



## SUNY Orange Placement Test Overview

Accuplacer is a placement test administered to all new students to ensure academic success in English and mathematics, as these courses are foundational to virtually every program offered at SUNY Orange. Accuplacer determines appropriate course placement to correspond to the student's skill level. Using these placements, students will begin classes at a level where they are most likely to succeed. All newly admitted students are required to complete the placement assessment prior to registration, unless they request and are granted a waiver based on previous course work.

Accuplacer is a computer-based adaptive assessment delivered via the Internet. All questions are multiple choice except the written essay. The computer uses your answers to questions to determine the level of difficulty of each successive question. It is therefore important to answer every question. This technique can determine one's skill level on each section of the assessment by asking relatively few questions (there are 12-25 questions in each section). The assessment is untimed (except for the essay portion). A proctor will be available to assist with problems that relate to the assessment format or computer usage. You may only take the Assessment once. Retesting is invalid unless specifically authorized by Department Chairs or Director of Advising & Counseling.

For more specifics on taking the placement test at SUNY Orange go to <http://www.sunyorange.edu/counseling/assessment.shtml>.

### THE TESTS

#### Written Essay (1 hour)

This test measures your ability to write effectively, which is critical to academic success. Your writing sample will be scored on the basis of how effectively it communicates a whole message to the readers for the stated purpose. Your score will be based on your ability to express, organize, and support your opinions and ideas, not the position you take on the essay topic. The following five characteristics of writing will be considered:

- **Focus**—The clarity with which you maintain your main idea or point of view
- **Organization**—The clarity with which you structure your response and present a logical sequence of ideas
- **Development and Support**—The extent to which you elaborate on your ideas and the extent to which you present supporting details
- **Sentence Structure**—The effectiveness of your sentence structure
- **Mechanical Conventions**—The extent to which your writing is free of errors in usage and mechanics

#### Reading Comprehension (untimed, multiple choice)

There are 20 questions of two primary types on the Reading Comprehension test.

1. A **reading passage** is followed by a question based on the text. Both short and long passages are provided. The reading passages can also be classified according to the kind of information processing required including explicit statements related to the main idea, explicit statements related to a secondary idea, application, and inference.
2. Focuses on **sentence relationship**. It presents two sentences followed by a question about the relationship between these two sentences. The question may ask, for example, if the statement in the second sentence supports that in the first, if it contradicts it, or if it repeats the same information.

#### Sentence Skills (untimed, multiple choice)

There are 20 Sentence Skills questions of two types.

1. The first type is **sentence correction** questions that require an understanding of sentence structure. These questions ask you to choose the most appropriate word or phrase to substitute for the underlined portion of the sentence.
2. The second type is **construction shift** questions. These questions ask that a sentence be rewritten according to the criteria shown while maintaining essentially the same meaning as the original sentence.

Within these two primary categories, the questions are also classified according to the skills being tested. Some questions deal with the logic of the sentence, others with whether or not the answer is a complete sentence, and still others with the relationship between coordination and subordination.

### **Arithmetic Test (untimed, multiple choice)**

This test measures your ability to perform basic arithmetic operations and to solve problems that involve fundamental arithmetic concepts. There are 17 questions on the Arithmetic tests divided into three types. **Please note no calculators are allowed on the test.**

1. Operations with whole numbers and fractions: topics included in this category are addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, recognizing equivalent fractions and mixed numbers, and estimating.
2. Operations with decimals and percents: topics include addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division with decimals. Percent problems, recognition of decimals, fraction and percent equivalencies, and problems involving estimation are also given.
3. Applications and problem solving: topics include rate, percent, and measurement problems, simple geometry problems, and distribution of a quantity into its fractional parts.

### **Elementary Algebra**

A total of 12 questions are administered in this test.

1. The first type involves operations with integers and rational numbers, and includes computation with integers and negative rationals, the use of absolute values, and ordering.
2. A second type involves operations with algebraic expressions using evaluation of simple formulas and expressions, and adding and subtracting monomials and polynomials. Questions involve multiplying and dividing monomials and polynomials, the evaluation of positive rational roots and exponents, simplifying algebraic fractions, and factoring.
3. The third type of question involves the solution of equations, inequalities, word problems. solving linear equations and inequalities, the solution of quadratic equations by factoring, solving verbal problems presented in an algebraic context, including geometric reasoning and graphing, and the translation of written phrases into algebraic expressions.

### **College Level Math Test**

There are 20 questions on the College-Level Mathematics. The College-Level Mathematics test assesses from intermediate algebra through precalculus.

1. Algebraic operations includes simplifying rational algebraic expressions, factoring, expanding polynomials, and manipulating roots and exponents.
2. Solutions of equations and inequalities includes the solution of linear and quadratic equations and inequalities, equation systems and other algebraic equations.
3. Coordinate geometry includes plane geometry, the coordinate plane, straight lines, conics, sets of points in the plane, and graphs of algebraic functions.
4. Applications and other algebra topics ask about complex numbers, series and sequences, determinants, permutations and combinations, fractions, and word problems.
5. Functions and trigonometry, presents questions about polynomials, algebraic, exponential, logarithmic and trigonometric functions.

For more information on how Accuplacer works, sample tests and tips for taking the test, go to <http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/accuplacer/>