

STEP 2: PLACEMENT

Placement processes

Students applying to and attending Southwestern College have access to math, English, and English as a Second Language placements.

Shortly after an application to the college is processed, students receive an automated email with information about their placements. Students may be asked to complete additional steps in the placement process and/or provide additional information for accurate placement. An email regarding the placement process is sent to all new students who do not already hold an associate degree or higher. Students who already hold an associate degree or higher will need to take additional steps to receive math, English, and English as a Second Language placements.

Students can also access links to specific placement processes and find instructions and information about those processes on the Placement and Prerequisites Center (<https://www.swccd.edu/student-support/placement-and-prerequisites/>) webpage or the Placement and Prerequisites Forms (<https://www.swccd.edu/student-support/placement-and-prerequisites/placement-and-prerequisite-forms/>) webpage. MySWC login is required to access most placement processes and forms.

The Southwestern College Placement and Prerequisites Center currently offers placement into mathematics, English and English as a Second Language. The Placement and Prerequisites Center is located in room 68-205 on the second floor of the Cesar E. Chavez Student Services Building (68) on the Chula Vista campus. The Center email is SWCPlacement@swccd.edu. The Placement and Prerequisites Center is also available through virtual chat during normal business hours at the Placement and Prerequisites Lobby (<https://swccd.craniumcafe.com/group/placement-and-prerequisites/lobby/>).

How placements are determined

Mathematics and English placements are based on multiple measures or specific points of information about each student. These multiple measures indicate what a student needs to succeed in college-level coursework. The information used for placement of students who completed high school in the United States is gathered from high school courses and grades provided by the students. It is submitted to the college through the CCCApply application or by submitting a high school transcript or other document. Students are generally informed of their placement results via email.

The guided placement (GP) is for students who completed high school outside of the United States, completed adult school or a high school equivalency, or who cannot be placed using high school course and grade information. Completing the GP survey will give us information to determine the best level for you to start in mathematics, English, and/or English as a Second Language courses. For more information about guided placement and information about accessing guided placement please visit the Placement and Prerequisites webpage (<https://www.swccd.edu/student-support/placement-and-prerequisites/placement-and-prerequisite-forms/>).

English Placement

English placement is based on the student's **unweighted** overall grade point average (GPA), the highest level high school English course completed, and the grade received in that course.

- Students who have passed advanced high school English courses with a grade of C or better or have an **unweighted** overall high school GPA of 2.6 or higher are placed directly into English C1000 - Academic Reading and Writing.
- Students who have an **unweighted** overall high school GPA below 2.6 will be required to take a corequisite support course, English 45 – Support for Academic Reading and Writing or NC 165, its noncredit equivalent. English 45 or NC 165 is taken in the same term as the transfer level course and focuses on building and strengthening knowledge and skills that are necessary for success in English C1000.
- Students with an **unweighted** high school GPA between 2.00 and 2.59 may opt out of English 45/ NC 165.
- Students who want additional English language acquisition support and who qualify for English C1000 (without English 45) can enroll also in ESL 115A College Composition for Multilingual Students.

Students have a right to enroll in transfer level coursework according to Southwestern College placement policies.

Mathematics Placement

Mathematics placement at Southwestern College is determined by using a student's highest level of successfully completed mathematics, the grade in the student's highest math course completed, and the student's overall unweighted high school grade point average (GPA).

All students entering Southwestern College are placed into a transferable course in mathematics or quantitative reasoning that aligns with their program of study in their first semester of enrollment.

Students who need additional support in their mathematics and quantitative reasoning courses at Southwestern College may be required to take a corequisite support course in the same semester as their first transferable mathematics course. Support courses teach students mathematical concepts and study skills to support their success in their transfer level mathematics course and beyond. Concurrent support courses are available either as credit or noncredit courses.

Students are given two (2) mathematics placements at the transfer level and have the right to enroll in transfer level coursework according to their Southwestern College placement. The What Math Should I Take? webpage (<https://www.swccd.edu/student-support/placement-and-prerequisites/what-math-should-i-take.aspx>) provides information by major about the math or quantitative reasoning course that is recommended at each placement level. This website also helps students know which of their math placements is relevant to their major. In general terms:

- The **Business, Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (BSTEM)** pathway includes mathematics courses that prepare students for majors in which knowing advanced algebra and calculus are required.
- The **Statistics and Liberal Arts Mathematics (SLAM)** pathway is intended to meet the needs of students with a major or field of study that requires other kinds of quantitative reasoning skills.

Students in the STEM pathway who completed a course in intermediate algebra, Integrated Math 3, or a similar class with a grade of C or higher in both semesters in high school can expect to be placed into MATH 244 Precalculus with Trigonometry or other transferable courses for STEM

students. Students with lower overall GPAs may be required to take a concurrent support course with some courses.

Students in the STEM pathway who completed a course in precalculus, trigonometry, or a similar class with a grade of C or higher in both semesters in high school can expect to be placed into MATH 250 Analytic Geometry and Calculus or other transferable courses for STEM students. Students with lower overall GPAs may be required to take a concurrent support course with some courses.

It is highly recommended that students speak with a counselor to understand which mathematics courses are best suited to their particular educational goals.

All students have a right to enroll in transferable courses in mathematics and quantitative reasoning according to Southwestern College placement policies. A support course may be required as a condition on that enrollment.

English as a Second Language Placement

All students at Southwestern College have a right to take credit courses in English as a Second Language (ESL).

A guided self-placement process determines the level of classes where a student begins studying in the credit ESL program. In this process, the student answers questions about their education history, how long they have studied English, how they use English, and their comfort in using English to accomplish different purposes. The student also looks at samples of the work that they are expected to do at each level and reads descriptions of what they will learn in the class. At the end, the student decides what level is the best one for them to start studying ESL at Southwestern College.

For more information about the ESL Guided Self Placement Process, please contact the Placement and Prerequisites Lobby (<https://swccd.craniumcafe.com/group/placement-and-prerequisites/lobby/>) or visit the Placement and Prerequisites page (<https://www.swccd.edu/student-support/placement-and-prerequisites/>).

External Assessments

Southwestern College does not accept assessment or placement results from other colleges and universities for placement purposes. All incoming students will be placed based on the multiple measures placement processes as described above. If you have questions about this policy, please contact the Placement and Prerequisites Center.

Southwestern College accepts Advanced Placement and certain other exam scores for placement into higher level math and English courses in accord with the policies laid out in the External Exams Credit section in this catalog. To use these scores for placement purposes, please contact the Placement and Prerequisites Center (<https://www.swccd.edu/student-support/placement-and-prerequisites/>) or visit the Prerequisites (<https://www.swccd.edu/student-support/placement-and-prerequisites/prerequisites/>) page for information about how to submit these exam scores for evaluation.