

DVHS College and Career Center

Understanding College Admissions Testing

Most colleges require applicants to complete some type of application/assessment testing prior to application/enrollment but each college system or college has unique requirements. ***It is ultimately the student's responsibility to ensure he/she has met the appropriate testing/assessment requirements, but below is a general overview of what you might expect.*** Most tests require an administration fee, but fee waivers are available to qualifying students. Each college's admissions webpage will outline its school's particular college application testing, but submission of scores to colleges is done through the particular testing company and instructions are given upon registration.

The chosen method of preparation for these tests is unique per student. On line tools, books, tutors and private prep companies can provide a wide range of choices to supplement prior classroom learning. The DVHS College & Career Center (sponsored by the Academic Boosters) offers annual practice test options, in addition to providing information on testing and test prep resources. Pick up additional testing resources in the College & Career Center.

College Application Tests

PSAT (Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test); SAT, SAT 2's (SAT Subject tests)

Administered by College Board (www.collegeboard.com)

The **PSAT** is the preliminary SAT test offered to students in October of their junior year and is the qualifier for the National Merit Scholarship as determined by score. (Sophomores may take this test, but are not eligible to qualify for National Merit). The score of this test is not reported to colleges and is intended to be a learning tool for the student as to his/her strengths and weaknesses in certain academic areas. A printout of the scores by subject area provides valuable information for students to know their strengths and weaknesses for better preparation for the SAT. Sophomores often opt to take the PSAT for additional practice, but are cautioned to keep in mind that the test is written to test junior level (fall) curriculum. Pre-registration is required through the DVHS College and Career Center in late September and will be announced in school loop.

The **SAT** is an expected college entrance requirement by most (but not all) 4 year colleges/universities; public and private. In most cases the student can choose between taking an SAT test or an ACT test but a student should verify that option with each college to which he/she is applying. Register for this test on the College Board website at www.collegeboard.com. Tests are administered at different East Bay sites and prior registration is required. Be sure to read the information on the website regarding Score Choice and submitting scores to colleges. CSU's and UC's request that applicants send all scores from each test administration day as they use the top scores to evaluate each student's application. CSU's will take the best score earned in a particular area—Math and Critical Reading (i.e. will mix test dates); UC's will use the best scores from a single test date (Math, Critical Reading, Essay).

The **SAT 2 Subject Tests** are required by UC system applicants (through the class of 2011) and many private and out of state colleges. They are not required by CSU's. See the College Board website for information on subject areas covered and dates administered. Pre-registration is required though the College Board website and a student can take up to 3 tests on one day. A student may not take an SAT and any SAT Subject tests on the same day, though; they have to choose between the two testing options when they register. But, if signed up for the SAT Subject tests the student may select between the Subject tests offered on the day of the test (see College Board website for particulars on this). Beginning with the class of 2012, the UC's will not require SAT Subject tests for admission, but some majors/programs may recommend that they be taken by prospective students as an additional measure.

The ACT

Administered by ACT (www.act.org)

The **ACT** is an expected college entrance requirement by most (but not all) 4 year colleges/ universities; public and private. In most cases the student can choose between taking an SAT test or an ACT test

but a student should verify that with each college to which he/she is applying. Students should opt to take the optional "Plus Writing" portion as all UC's require it and some CSU's recommend it. See the ACT website to verify your college's requirement on the writing portion.

Advanced Placement (AP) Tests

Students who take AP classes are encouraged to sign up for the AP tests administered in May. Scores from these tests can enhance student's college application resume as well as qualify them for advanced placement at some colleges. For certain scores, some colleges may award college credit (units) for AP tests completed with a 3 or better. (Each college sets its own policy on this). For more information go to: www.collegeboard.com/apstudents.

College Assessment Tests

Many colleges require admitted students to take assessment tests for placement in the appropriate level of instruction once enrolled. Each college or system might have differing requirements and it is up to the student to determine what is required at his/her intended 2 or 4 year college/university.

CSU's ELM (Entry Level Math) & EPT (English Placement Test) & EAP (Early Assessment Program)

The CSU system assesses all incoming students regarding their academic proficiency level of math and English prior to freshman enrollment. All students must take these (fee based) tests prior to enrollment at the university or become exempt through prior testing. At CA high schools students are assessed in 11th grade as part of their STAR (standardized testing). This program is called EAP (Early Assessment Program). Certain scores on this test (might) exempt CSU students from taking the placement tests and qualify them for enrollment in non-remedial math and English courses. Each 11th grader should receive a letter over the summer from the CSU Chancellor's office indicating the student's EAP testing results. In addition, certain scores received on the SAT, ACT, SAT Subject Tests or AP tests may exempt students from needing to take the EPT/ELM tests. See <http://www.calstate.edu/eap/about.shtml> for information regarding ELM and EPT exemption requirements. If a student needs to take an EPT and/or and ELM test see the webpage on the CSUEB (Cal State East Bay) for information including cost and testing dates, as it is the closest CSU campus to SRVHS.

<http://www.testing.csueastbay.edu/eptelm/eptelmhome.php> NOTE: The placement tests can be taken at ANY CSU (not only the one where the student plans to enroll).

Diablo Valley Community College and Las Positas Community College

Both DVC and Las Positas have English, Math and Chemistry (if applicable) assessment test requirements at no cost to the student. Students must submit an application to a particular campus prior to taking their assessment tests. SAT and/or ACT tests are not required at Community Colleges and scores cannot exempt enrolling students from assessment tests. Certain AP test results and/or transcript grades may be an exception and the assessment center at each college should be consulted in this case. See each school's website for a schedule of assessment test dates and conditions for test exemptions. Also, watch school loop for announcement of DVC assessment tests administered at DVHS in the spring. Students must have completed the application process and be enrolled in the Community College (and have a student ID# in order to take the tests). Watch for important application deadlines!

UC (University of California) assessment requirements are met through the SAT or ACT plus Writing, plus the two SAT Subject tests from different subject areas. See individual UC websites for more information.

CA and Out of State Private, and Out of State Public Universities and colleges may have specific testing requirements and students are encouraged to check the specific college admissions web pages to ensure application requirements are met. Most colleges accept either the ACT or the SAT Reasoning test for application, but some also require 2 or 3 SAT Subject tests. Once enrolled some may require assessment tests for placement in appropriate level of academics.