

**Bridge to College Transition Courses  
Questions and Answers  
Updated: March 21, 2017**

- A. Background and Application Process
- B. [Placement Agreement and How the Courses “Count”](#)
- C. [Who Can/Should Enroll in the Courses?](#)
- D. [Course Content, General Information](#)

**A. Background and Application Process**

**1. When will the registration process open for the 2017-18 year?**

Registration is open now. Districts can register their schools and teachers through iGrants Form Package 719 (FP 16-17).

**2. Are smaller districts and rural ones on equal footing with larger districts during the selection process?**

Absolutely - selection is based on the order in which the registrations are received. Priority is being given to registrations received prior to March 30 but iGrants will remain open at least through the end of April.

**3. Is there a state course code to use on Skyward that is statewide? How do we get the Bridge courses in Skyward or on any 1-to-1 devices?**

- The course code for *Bridge to College English language arts* is #01069. Course description: *This course will develop students’ college and career readiness by building skills in focused reading, writing, speaking & listening, and research work based on Washington State’s K-12 Learning Standards for English language arts (the Common Core State Standards, CCSS-ELA). Students will engage with rigorous texts and learn to use strategies for critical reading, argumentative writing, and independent thinking while reading unfamiliar texts and responding to them in discussion and writing. The course will also develop essential habits of mind necessary for student success in college, including independence, productive persistence, and metacognition.*
  
- The course code for *Bridge to College Mathematics* is #02099. Course description: *This course is designed for seniors to improve their readiness for college-level math courses through building conceptual understanding, reasoning and mathematical skills. The course emphasizes modeling with mathematics and the Standards for Mathematical Practice found within*

*Washington K-12 Mathematics Learning Standards (the Common Core State Standards, CCSS-M). Topics include building and interpreting functions (linear, quadratic & exponential), writing, solving and reasoning with equations and inequalities, and summarizing, representing, and interpreting data. Meets the baccalaureate admissions requirement for a 4<sup>th</sup> year quantitative reasoning course.*

You will need to work with your IT department to determine how to access the reporting tools and curriculum using the technology in your district.

#### **4. What data will be collected for the Bridge to College courses?**

Using the Bridge to College courses' unique course codes, evaluators from the BERC Group will be collecting longitudinal data to assess outcomes, including course completion records, grades, and assessment results (MSP/SBAC). They will also track students through college to learn more about the impact of the class. All of this data will be gathered from third party resources, and we do not anticipate requesting records through the schools. The BERC Group will also be gathering qualitative data on the project, particularly the effectiveness of the professional learning support for teachers, and in order to collect those data they will be visiting a sampling of schools and classrooms across the project.

### **B. Placement Agreement and How the Courses "Count"**

#### **5. Which Washington higher education institutions have included the Bridge to College courses in their Smarter Balanced placement agreements?**

Currently the Bridge courses are included in the system-wide agreement that applies to all 34 of the state's community and technical colleges and in Eastern Washington University's agreement; the other public baccalaureate institutions are still considering whether to include the Bridge courses in their separate agreements. For participating institutions, high school students who score a 2 on the Smarter Balanced Assessment in math or English, earn a B or better in the Bridge courses as seniors the following year, and then begin college within the year, will be placed directly into a college-level math (not on a calculus or STEM pathway) or English composition course. They will be placed at the same level as students who scored at level 3 on the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

#### **6. Will this course replace the SAT or ACT testing requirement for colleges and universities in Washington?**

No, currently the SAT and ACT are tests required for the admission process at most baccalaureate colleges and universities. At most institutions students then need to take a placement assessment to determine whether they can start in college-level coursework in math and English. At participating institutions (currently all of the community and technical colleges and Eastern Washington University), the Smarter Balanced agreement with the Bridge course can substitute for that placement process

allowing students direct entry into credit-bearing coursework if they earn a 2 on the Smarter Balanced Assessment and a “B” in the course.

**7. Will passing this course count as an “alternative” to passing the SBA as a graduation requirement?**

Currently, the courses do **not** replace the requirement for meeting standard on the high school assessments required for graduation purposes. The State Legislature designates the approved alternatives for high school graduation and the Bridge Courses are not yet included. To access online the variety of graduation assessment alternatives for students who do not pass the high school assessments required for graduation, see: <http://www.k12.wa.us/assessment/GraduationAlternatives/default.aspx>

**8. Do the Bridge Courses count as a “Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) Option”?**

There are two components to the CAA, course and non-course requirements. The Bridge to College courses do count towards high school course credits (4<sup>th</sup> credit of English and 3<sup>rd</sup> credit of math). However, the Bridge to College courses are **not** an alternate assessment to meet the additional non-course graduation requirements.

**9. Do the Bridge Courses count toward meeting the English and Math credit requirements for high school graduation?**

Yes. Districts and schools can award credit for both courses. These credits can be counted for graduation purposes. This will help students still needing the required course credits in English and math. For math, the Bridge to College course will meet the requirement for the 3<sup>rd</sup> credit of math but cannot replace Algebra 1, Algebra 2 or Geometry. For ELA, students can take the Bridge course in place of their senior ELA course.

To meet the minimum admissions requirements for state baccalaureate institutions, students need to pass Algebra 2 for their 3<sup>rd</sup> credit of math. The Bridge to College Mathematics course does meet the baccalaureate senior year requirement for a math or quantitative reasoning course as determined by the Washington Student Achievement Council (College Academic Distribution Requirements (CADR), 2014).

**10. Does the Bridge course replace or connect to the Collection of Evidence (COE) course?**

At this time, the Bridge course cannot replace the COE course. Schools that have a COE course and choose to offer a Bridge course will need to offer both courses. Teachers who have experience with both types of courses indicate that while the Bridge courses and the COE courses overlap in some ways they are fundamentally different: the COE is structured to meet the expectations for a large-scale assessment alternative, the Bridge courses use a comprehensive curriculum focused on college readiness that is grounded in a progression of learning aligned with the Washington state K-12 Learning standards (Common Core).

## C. Who Can/Should Enroll in the Courses?

### **11. Can you describe the ideal student "profile" for students who are well-suited for the Bridge courses and should be placed in the course if they did not take the Smarter Balanced Assessment or have not yet received their scores?**

While the Bridge courses are designed for students who do not meet standard on the state high school assessment, they will also work well for students who desire to go from high school into college but are struggling with their current coursework.

In particular, students who may be participating in AVID Elective and Secondary programs may be struggling with content and yet have a strong desire to go to college and work hard. These students are generally capable of completing rigorous courses but are falling short of their potential. Given the design of most AVID programs, AVID students may be a good match for placement in the Bridge to College courses.

Schools and districts are encouraged to use their best professional knowledge for placing students in the course for the coming year. Here are some specific suggestions for placement into these courses:

ELA: This course may be a good fit for seniors who score below college-ready on the Smarter Balanced Assessment but are interested in attending college and would like to enter directly into a college Composition class without remediation or placement testing when enrolling in college after graduation. Juniors who plan to take a College in the High School or other college-level course in their Senior year will benefit from taking this course in the junior year. Students who seek to strengthen their literacy skills may also choose this course as an alternative to a core English 12 class.

Math: The course is specifically designed for students scoring at Level 2 on the Smarter Balanced Assessment, but the course could be a useful experience for any senior student interested in improving their college readiness skills. In particular, you should consider giving priority to the following students:

- Seniors who have taken but not passed Algebra 2 OR who passed but would benefit from additional math intervention.
- Seniors who are recommended by high school instructors based on other factors such as readiness and their High School and Beyond plans.

### **12. Can juniors be placed in the Bridge Course?**

NEW for 2017-18: Yes, schools are encouraged to enroll juniors in the ELA Bridge course, especially if the students plan to take a college-level course as seniors (College in the High School, Running Start, AP, etc.). The placement agreement will be applicable to seniors who enter college the next fall term immediately after taking the Bridge course and to juniors who enter a college-level course in their senior year. In both cases, the student must fulfill the Placement Agreement criteria: level 2 on the Smarter Balanced assessment and a B or better in the course..

**13. Can Running Start students take the Bridge courses?**

Yes, however, the student would need to take the Bridge course at their high school as they are offered only at the high school and are not college-level courses.

**14. Can students who scored in level 1 on the Smarter Balanced Assessment take these courses?**

Yes, with some caveats. While the Bridge courses provide a solid learning experience for any student interested in going to college, they are designed primarily for students scoring in the level 2 range in order to take advantage of the higher education Smarter Balanced placement agreement., Currently students scoring in Level 1 will not qualify for the placement agreement but the courses should help them be better prepared for a Smarter Balanced retake or a higher education placement test.

Specifically for the Bridge to College Math course, students who scored in level 1 on the Smarter Balanced assessment can take the course but will likely find the material in the course very challenging, especially if they have not yet been exposed to Algebra II material. Schools and districts are encouraged to use their best professional knowledge for placing students in the course for the coming year.

**15. Does “B or better” mean that a student needs to earn a B for the whole year, or first semester or second semester?**

For both Math and English, “B or better” means a B in the **final term** of the year (depending on individual school calendars, could be either second semester or third trimester).

D. Course Content, General Information

**16. Where can we access sample parent letters and information for students and parents?**

These resources can be found at: <http://www.bridgetocollegecourses.org> .

**17. Where can I find the materials for the ELA modules?**

Some materials in the Bridge to College English course are copyright protected so the course is currently password protected. Teachers who are currently teaching the course have passwords and can access the course. The course modules are drawn and adapted from three primary sources:

- California State University Expository Reading and Writing Course (<https://www.calstate.edu/eap/englishcourse/index.html>)
- Literacy Ready course from the Southern Regional Education Board ([http://www.sreb.org/page/1683/literacy\\_ready.html](http://www.sreb.org/page/1683/literacy_ready.html))
- Engage New York curricular materials developed for the Common Core (<https://www.engageny.org/resource/grade-12-english-language-arts>)

For more general details about the course and its source materials, see the Bridge to College web site (<http://bridgetocollegecourses.org/>).

**18. Where can I find the materials for the Math course?**

Teachers and administrators who are registered to offer the Math course are granted access to the math course on the CANVAS web platform. For more general details about the course and its source materials, see the Bridge to College web site (<http://bridgetocollegecourses.org/>).

**19. Is anything like this being planned for science?**

Colleges do not “place” students in science classes and have no “remedial” science courses like in English and math, so there is not the same need for courses that would help reduce the number of students taking precollege classes in college. There has been some discussion at a statewide level of a comparable course in science based on the Next Gen Science Standards but there are no firm plans or funding in place.