**Middlesex Community College**

**Guided Self-Placement**

**English**

Page

**Section 1 Multiple Measures** 2

**Section 2 General Questions** 4

**Section 3 Reading Evaluation** 6

**Section 4 Writing Evaluation** 11

**Section 5 Self-Placement** 15

**Middlesex Community College**

**Placement Center**

[**placement@middlesex.mass.edu**](mailto:placement@middlesex.mass.edu)

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Student A number:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Have you taken an English course at Middlesex Community College?**

\_\_\_ **Yes You are eligible to register online or meet with an advisor by calling**

**1-800-818-3434 to set up an appointment.**

\_\_\_  **No Proceed to Section 1**

**Section 1: English Placement – Multiple Measures**

1. **At MCC, we use multiple measures for course placement. Students can be placed into college-level coursework based on High School GPA, SAT, ACT, HiSet or GED scores, or previous college work.**
2. **Do you have an overall US High School GPA of 2.7 or higher within the last ten years?**

\_\_\_Yes

\_\_\_ No

If yes, send HS transcripts to [admissions@middlesex.mass.edu](mailto:admissions@middlesex.mass.edu)

1. **Do you have a verbal SAT score of 500 or higher within the last three years?**

\_\_\_Yes

\_\_\_ No

If yes, request an official score transcript and send it to [placement@middlesex.mass.edu](mailto:placement@middlesex.mass.edu)

1. **Do you have an ACT score of 22 or higher within the last three years?**

\_\_\_Yes

\_\_\_ No

If yes, request an official score transcript and send it to [placement@middlesex.mass.edu](mailto:placement@middlesex.mass.edu)

1. **Do you have a HiSet score of 15 or higher or a GED score of 165 or higher within the last three years?**

\_\_\_Yes

\_\_\_ No

If yes, request an official score transcript and send it to [placement@middlesex.mass.edu](mailto:placement@middlesex.mass.edu)

1. **Do you have college level English credits from another institution?**

\_\_\_Yes

\_\_\_ No

If yes, request an official college transcript and send to [registrar@middlesex.mass.edu](mailto:registrar@middlesex.mass.edu)

1. **Do you have AP, CLEP or other evidence of prior learning credits in English?**

\_\_\_Yes

\_\_\_ No

If yes, submit official scores to [registrar@middlesex.mass.edu](mailto:registrar@middlesex.mass.edu)

1. **Do you have previous English Accuplacer scores (Next Gen Reading and Writeplacer) taken at another institution?**

\_\_\_Yes

\_\_\_ No

If yes, submit official scores to [placement@middlesex.mass.edu](mailto:placement@middlesex.mass.edu)

**Students who answered NO to all questions must proceed to Section 2 to begin English Self-Placement process. Students who answered YES to one or more of the questions are entitled to skip the English Self-Placement process, but are still encouraged to read the rest of this document in order to understand the different English course offerings and choose the path best suited for them.**

**Section 2: General Questions**

1. **Were you born in the United States of America?**

\_\_\_Yes

\_\_\_ No

1. **Is English your first language?**

\_\_\_Yes

\_\_\_ No

1. **What language do you speak with family and friends?**

\_\_\_\_English

\_\_\_\_A language other than English

1. **Did you take ESL classes in high school?**

\_\_\_Yes

\_\_\_ No

1. **Do you feel comfortable reading textbooks in English?**

\_\_\_ Yes, I feel comfortable reading textbooks in English

\_\_\_ I feel somewhat comfortable reading textbooks in English

\_\_\_ No, I am not comfortable reading textbooks in English

1. **Do you feel comfortable reading novels in English?**

\_\_\_ Yes, I feel comfortable reading novels in English

\_\_\_ I feel somewhat comfortable reading novels in English

\_\_\_ No, I am not comfortable reading novels in English

1. **Do you feel comfortable writing essays in English?**

\_\_\_ Yes, I feel comfortable writing essays in English

\_\_\_ I feel somewhat comfortable writing essays in English

\_\_\_ No, I am not comfortable writing essays in English

1. **How would you describe your ability to speak in English and be understood by other people?**

\_\_\_\_ I have no trouble speaking in English, and nearly everyone can understand me easily.

\_\_\_\_ I do all right when I speak in English, and most people understand me.

\_\_\_\_ I get really nervous about speaking in English; people sometimes don’t

understand me.

* If English is not your first language and you answered NO or SOMEWHAT COMFORTABLE to questions 5 through 7, then e-mail [ACE@middlesex.mass.edu](mailto:ACE@middlesex.mass.edu) to set up an appointment to discuss your course placement.
* If you are nervous speaking in English or took ESL classes in high school, then e-mail [ACE@middlesex.mass.edu](mailto:ACE@middlesex.mass.edu) to set up an appointment to discuss your course placement.
* Otherwise, proceed to Section 3 – Reading Evaluation.

**Section 3 – Reading Evaluation**

**The short reading below represents a typical text that you may be assigned to read and write about ENG 101 (English Composition I). Please do the short reading below and then answer a series of questions. This is not a test but will assist you in your final English course selection.**

**Short Reading #1 Demanding More from College by Frank Bruni**

I’m beginning to think that college exists mainly so we can debate and deconstruct it.

What’s its rightful mission? How has it changed? Is it sufficiently accessible? Invariably worthwhile?

As the fall semester commenced, the questions resumed. Robert Reich, the country’s labor secretary during the Clinton administration, issued such a pointed, provocative critique of the expense and usefulness of a traditional liberal arts degree that Salon slapped this headline on it: “College is a ludicrous waste of money.”

Meanwhile, the sociologists Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa were out with a new book, “Aspiring Adults Adrift,” in which they assessed how a diverse group of nearly 1,000 recent graduates were faring two years after they finished their undergraduate studies. About one quarter of them were still living at home. And nearly three-quarters were still getting at least some money from parents. These were the nuggets that the media understandably grabbed hold of, drawing the lesson that college isn’t the springboard that young men and women want and perhaps need it to be.

I have a problem with all of this. But my concern isn’t about the arguments themselves or some of the conclusions drawn. It’s about the narrowness of the discussion, which so heavily emphasizes how a career is successfully forged and how financial security is quickly achieved.

While those goals are important and that focus is understandable, there’s another dimension to college, and it’s one in which students aren’t being served, or serving themselves, especially well. I’m referring to the potential — and need — for college to confront and change political and social aspects of American life that are as troubling as the economy.

We live in a country of sharpening divisions, pronounced tribalism, corrosive polarization. And I wish we would nudge kids — no, I wish we would push them — to use college as an exception and a retort to that, as a pre-emptive strike against it, as a staging ground for behaving and living in a different, broader, healthier way.

As we pepper students with contradictory information and competing philosophies about college’s role as an on ramp to professional glory, we should talk as much about the way college can establish patterns of reading, thinking and interacting that buck the current tendency among Americans to tuck themselves into enclaves of confederates with the same politics, the same cultural tastes, the same incomes. That tendency fuels the little and big misunderstandings that are driving us apart. It’s at the very root of our sclerotic, dysfunctional political process.

And college is the perfect chapter for diversifying friends and influences, rummaging around in fresh perspectives, bridging divides. For many students, it’s an environment more populous than high school was, with more directions in which to turn. It gives them more agency over their calendars and their allegiances. They can better construct their world from scratch.

And the clay hasn’t dried on who they are. They’re not yet set in their ways.

But too many kids get to college and try instantly to collapse it, to make it as comfortable and recognizable as possible. They replicate the friends and friendships they’ve previously enjoyed. They join groups that perpetuate their high-school experiences.

Concerned with establishing a “network,” they seek out peers with aspirations identical to their own. In doing so, they frequently default to a clannishness that too easily becomes a lifelong habit.

If you spend any time on college campuses, you’ll notice this, and maybe something else as well: Many students have a much more significant depth than breadth of knowledge. They know tons about what they’re interested in, because they’ve burrowed, with the Internet’s help, into their passions. But burrows are small and often suffocating, and there are wide spaces between them. You’re in yours; I’m in mine. Where’s the common ground? The Internet has proved to be one of the great ironies of modern life. It opens up an infinite universe for exploration, but people use it to stand still, in a favorite spot, bookmarking the websites that cater to their existing hobbies (and established hobbyhorses) and customizing their social media feeds so that their judgments are constantly reinforced, their opinions forever affirmed.

A REPORT published late last month by the Pew Research Center documented this. Summarizing it in The Times, Claire Cain Miller wrote, “The Internet, it seems, is contributing to

the polarization of America, as people surround themselves with people who think like them and hesitate to say anything different.”

College is precisely the time not to succumb to that. Every student orientation should include the following instructions: Open your laptops. Delete at least one of every four bookmarks. Replace it with something entirely different, maybe even antithetical. Go to Twitter, Facebook and such, and start following or connecting with publications, blogs and people whose views diverge from your own. Mix it up.

That’s also how students should approach classes and navigate their social lives, because they’re attending college in the context not only of a country with profound financial anxieties, but of a country with homogeneous neighborhoods, a scary preoccupation with status and microclimates of privilege. Just as they should be girding themselves for a tough job market, they should be challenging the so-called sorting that’s also holding America back.

Arum and Roksa, in “Aspiring Adults Adrift,” do take note of upsetting patterns outside the classroom and independent of career preparation; they cite survey data that showed that more than 30 percent of college graduates read online or print newspapers only “monthly or never” and nearly 40 percent discuss public affairs only “monthly or never.”

Arum said that that’s “a much greater challenge to our society” than college graduates’ problems in the labor market. “If college graduates are no longer reading the newspaper, keeping up with the news, talking about politics and public affairs — how do you have a democratic society moving forward?” he asked me.

Now more than ever, college needs to be an expansive adventure, yanking students toward unfamiliar horizons and untested identities rather than indulging and flattering who and where they already are. And students need to insist on that, taking control of all facets of their college experience and making it as eclectic as possible.

It could mean a better future — for all of us. And there’s no debate that college should be a path to that.

A version of this op-ed appears in print on September 7, 2014, on Page SR3 of the New York edition with the headline: Demanding More From College.

Web link to article

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Based on the reading above, answer the following questions:

1. **On a scale of 1-5 (5 being the most challenging), how challenging would it be to answer these sample questions and to write about this article?**
2. **On a scale of 1-5 (5 being the most challenging), how challenging is it for you in general to read articles like this, especially if it is a subject you are unfamiliar with?**

Next, think about your ability to answer the following questions. These are typical questions you may see in an ENG 101 homework assignment. (You don’t have to answer these questions in writing, but you should think about how you would do it if you had to.)

1. What are the main ideas of the article?
2. Choose one important quote from the article. What do you think this quote means?
3. How did you react? What did the article make you think about from your own life?
4. College-level English classes frequently require students to speak to each other in small groups and sometimes share opinions or answers with the entire class. Think about what you would like to discuss with fellow students who have also read this article.
5. On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the most challenging), how challenging would it be to write about this article? Why?

**If you answered 5 (being the most challenging) for questions 1 and 2,** we recommend that you consider ENG 092.

**If you answered 4 for questions 1 and 2,** we recommend that ENG 092 would be best for you.

**If you answered 3 for questions 1 and 2,** we recommend that ENG 109/ENG101 would be best for you.

**If you answered 1 or 2 for questions 1 and 2,** we recommend that ENG 101 or possibly ENG 101 Honors may be best for you.

* Now, please proceed to Section 4 – Writing Evaluation

**Section 4 – Writing Evaluation**

1. **In the past three years, what types of writing have you done most?**

\_\_\_ Papers in English classes

\_\_\_ Papers in other classes

\_\_\_ E-Mails at work

\_\_\_ Reports or memos at work

\_\_\_ Online writing (social media posts, blogs, newsletters, other)

\_\_\_ Poetry, stories, or songs

\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_

1. **In the past three years, how many papers or reports have you written that incorporate ideas and information from books, articles, or websites?**

\_\_\_\_ I have not done this in the last three years

\_\_\_\_ One to three times

\_\_\_\_ Four or more times

Next, please read the passage below and use it to write an essay in response to the question.

The reasons students choose to attend college have been steadily shifting over the course of the last half-century. Ira Harkavy and Matthew Hartley of the University of Pennsylvania write, “In 1900, barely 4 percent of all high school graduates attended college. By 1970, that number had grown more than tenfold (45 percent). The reasons for attending college began to shift. Economic purposes gained ascendancy. Data from an annual survey of more that 200,000 incoming freshman by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA show that in 1969, 80 percent of incoming freshman believed that developing a meaningful philosophy of life was a very important goal; by 1996, that percentage diminished to 42 percent. In 1979, half of the students (49 percent) said they were attending college “to be able to make more money: by 1991, that figure had climbed to three-quarters (74.7 percent). Increasingly, the public came to view a college education as a ticket to securing a good job – a private rather than a good public good.”

**Question:** What does this passage suggest about your own goals for a college education? Explain how your goals would look to a college student in 1969, a student in 1991, and to Harkavy and Hartley.

**Instructions**

Using Word or another computer program, please answer this question. Include specifics from the passage, and use examples from your reading or experience. Your short essay should be approximately 300-600 words. Take a few minutes to plan before you write.

When you are finished, edit for Standard English grammar and the style that best makes your point.

Save your essay and bring with you when you meet with an advisor or placement counselor.

Next, answer the questions below.

1. Reflect on the essay you just wrote. How confident are you that you comprehended the passage you read?

\_\_\_\_ Confident

\_\_\_\_ Not very confident

1. In the essay you just wrote, how confident are you that you included ideas from the passage you read?

\_\_\_\_ Confident

\_\_\_\_ Not very confident

1. In the essay you just wrote, how confident are you that the grammar is correct standard written English?

\_\_\_\_ Confident

\_\_\_\_ Not very confident

* If you answered mainly “not very confident” in comprehending, writing, and correcting for grammar and you have not written many papers or reports in the last three years, we recommend that you consider ENG 092 for placement.
* If you answered a combination of “confident” and “not very confident” in terms of comprehension, writing, and correcting for grammar, and you have written some papers or reports in the last three years, we recommend that you consider ENG 109/ENG 101 for placement.
* If you answered “confident**”** in terms of comprehension, writing, and correcting for grammar and have written reports in the last three years, we recommend that you consider ENG 101 or possibly ENG 101 Honors.
* Now, please continue to Section 5 – Self-Placement.

**Section 5 Self-Placement**

It is now time to select your English course that best meets your skills level based on your answers to the exercises above. First, review the recommended course that you wrote down from Section 3 (Reading) and Section 4 (Writing).

Next, review the courses descriptions found in the MCC catalog at:

<https://catalog.middlesex.mass.edu/misc/catalog_list.php?catoid=20>

Listed below is more detailed information on **ENG 092, ENG 109, ENG 101, ENG 101 Honors** and an overview of **ELL 054, ELL 055, ELL 074**, and **ELL 075**. Based on your skills and these descriptions, determine your self-placement.

After review of these descriptions, write down the self-placement course you selected and the reasons why you selected this class. As you consider your reasons, please also include which course best describes your previous experience

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Course** | **ENG 092**  **Reading, Writing, Reasoning** | **ENG 109 (with ENG 101)**  **Critical Thinking/English Composition I** | **ENG 101**  **English Composition I** | **ENG 101 Honors**  **English Composition I Honors** |
| **Credits** | 6 credits  (developmental) | 3 credits for ENG 101 **AND** 3 credits for ENG 109 (Humanities/free elective). **Courses must be taken together.** Sections are linked and taught by the same instructor. | 3 credits | 3 credits |
| **Description** | Reading, Writing, and Reasoning (RWR) is a 6-credit integrated reading, writing, and critical thinking course that includes a one-hour weekly workshop. It deepens and solidifies literacy skills and strategies for meeting the rigorous demands of academic work. | This course enhances students’ ability to read insightfully, and think critically about a variety of texts they may encounter in their academic and professional careers--ultimately creating “a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion" (AAC&U).  By registering for this course, the student will also be registered in a linked ENG 101 taught by the same instructor. | English Composition 1 (ENG101) focuses on developing students’ academic writing, close reading, and critical thinking skills. | English Composition 1 Honors: Choose ENG 101 Honors if you want to enhance your learning experience by concentrating on important skills for career and/or transfer: critical thinking, research, verbal presentation, and interpretive analysis. Honors courses provide a place for you to work with like-minded students working closely with instructors who help guide and prepare you for the job market and transfer to four-year colleges and universities. |
| **Expectations** | Students will complete four five-paragraph persuasive essays 1-3+ pages in length using MLA format. Non-fiction readings that range from 2-8 pages are used, and reading and writing strategies are taught so students learn to annotate and comprehend difficult material. Additional writing assignments include brief summary/response paragraphs, journal writings and reflection papers. There is some grammar review. Students will learn to write essays using citations and factual evidence within their essays. | This workshop setting and smaller class size allow for a more personal and individualized approach to addressing learning needs. In addition, each ENG 109 section has an embedded peer tutor, who can provide additional individualized support. | This is a college-level composition course which requires a significant amount of reading and writing. Typical assignments include summary and response essays, annotated bibliographies, and 5+ page long persuasive essays using sources that are provided by the professor. Students in this class type a minimum of 18 pages of formal writing (not including drafts, journals, reflections or homework). | This is a college-level composition course, which requires a high level of discourse and preparation and a significant amount of reading and writing. Typical assignments include summary and response essays, annotated bibliographies, and 5+ page long persuasive essays. Students are expected to find their own sources for at least one of their assignments. Students in this class type a minimum of 18 pages of formal writing (not including drafts, journals, reflections or homework). |
| **Reading** | Students will read, evaluate, and analyze college level, thematic, non-fiction texts. | Students will read, evaluate, and analyze college level, thematic, non-fiction texts. | Students will read, evaluate, and analyze college level, thematic, non-fiction texts | Students will read, evaluate, and analyze higher college level, thematic, non-fiction texts. |
| **Essays** | Students will write at least four complete essays that demonstrate Standard English conventions and format as well as coherent structure and an analytical understanding of readings. | ENG 109 focuses more on low-stakes writing than formal polished essays (which is the focus of the paired ENG 101 course). Writing assignments, while frequent, will generally be short (one paragraph to a couple pages) and will focus on communicating understanding and demonstrating critical thought. These short writing assignments will help students with the ENG 101 essays. | Using a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, instructor and peer feedback, and revision, students will produce written essays with arguable thesis statements and appropriate use of standard English. Students will produce a total of 18-24 pages of formal polished writing in three or more source-based essays. | Using a writing process that includes pre-writing, drafting, instructor and peer feedback, and revision, students will produce written essays with arguable thesis statements and appropriate use of standard English. Students will produce a total of 18-24 pages of formal polished writing in three or more source-based essays and a 10-page research paper. |
| **Research** | Sometimes | Almost Always | Almost Always | Always |
| **Previous Experience** | | | | |
|  | **ENG 092** | **ENG 109 (with ENG 101)** | **ENG 101** | **ENG 101 Honors** |
| **Reading** | Have read short printed works, but not regularly or in many years | Have read printed works before with some regularity | Have read printed works of several pages on a regular basis in previous educational settings | Have read printed works of several pages on a regular basis in previous educational settings |
| **Writing** | May have written essays before, but they have been short (1-2 pages) or may not have developed a single piece of writing of two or more typed pages in many years | Have written essays before, but they may have been short (1-2 pages) or it may have been many years since they have done so | Have written essays of three typed pages or more on several occasions within the past three years | Have written essays of three typed pages or more on several occasions within the past three years |
| **Grammar** | May have grammar and mechanical issues in their writing | May have minor grammar and mechanics issues in their writing, but are aware of them to some extent. | May have minor grammar and mechanics issues in their writing, but are able to edit and correct them when necessary | May have minor grammar and mechanics issues in their writing, but are able to edit and correct them when necessary |

**ELL Courses:**

**ELL 055 (ELL Reading and Writing II):** This course is for non-native English speakers with high-intermediate to advanced fluency in oral communication and written skills. Students will write four five-paragraph persuasive essays based on non-fiction readings. The readings are typically 3-5 pages. Knowledge of higher grammar skills is very helpful. Whole articles must be paraphrased. (It is recommended you take ELL 075 with ELL 055)

**054 (ELL Reading and Writing I):** ELL 054 is for non-native speakers of English who need to learn basic writing skills to prepare for college courses. Students will use the process approach of writing a multi-paragraph essay.  Students will move from simple sentence structure to complex sentences. Readings will include primarily nonfiction texts.  In addition to classroom meetings, we will use the online Blackboard Learning System for explanation, review, drills, homework and quizzes. (It is recommended you take ELL 074 with ELL 054).

**075 (ELL Grammar and Editing II):** This course is for non-native English speakers with high-intermediate to advanced fluency in oral communication and written skills. The focus of this course is on editing. Students do extensive practice and apply their knowledge to edit their own as well as peers’ writing. Knowledge of higher grammar skills is very helpful, such as grammatical context, parts of speech, and their functions on a sentence level.

**074 (ELL Grammar and Editing I):** ELL 074 is for non-native speakers of English who need to review the basic grammatical structures to begin short writing assignments for academic purposes.  Students will learn proofreading and editing strategies to improve their writing.  In addition to classroom meetings and group work, students will use the online Blackboard Learning System for explanation, review, drills, homework and quizzes.

* Now that you have completed your course placement, please proceed to Next Steps.

**Next Steps:**

* **If you are unsure of your English placement**, email [ACE@middlesex.mass.edu](mailto:ACE@middlesex.mass.edu) to request an appointment for a “Make the Right Choice Session.” Make the Right Choice Sessions are designed to provide a refresher in writing and reading skills, receive feedback on your essay and reading understanding, help you make an informed decision based on your skills and motivation, and learn about student support services.
* **If you are comfortable with your English placement**, complete the English Self-Placement form on the website. This form will be sent to the Testing Center and your placements will be recorded. Please also save a copy of this form and bring with you to your registration session. Once you have completed this form you are ready to register for classes. Call 1-800-818-3434 or e-mail [middlesex@middlesex.mass.edu](mailto:middlesex@middlesex.mass.edu) to register for a new student registration session.