MEMORANDUM

TO: CSU Presidents  
    CSU Provosts/Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs  
    CSU Vice Presidents for Student Affairs

FROM: Ephraim P. Smith  
    Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer

SUBJECT: Early Assessment Program Changes in 2015

California’s statewide system for assessing public school student achievement in grades three through eight and eleven is undergoing a significant transformation. These changes will have a direct impact on the Early Assessment Program (EAP), on CSU’s placement tests and on the determination of college readiness. This memorandum explains the transition process and messaging the CSU will utilize during this academic year.

Beginning with spring 2015, the California Department of Education will administer the operational Smarter Balanced assessments as part of the new California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) system. The CAASPP system will assess students in grades three through eight and eleven in English and mathematics. The outcome from the grade eleven exams will continue to provide a college content readiness result by the end of the junior year, but it will be based on the new assessment instrument. The Smarter Balanced Consortium is in the process of recommending new achievement level cut scores, and when endorsed by the CSU faculty, this system will replace the current assessments the CSU uses for EAP. We are in the process of working with the faculty advisory groups in this area to validate the recommended levels. So while the current assessment based on CST exams will no longer be offered, the CSU EAP will continue to be provided to students using the new CAASPP system, continuing to offer an early indication of readiness for college-level work in English and mathematics.

During the transition, and partially due to the changes in the examination structure, the CSU anticipates that fewer students may be identified as demonstrating readiness, resulting in a potential increase in the number of English Placement Test (EPT) and Entry Level Math (ELM) test takers over the next two to three years. In order to offset this increase and provide students with an additional pathway to determine their college readiness, the CSU will also use SAT or ACT results.
to indicate conditional status in English and mathematics beginning in spring 2015. Based on an analysis performed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), in conjunction with our Department of Analytic Studies the CSU has identified the SAT and ACT cut scores that can determine conditional exemption and will complement the exemption cut scores that are matched with scores on the EPT/ELM.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>CSU Readiness Cut Score</th>
<th>CSU Conditionally Ready Cut Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAT Math</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT Reading</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT Math</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT English</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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In keeping with this practice, the CSU will encourage students to take the SAT or the ACT by the end of their junior year. This will allow EAP coordinators and school counselors to provide rising seniors with appropriate advising in order to motivate them to take appropriate courses during their senior year. This messaging will be provided to high school counselors during the fall 2014 CSU High School Counselor Conferences.

The CSUCO is currently developing the internal technical procedures to use during this transition period. More information will be provided as it becomes available. If you should have any questions regarding the decision and messaging, please contact Carolina Cardenas at ccardenas@calstate.edu. If you have questions regarding the technical process, please contact Nathan Evans at nevans@calstate.edu.

c: Chancellor Timothy P. White
Dr. Ron Vogel, Associate Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
Dr. Beverly Young, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Teacher Education and Public School Programs
Mr. Eric Forbes, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Student Academic Support
Dr. Philip Garcia, Senior Director, Analytic Studies
Ms. Carolina Cardenas, Director, Outreach and Early Assessment
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