

# Validating College Course Placement Decisions Based on **CLEP** Exam Scores

This study presents evidence of placement validity for College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP®) exam scores. Six exams in three subject areas are explored. Records in this study are from a national longitudinal four-year college outcome database at the College Board. The research question is: **How do CLEP exam credit-holding students perform in sequent or subsequent courses compared to students without CLEP credit who took the corresponding introductory course(s) at the institution?**

## Key Findings

Students who earn course credit for achieving a required minimum CLEP exam score (most commonly the American Council for Education's recommended score of 50) perform as well as or better in sequent or subsequent courses than their classmates without CLEP exam credit who took the introductory course at the institution.

CLEP Exam	Number of Courses Studied	CLEP Students Outperform Non-CLEP Students	Non-CLEP Students Outperform CLEP Students	CLEP Students Perform as well as Non-CLEP Students
Analyzing and Interpreting Literature	4	1	0	3
College Composition	2	0	0	2
College Algebra	7	5	0	2
Precalculus	2	1	0	1
Calculus	2	0	0	2
Spanish Language	8	4	0	4

## CLEP EXAMS STUDIED

- Analyzing and Interpreting Literature
- College Composition
- College Algebra
- Precalculus
- Calculus
- Spanish Language

## DATA SOURCES FOR THIS STUDY

This study includes course records of over 47,000 students at 10 four-year postsecondary institutions. All institutions are public with varied selectivity levels, ranging in size from large (7,500+) to very large (15,000+) and are located across the United States. Both military and civilian students were included, and 25 sequent or subsequent courses were analyzed.

Access the full report at [eric.ed.gov](https://eric.ed.gov).