First-Year Placement and Acceleration Credit

The policies of Yale College and the various departments concerning placement for subjects in which Advanced Placement or similar tests are given are described on the First-Year Student Website. The site also lists criteria upon which acceleration credits are awarded in each department, whether earned upon entrance on the basis of high scores on Advanced Placement tests or after the successful completion of specified courses during the first year. In addition, the First-Year Student Website is the primary place for first-years to seek advice about available and appropriate courses.

The regular review of a department’s placement policies and its policies on acceleration credit is an important task, because questions of where a first-year should begin the study of a subject, what college-level work may have been anticipated in high school, and how previous work may be worth credit toward an accelerated bachelor’s degree are of great educational and institutional consequence. Each year the editor of the First-Year Student Website will ask the DUS for any revisions that should be made in his or her department’s pages. The DUS of a department that offers acceleration credit (either for performance on College Board Advanced Placement tests or for successful completion with a grade of B or above of specified courses during first year) will be asked to review the department’s policies on the award of such credit. Proposed revisions to the award of acceleration credit require the approval of the Teaching and Learning Committee. Currently, the following departments and programs offer acceleration credits: African Studies (Kiswahili, Yorùbá, isiZulu), Biology, Chemistry, Classics (ancient Greek, Latin), Computer Science, East Asian Languages and Literatures (Chinese, Japanese, Korean), Economics, English, French, Germanic Languages and Literatures (German, Dutch), Hellenic Studies (modern Greek), History of Art, Italian, Mathematics, Music, Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations (Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, Turkish), Physics, Portuguese, Slavic Languages and Literatures (Russian), South Asian Studies (Hindi, Sanskrit), Southeast Asia Studies (Indonesian, Vietnamese), and Spanish.

To assist in the placement of first-year students in large departments, the DUS may enlist the aid of one or two colleagues as placement officers; in smaller departments, the DUS usually serves as the placement officer. If placement officers wish to examine the records of incoming first-years, either to place them or to schedule the appropriate introductory courses, the placement officers must be available to do so in August, before the first-year students arrive. If the department gives its own placement test in the fall, the DUS must arrange for it well in advance to be sure the date and time of the examination are listed through the Yale College Dean’s Office in the Calendar for the Opening Days of College. In either event, the DUS and the placement officers should be readily accessible in late August and early September, particularly during the days of first-year student registration, to answer inquiries from students, first-year faculty advisers, and the college deans about the department’s policies and particular courses.

Questions about general policies connected with placement and acceleration should be addressed to Daria Vander Veer (daria.vanderveer@yale.edu), Assistant University Registrar, or Shonna Marshall (shonna.marshall@yale.edu), Associate University Registrar, 246 Church Street. DUSes in departments offering placement examinations should schedule them through the Yale College Dean’s Office, which is the compiler of the Calendar for the Opening Days of College. The Dean’s Office takes the initiative in the spring to secure this information from the DUS of any department that has offered such examinations in the past. Details concerning any new placement examinations should be submitted to Dean Risa Sodi (risa.sodi@yale.edu).