



# California Community Colleges



**Academic Senate  
for California Community Colleges**

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## Frequently Asked Questions about AB 705 for Credit English as a Second Language (ESL) December 2018

### **Q1: Are we still able to use our ESL Placement tests?**

A: Placement tests may continue to be used for credit ESL through Fall 2019. It hasn't been determined whether assessment tests for ESL will be approved for use beyond Fall 2019 (Spring 2020 placement), but a final determination will be distributed during Spring 2019.

### **Q2: When will the next Guidance Memo be released to the field?**

A: We anticipate releasing the next ESL Guidance Memo in late January/early February 2019.

### **Q3: When does the three-year timeline for ESL begin: in credit or noncredit?**

A: The three-year timeline for ESL begins at the point that a student enrolled in a credit ESL sequence declares intent for degree or transfer as determined by their educational goal, education plan, and/or major declaration. ESL programs and departments may continue to offer levels necessary to serve the needs of all students, but the placement process must maximize the likelihood that students complete an approved (to be included in CSU General Education Breadth or the Intersegmental General Educational Transfer Curriculum) transfer-level composition course within three years from the time the student is enrolled in the credit sequence and declares his/her goal. The theoretical maximum sequence length would begin five levels below transfer-level composition, but a shorter sequence may maximize the likelihood of completing transfer-level composition within three years. Colleges should perform analysis to determine the optimal sequence length to maximize the likelihood of completing transfer-level composition within three years for various student groups.

### **Q4: Does the three-year timeline for credit ESL necessitate a shorter ESL sequence?**

Colleges may *have* credit ESL levels beyond the theoretical maximum of six semesters (nine quarters) to complete transfer-level English; however, colleges may not *place* into levels beyond the three-year timeline to complete TLE and are required to provide placements that maximize throughput to TLE completion.

### **Q5: Should ESL/ELL students with high school GPA data be advised to enroll directly into transfer-level Composition?**

A: Students can receive placements into transfer-level composition and/or ESL sequences. Colleges are encouraged to provide information to incoming students on both sequences to encourage them to engage with the placement process best suited to their English skill level and goals. Available high school information should be used along with other measures adopted by each college to create

support and advising that will maximize the likelihood of completing transfer-level composition. Per the July Guidance Memo AA 18-41:

Colleges should be mindful that while some high school senior English language learners (ELLs) may indeed be ready for mainstreaming into transfer-level English [composition], credit ESL at the community college is designed to enhance proficiency in English at a level of academic rigor that can better serve many ELLs who may have completed three or four years of high school English but whose language proficiency may still require attention to specific needs that are not met in transfer-level English even with co-requisite or cocurricular support.

**Q6: Is it discriminatory to advise/place students into academic credit ESL or to offer ESL/multilingual-designated sections of TL English into which students may self-select?**

A: AB 705 allows for ESL placement and instruction and cites the benefit to students; furthermore, the July Guidance Memo for ESL AA 18-41 *recommends* developing ESL/multilingual-designated sections of TL English. These are best practices that support student success for English language learners seeking degree, transfer, or certificates.