

**Bridge to College Transition Courses  
Questions and Answers  
Updated: March 2021**

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**A. Background and Application Process**

**1. What are Bridge to College courses?**

Originally funded by [College Spark Washington](#), Bridge to College transition courses in math and English are designed to provide high school seniors not yet ready for college-level work a targeted opportunity to prepare for success in college-level work in math and/or English language arts. Students who earn a B grade or above in Bridge to College courses are considered college-ready and are eligible to enroll in college level math and English at all participating Washington higher education institutions.

Collaboratively designed and developed by higher education faculty, high school teachers, and curriculum specialists from multiple colleges and school districts, the Bridge to College courses are grounded in essential career and college readiness expectations reflecting Washington’s K-12 state learning standards.

**2. Which Washington higher education institutions have included the Bridge to College courses in their placement agreements?**

Currently, Eastern Washington University and all 34 of the state’s community and technical colleges (through a system-wide agreement). For participating institutions, high school students who earn a B or better in the Bridge courses and then begin college the year following graduation, will be placed directly into a college-level math (not on a calculus or STEM pathway) or English composition course. See the [Bridge to College page](#) on the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges website for the specific terms of the agreement.

**3. What is the registration process for the 2021-22 year?**

Registration opened in February 2021. Districts are encouraged to complete registration by June 1, 2021. Districts are invited to register their schools and teachers through this [Smartsheet link](#). Districts are encouraged to register all teachers who are planning to teach the course during the 2021-22 school year, whether they are new or experienced Bridge to College teachers.

The Bridge to College program is now fully self-supporting. Districts will be charged per-teacher participation fees to support the professional development infrastructure that is essential to the success of the Bridge to College courses. The annual cost is \$1500 for

teachers who are new to Bridge to College and \$300 for returning teachers. Additionally, districts are responsible for providing substitute coverage (if necessary) to allow teachers to complete their professional learning during the school year.

\$1500 NEW Bridge to College teacher fee covers:

- Registration for the required Summer Institute in August
- Five days (or its equivalent) of required professional learning meetings and/or curriculum workshops with teachers' assigned Community of Practice during the school year facilitated by Bridge to College Course Leadership (in-person or virtual, TBD) (sub costs for individual teachers not included).
- Online access to all curriculum materials, ongoing support, and technical assistance from Bridge to College teacher leaders.

\$300 RETURNING Bridge to College teacher fee covers:

- Registration for the optional one-day Summer Institute in August designed for experienced Bridge to College teachers which fulfills the requirement for continuing professional learning to maintain eligibility to teach the course.
- Access to a variety of other in-person and online professional learning opportunities required for teachers to retain their eligibility to teach Bridge to College.
- Online access to all curriculum and assessment materials, as well as ongoing support, and technical assistance from Bridge to College teacher leaders.

#### **4. What are the required statewide course codes that need to be used for Bridge to College courses?**

- ***The course code for Bridge to College English Language Arts is WA0001.*** 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 WA0003.*** 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.*

**5. How are Bridge courses imported into Skyward (or other electronic platforms) or to any 1-to-1 devices?**

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.

**6. What data are being collected for the Bridge to College courses?**

Using the Bridge to College courses' unique course codes, evaluators from the BERC Group have collected longitudinal data to assess outcomes, including course completion records, grades, and assessment results (MSP/SBA). They have also followed students who have transitioned into college to learn more about the impact of the class. All of these data are gathered from third party resources, and we do not anticipate requesting records through the schools. The BERC Group has also gathered qualitative data on the project, particularly the effectiveness of the professional learning support for teachers, based on site visits to a sample of schools and classrooms across the project. See the Bridge to College page on the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges website for links to the BERC Group reports.

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

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

No, but typically, students also need to take a placement assessment to determine whether they can start in college-level coursework in math and English. At participating baccalaureate institutions (currently only Eastern Washington), the placement agreement with the Bridge course can substitute for that placement process allowing students direct entry into credit-bearing coursework if they earn a "B or better" in the Bridge course.

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

For Math, "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). For English "B or better" means for one of the semesters or trimesters. Students who are using the course as a graduation pathway must earn credit for the entire year.

Due to abbreviated class time in 2020-21, in order to qualify for college-level placement in math, you will need to:

- Complete a Bridge to College course with a final grade of "B or better."
- Contact your college to find out if they will accept a 2020-21 Bridge to College grade on its own for placement or if they will require additional information from

you for math placement - other transcript details, directed self-placement, a placement test, etc.

- Enroll in college in the academic year immediately following high school graduation.

### **9. Can the Bridge Courses meet the English language arts and mathematics credit requirements for high school graduation?**

Yes. Districts and schools can award credit for both courses, and these credits count toward the credit requirement for graduation purposes.

The Bridge to College Math course is designed and intended to be a 4<sup>th</sup>-year, post-Algebra II math course, and it meets the baccalaureate admissions requirement for a senior year quantitative reasoning course as determined by the Washington Student Achievement Council College Academic Distribution Requirements (CADR). The course does not qualify as a substitute for Algebra II for the purpose of baccalaureate admissions.

Students can take the Bridge to College English course in place of their typical senior English course; in some districts, the course has become the standard senior English course for all students.

### **10. What is the role of Bridge to College in the multiple pathways legislation ([HB 1599](#)) passed in 2019?**

Transition courses, such as Bridge to College, are one of the multiple pathways defined in the new law. The law defines transition courses as only those courses where successful completion by a high school student ensures the student college-level placement at participating institutions of higher education. Criteria for Bridge to College include a higher education placement agreement.

### **11. Do these courses meet the NCAA Eligibility criteria for a core course?**

Currently, the Bridge to College Mathematics Course does not qualify for NCAA eligibility. The course is intended as a senior-level, 4th-year course in mathematics; the NCAA requires only 3 years of math, so not qualifying as a 'core course' for the NCAA should not be a problem for most students.

The Bridge to College English course was not approved on a statewide basis as a core course for the purposes of the NCAA but the course can be approved locally; each school offering the course will need to follow the standard NCAA process to request approval. See <https://web3.ncaa.org/hportal/exec/homeAction> for more details or contact your school or district administrator responsible for core course submissions. Guidelines for schools submitting the course to the NCAA, along with some successful examples, are available by contacting the Bridge to College Project Director, Bill Moore (bmoore@sbctc.edu)

## **12. Why would colleges want to accept Bridge to College course credit?**

Higher education faculty have been involved in the design and implementation of the courses, so there is a solid and growing understanding statewide of the quality of the courses and the clear focus on college readiness. The growing body of evaluation evidence supports the positive impact of the courses, and these results have been shared widely with higher education institutions across the state. The Bridge to College courses meet the state's K-12 learning standards while ensuring student readiness for college and careers, allowing students to avoid placement in remedial courses when they enter college and increasing the likelihood they will complete a certificate or degree.

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

## **13. Can you describe the ideal student "profile" for students who are well suited for the Bridge courses?**

The Bridge courses are designed to support senior students who are interested in attending college and would like some targeted focus to help them succeed in college-level math and composition courses. Students who are not college-bound may also benefit from the Bridge courses; however, schools are strongly encouraged to identify carefully, in collaboration with teachers, counselors, and administration, which students are the best fit for the Bridge courses.

Given the design of most AVID programs, AVID students may be a good match for placement in the Bridge to College courses.

If SBA scores are not available, 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 SBA 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 courses in their senior year will benefit from taking this course in the junior year. Students who seek to strengthen their literacy skills with modules and assignments specifically geared to preparation for college-level writing may also choose this course as an alternative to a core English 12 class.

Math: The course is designed for students scoring below but near the college-ready threshold on the SBA. The course could be a useful experience for senior students interested in improving their college readiness math skills, provided they took Algebra 2 as juniors (whether or not they passed). Consider giving priority to seniors who struggled with Algebra 2 OR seniors who are recommended by high school instructors based on other factors such as readiness and their High School and Beyond Plans.

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

ELA: Yes, if the English faculty determine the student is ready for the level of work, schools can 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.). If the student is not yet ready for the level of work in Bridge to College English, the school may offer Bridge to College English Prep, a year-long course that prepares them for the rigor of BTCE (see question #14).

The placement agreement will be applicable to seniors who enter college the next fall term immediately after graduation and to juniors who enter a college-level course in their senior year. In both cases, the student must fulfill the Placement Agreement criteria of earning a B or better in the course.

Math: There is no separate Bridge to College Math option for juniors; juniors who have already completed Algebra 2 could take the existing course but it's unlikely to be the best option for these students.

#### **15. What is the Bridge to College English Prep Course? How does it differ from BTCE?**

The Bridge to College English Prep course is designed for 11<sup>th</sup> grade students who are not yet ready for the rigor and pace of Bridge to College English (BTCE) and provides the first step in a two-year pathway to college readiness. The course is based on the same module template as BTCE and provides teachers with modules to choose from that have been selected specifically for students preparing to take BTCE. Built on the same engaging reading, writing, and thinking strategies of Bridge to College English, it provides students with more support and scaffolding in the development of their skills. Like BTCE, Bridge to College English Prep is a year-long course focusing on the key readiness standards from Washington State's K-12 Learning Standards for English Language Arts.

After completing Bridge to College English Prep in their junior year, students would then be ready for Bridge to College English (BTCE) in their senior year.

#### **16. 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.

#### **17. Can students who scored a level 1 on the Smarter Balanced Assessment take these courses?**

Yes, the automatic placement agreement for Bridge to College no longer requires a specific SBA score (level 2 or higher). However, while the Bridge courses provide a solid learning experience for any student interested in going to college, they are designed to prepare students to be college-ready within one year, so students enrolling in Bridge to College should be on track to meet that goal.

Students who scored in level 1 on the Smarter Balanced assessment and who struggled in Algebra 2 could take the Bridge to College Math course, but will likely find the

material in the course very challenging. Schools and districts are encouraged to use their best professional knowledge for placing students in the course for the coming year.

### **18. Who is teaching the Bridge to College courses?**

All Bridge to College courses are taught at high schools by high school teachers who have completed the required training. (The Bridge to College courses do not have their own set of endorsement requirements for teachers. If a district determines that a teacher is eligible to teach at the high school level based on the district's standard practice, then that teacher is eligible to teach this course.) We strongly encourage schools to recruit teachers for the courses who have a deep understanding of the state learning standards and have demonstrated evidence of successfully teaching struggling students. In addition to attending the initial two-day Summer Institute, teachers participate in Communities of Practice throughout the year, which provide ongoing professional development for Bridge teachers in order to ensure that teachers keep current with updates to the curriculum and assessments.

### **D. Course Content, General Information**

### **19. Where can we access information for students and parents?**

These resources can be found at the [Bridge to College general website](#) .

### **20. 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 curriculum is password protected. Teachers who are currently teaching the course have passwords and can access the course materials on Canvas.

The Bridge to College English curriculum was originally adapted by Washington educators, drawing from three primary sources:

- California State University Expository Reading and Writing Course ([CA Curriculum Materials](#))
- Literacy Ready course from the Southern Regional Education Board ([Literacy Ready materials](#))
- Engage New York curricular materials developed for the Common Core ([Engage New York website](#))

Over the past several years Washington high school teachers and college faculty have refined the available modules and developed new ones for use in the course. For more general details about the course and its source materials, see the [Bridge to College web page on the OSPI site](#) or the general Bridge to College web site ([Bridge to College general website](#)).

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

All the course materials are on a public Canvas site that can be accessed from the OSPI Math Bridge webpage: [Bridge to College Math website](#)

Teachers and administrators who are registered to offer the Math course are granted access to a separate private Canvas site for access to the course curriculum and additional resources, including assessments.