Course Placement Rationale: In-Coming Freshmen

Wheaton Academy is committed to ensuring students are placed in classes that provide instruction at their proficiency level and that challenge them both to grow and to flourish. We created a placement test specifically designed to determine preparedness for the curriculum of Wheaton Academy, and a student's course placement is based on the outcome of that test. This test is not designed to label or to exclude any student; however, we have discovered that student learning is most effective when approached with appropriate knowledge, understanding, and skills.

In the sections below, you will find an explanation of the knowledge and skills assessed in the placement test as well as the way the results lead to placement of freshman students.

Math Placement:

The math placement test examines mathematical knowledge as well as mathematical thinking skills. The following ranges, along with the student's 8th-grade math class, are used to determine final mathematics class placement. To register for any course beyond College Algebra, freshmen will need to take a Level 2 test that ensures mastery of the content in College Algebra.

8th Grade Class	Placement test score range	Recommended class
Pre-algebra		Algebra (and or Lab)
Algebra	7-12	Geometry and Lab
Algebra	13-26	Geometry
Algebra	27+	Advanced Geometry
Geometry	7-14	Intermediate Algebra
Geometry	15-29	Algebra II
Geometry	30+	College Algebra

Questions may be directed to Chris Felinski, Math Department Head, cfelinski@wheatonacademy.org.

Science Placement:

All freshmen take Regular or Advanced Physics. The placement test assesses basic math skills, graphical interpretation, and reading comprehension (similar to the ACT science section) since these skills are essential for success in the Advanced Physics class. Based on the required math skills in physics, students in Algebra I are placed in Regular Physics. Students registered for Advanced Geometry or a higher-level math class are often placed in Advanced Physics.

Questions may be directed to Luke Regan, Science Department Head at lregan@wheatonacademy.org.

English Placement:

The English department at Wheaton Academy is committed to ensuring that all students develop competency and proficiency in all aspects of communication. Our desire is to assure that no gaps exist so that each student is prepared to excel in communication skills—reading, writing, speaking, listening—at the end of four years of study. The initial assessment is used to guide placement decisions for incoming freshmen.

The English department does not have a track that limits student achievement but rather a progression that ensures student success. As students demonstrate mastery of skills, they have the opportunity to move into levels of greater complexity and challenge. Moving from a regular class to an advanced or AP one is accomplished simply by demonstrating proficiency appropriate for the advanced course. In other words, English course placement can be viewed as fluid rather than restrictive.

The English placement assessment given to incoming freshmen is used to ascertain skills in inferential reading as well as clarity of written communication since this foundation is crucial for further progress. Students with a composite score of at least 46 (out of a possible 56) are recommended for the English I Advanced class. Skills of students placed in the English I class will be assessed regularly to determine appropriate future placement.

Questions may be directed to either of the co-heads of the English department: Trish Main (tmain@wheatonacademy.org) or Brad Thornton (bthornton@wheatonacademy.org).

World Language

Students who desire to take Spanish I or French I or Chinese I will be placed in those courses. If placement at any other level of Spanish or French is desired, the student will take a test to assess the current skill level. Course placement will be based on the results of this assessment.

Questions may be directed to Trish Main, World Language Department Head, tmain@wheatonacademy.org.