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An Analysis of the Effects of a Readjustment of the Math Placement Test Cutoff Scores

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Report 1992-03: An Analysis of the Effects of a Readjustment of the Math Placement Test Cutoff Scores

After a May, 1991, study of the Math Placement Test conducted by the Office of Institutional Assessment and Testing (OIAT) was published, cut-off scores for admittance to certain mathematics courses were readjusted to more appropriately reflect the needs and abilities of students at Western. This report assayed the effectiveness of those new MPT cut-off scores. The probability of receiving a passing grade (C- or better) was computed for a sample of students who had both taken the MPT and enrolled in a mathematics course since the MPT score readjustment.

Of the 737 students in the final, usable sample, 398 took the Intermediate Algebra Test, with the course most frequently enrolled in being Math 102; and 336 took the Precalculus Test, with the course most frequently enrolled in being Math 124.

The following list describes the percentage of students who passed (C- or better) the mathematics course enrolled in after taking the Intermediate Algebra MPT: Math 102, 89.3%; Math 103, 88.5%; Math 104, 95.5%; Math 105, 95.0%; and Math 155, 71.8%.

The following list describes the percentage of students who passed (C- or better) the mathematics course enrolled in after taking the Precalculus MPT: Math 102, 93.3%; Math 103, 94.6%; Math 104, 97.0%; Math 105, 93.9%; Math 124, 89.0%; Math 128, 100%; Math 155, 85.4%; and Math 157, 92.3%.

Statistical analysis of pass/fail rate between females and males, as well as grade earned in mathematics course taken between females and males indicated no statistical significance in either area. Males and females passed and failed mathematics courses at similar rates, as well as earned similar grades.