

IEP Diagnostic Tests

*Updated June, 2009*

**Diagnostic Tests:** When we talk about *diagnostic tests*, we mean the test that an instructor creates/ modifies/adapts for his/her class and gives within the first days of the quarter to be sure each student is in the right class. We have a very specific testing plan for the first few days of a given quarter.

- All grammar diagnostics will be given on the first day of the quarter (in R/W/G or G/W classes only. R/W/G or G/W instructors will share grammar scores with other instructors).
- R/W and L/S in summer (R/V, L/S in fall) diagnostics will be given within the first 2-3 days.
- The goal is to have any and all [level changes](#) done by the end of the first week.

  - Instructors create their own diagnostics. You might want to contact other instructors who are teaching the same class as you or who have taught the class before (ask the IEP Coordinator for this information). The IEP Coordinator has a binder full of many past diagnostics you can look at/use/modify.

  - Your diagnostic test should be comprised of material that is 50% “previous to the current level” and 50% “of the current level”. For example, a level 3 diagnostic will include what should have been accomplished in level 2, plus what will be accomplished in level 3.

  - This is particularly important for grammar diagnostics. You need to know your outcomes and be sure the test is written with them in mind. If you use someone else’s test, be sure to double check this.

  - Let your students know, before taking the test, that they are *not* meant to pass that test, and stress that their grades for these tests won’t count. Tell them it’s purely for you to assess their level and be sure they’re in the right place. Your diagnostics need to have an ample number of questions in order to deal with the following…

  - “Jumpers”: There’s a trend of students who think they want to jump/skip a level. They can’t do this. What they can do is take the diagnostics at the beginning of the quarter and, if they score 85% or more in all components of your class, be considered for a level change. You, as the instructor that is approached or that sees a student aced your diagnostics, should contact the student’s other instructor(s). You should also have a conversation with the student’s prior instructor, if the student was here then. After discussing the student with these two people, a level change can be recommended.

  - Incorrectly placed students 1: If a student scores 85% or higher on all of your diagnostics, and you think he/she might be able to move up, discuss
it with the instructors of the target level (show the tests and results) and follow the level change procedure.

- Incorrectly placed students 2: If, conversely, a student does very, very poorly on your diagnostics, discuss it with the instructors of the level lower than you, etc, (same procedure in reverse). We try to place low so that this kind of thing doesn’t happen.

- Last, Do not let students keep their graded diagnostic tests! If you do, they can easily give their old tests to their friends (who can then prepare for the test next quarter) and you will need to write a new one.