either traditional developmental course work or alternatives as approved by the THECB.

Each student who has not met all college-readiness requirements must meet with an advisor in the Academic Advising Center (AAC) before registering for classes each semester. The student’s progress toward achieving readiness standards will be reviewed, and the advisor will provide assistance in registering for required developmental coursework.

Meeting Developmental Requirements
For each area of deficiency, the student must enroll in developmental coursework to address that area until the AAC determines that the student is ready to perform freshman-level academic coursework in that area. As indicators of readiness, the AAC may consider the student’s performance in developmental education, performance in appropriate non-developmental coursework, and/or performance on an approved TSI assessment instrument. For course-based developmental work (ENG 099, MTH 099, RDG 098), an earned grade of “C” or higher will demonstrate that the student is college-ready. A student may retest at any time to demonstrate readiness using any of the assessment instruments approved by THECB. It is the student’s responsibility to submit any updated test scores to the AAC.

Documentation of TSI Status
In accordance with THECB regulations, the student’s SFA transcript will indicate each student’s current status regarding college readiness in reading, writing, and mathematics. This status will be updated each semester. Each student’s updated TSI status will be documented on the official university transcript as readiness standards are met. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that applicable transcripts or test scores from other institutions are supplied to SFA.

Dual-Credit and Concurrent Students
High school students who achieve sufficient scores on the tenth-grade TAKS (or other state-administered assessment approved by the THECB) may enroll in dual-credit courses through their senior year of high school without taking a state-approved TSI assessment. Upon enrolling for degree-seeking credit at SFA, these students must satisfy requirements for TSI exemption or take an approved TSI assessment test in reading, writing, and mathematics.
Any high school student seeking concurrent enrollment must demonstrate qualification for exemption from TSI assessment or earn an acceptable score on an approved TSI assessment instrument before enrolling at SFA.

**Special Circumstances**

**TSI requirements may be waived for students enrolling on a temporary, non-degree-seeking basis. Students enrolling for dual or concurrent credit must meet eligibility requirements established by the Division of P-16 Initiatives.**

**Attendance, Grades, and Academic Standing**

Students are not allowed to drop developmental courses from their schedule unless they pass a TSI assessment instrument or can provide documentation of satisfying readiness requirements in another manner. If a student is allowed to drop a developmental course, the dropped course does not count toward the course drop limitation policy as described in the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Rules, Chapter 4, Subchapter A, Section 4.10. Grades earned in developmental courses do not count toward a student’s cumulative GPA. Credit for developmental courses may not be used to meet graduation requirements.

**Evaluating Effectiveness of Developmental Education Monitoring Readiness for College-Level Work**

_The Academic Advising Center will compile cumulative information about students’ TSI readiness during each long semester. This information will be provided to the provost and vice president for academic affairs and other academic administrators as appropriate._

The AAC will collect and compile information about students’ success in achieving TSI readiness standards. This information will be prepared for the provost and vice president for academic affairs. If subsequent performance in related freshman-level academic coursework is to be collected and compiled, this would be the responsibility of individual academic units.

Responsible for Implementation: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Contact for Revision: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Forms: None

Board Committee Assignment: Academic and Student Affairs