# Change in Board Policies

**3.3.2 Learning Support Programs, 3.5.1.1 Grades Approved in Determining the Grade Point Average, 4.2.1.1 Freshmen Requirements, 4.2.1.2 Exceptions to Freshmen Admission Requirements for Special Groups of Students, and 4.2.1.4 Non-Traditional Students**

**Recommendation:** That the Board approve the changes to Board Policy on Learning Support Programs, Exceptions to Freshmen Admission Requirements for Special Groups of Students, and Non-Traditional Students, effective August 20, 2014.

**Abstract:**
Nationally, outdated and ineffective policies on remediation have been identified as creating major barriers to college completion. Over the past year, two USG remediation Task Forces, two Ad Hoc Committees on Remediation, and representatives from most USG institutions have participated in discussions on how to improve remediation within the USG, culminating in an effort by the Remediation Policy and Procedure Committee to rewrite policies and procedures to align with the recommendations of these bodies. While most of the changes are changes in process, and will be made in the Academic and Student Affairs Handbook, five of the changes involve Board of Regents policy. These changes will align with guidance of provided by the BOR Policy Manual with the best processes and practices in remedial education.

**Current Policies Related to Learning Support**

**3.3.2 Learning Support Programs**

Each institution that admits students required by USG policy to enroll in Learning Support courses before or as they attempt core curriculum courses shall have a separate department or division for meeting the academic needs of such students. The program shall be designed, at a minimum, to meet the specific needs of students who, according to USG placement standards, must enroll in Learning Support. Institutions may set higher standards for placement, and the program may include other learning support components.

Each such department or division shall have its own budget and staff and shall report directly to the chief academic officer or to his/her designee.

The USG chief academic officer will issue administrative procedures regarding the operation of these programs (BoR Minutes, 1972-73, pp. 533-37; 1978-79, p. 162; 1982-83, pp. 119-21, 1986-87, p. 102; 1992-93, p. 241; Feb., 2007, p. 37).

**3.5.1.1 Grades Approved in Determining the Grade Point Average**

The following grades are approved for use in institutions in the determination of the Grade Point Average:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent (4.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Good (3.00)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The University of Georgia and Georgia State University shall be on the following grade point average system, calculated to and truncated at two significant digits, with the following numeric equivalents.

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<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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In addition, Georgia State University will be allowed to use an A+ designation, with the equivalent numerical value of a 4.30. The University of Georgia and Georgia State University shall not use plus/minus grades in the calculation of the HOPE Scholarship grade point average (BoR Minutes, February 2009).

Institutions are permitted to use other than the Uniform Grading System for the purpose of grading student progress in Learning Support or Developmental Studies (BoR Minutes, 1974-75, pp. 109-11).

**4.2.1.1 Freshmen Requirements**

Students applying for freshman admissions to a USG institution must meet the following criteria.

**Required High School Curriculum**

Completion of the USG’s Required High School Curriculum (“RHSC”) requirements and graduation from a high school accredited by a regional accrediting association (such as the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) or the Georgia Accrediting Commission or from a public school regulated by a school system and state department of education.
Students applying to any institution must present credit for sixteen (16) specified units. Students who graduate from high school in 2012 or later must present credits for seventeen (17) specified units. The 16 (17 for students who graduate in 2012 or later) specified USG units are:

1. **MATHEMATICS**: Four (4) units of Mathematics, including Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry. For students who graduate from a Georgia Public School in 2012 or later, the 4 units of Mathematics must include a course at the level of Math 3 or higher.

2. **ENGLISH**: Four (4) units of English which have as their emphasis grammar and usage, literature (American, English, World), and advanced composition skills.

3. **SCIENCE**: Three (3) units of science, with at least one laboratory course from the life sciences and one laboratory course from the physical sciences. Students who graduate in 2012 or later must have four (4) units of science. Georgia Public high School graduates must have at least one (1) unit of biology, one (1) unit of physical science or physics, and one (1) unit of chemistry, earth systems, environmental science, or an advanced placement science course.

4. **SOCIAL SCIENCE**: Three (3) units of social science, with at least one (1) course focusing on United States studies and one (1) course focusing on world studies.

5. **FOREIGN LANGUAGE**: Two (2) units in the same foreign language emphasizing speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Two (2) units of American Sign Language may be used to satisfy this requirement.

In addition to these minimum requirements, students are encouraged to take additional academic units in high school to improve their probability for admission and success.

**Freshman Index**

Effective Fall semester 2011, presidents of state and two-year colleges at their option shall require one of the following: a) submission of SAT/ACT test scores and meeting of the Freshman Index, as described below; or b) a minimum high school grade point average (HSGPA) and mandatory placement testing in lieu of SAT/ACT test scores for admissions.

A designated score on the Freshman Index (“FI”), which is based on a combination of a student’s SAT I or ACT assessment scores and high school grade point average (HSGPA). The Freshman Index is:

\[ FI = 500 \times (\text{HSGPA}) + \text{SAT Verbal/Critical Reading} + \text{SAT I Math} \]  
\[ FI = 500 \times (\text{HSGPA}) + (\text{ACT Composite} \times 42) + 88 \]

The minimum FI required for admission to a:

1. Research university is 2500;
2. Regional university is 2040;
3. State university is 1940; and,
4. State or two-year college is 1830.

In addition to the FI, students must have a minimum SAT I Verbal score of 430 and Mathematics score of 400 (or ACT equivalent) for admission to a university (research, regional, or state).
Students without these minimum scores but with SAT I scores of at least 330 Verbal and 310 Mathematics may be considered for admission to a two-year college, but will be required to exempt or exit learning support (“LS”) in the areas of deficiency.

Institutions may set higher requirements for admission. Students meeting the minimum FI requirements are not guaranteed admission.

(BoR Minutes, August 2010)

4.2.1.2 Exceptions to Freshman Admission Requirements for Special Groups of Students

Students may also be admitted as freshmen based on alternative evidence of college readiness. Following are modified or additional requirements for specific groups of applicants.

**Limited Admissions Category**

In recognition of the fact that a limited number of students do not meet established standards but do demonstrate special potential for success, institutions are authorized to grant admission to a limited number of such students. Institutions will use multiple measures whenever possible, such as interviews, portfolios, and records of experiential achievements, for students being considered for Limited Admission.

The number of students who may be granted Limited Admissions will be restricted based on institutional sectors, with two-year colleges allowed the highest percentage for Limited Admissions. Nontraditional freshmen will not be included in the Limited Admissions percentage allowed for each institution.

The FI required for Limited Admission to a:

1. Research university is 2020;  
2. Regional university, 1830; and  

In addition to the FI, Limited Admissions, students must have a minimum SAT Verbal/Critical Reading score of 430 and Mathematics score of 400 (or ACT equivalent) for admission to a university (research, regional, or state). Students with SAT I (or ACT equivalent) scores of at least 330 Verbal and 310 Math may be considered for Limited Admission to a two-year college, but will be required to exempt or exit LS in the areas of deficiency.

At research, regional, and state universities, students granted Limited Admission must also have completed the sixteen (16)-unit Required High School Curriculum, and students who graduate in 2012 or later must have completed seventeen (17) units. At state and two-year colleges, students may be considered for Limited Admission if they have a high school diploma or GED and meet the minimum SAT/ACT score requirements. A GED is acceptable only if the student’s high school class has graduated. Certificates of attendance or special education diplomas are not acceptable.
Students who enter under the Limited Admissions category, including Presidential Exceptions as noted below, must make up any Required High School Curriculum units deficiencies in accordance with USG procedures. They must also be screened, as applicable, for placement in LS courses using a placement test administered by a USG institution and must meet USG criteria for exemption or exit of learning support in reading, English, and mathematics.

For students transferring from a Commission on Colleges (COC)-accredited Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) technical college, comparable scores from the TCSG technical college may be used according to guidelines issued by the Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer.

**Presidential Exceptions**
Presidents of USG institutions may grant exceptions to the Required High School Curriculum units and FI requirements for Limited Admissions if the student shows promise for academic success in college and has at least a high school diploma or GED credential. Institutions will be required to report to the USG chief academic officer on those students granted Presidential Exceptions. Presidential Exceptions must be included as part of the institution’s maximum percentage for Limited Admissions.

**Alternative Requirements for Home-Schooled Students and Graduates of Non-Accredited High Schools**
Applicants from home schools or graduates of non-accredited high schools may validate the Required High School Curriculum in an alternative way. SAT scores and satisfactory documentation of equivalent competence in each of the areas at the college-preparatory level may be used in lieu of the FI and Required High School Curriculum unit requirements.

A student whose SAT Composite (Verbal/Critical Reading plus Mathematics) (or ACT equivalent) score is at or above the average SAT score of the previous year’s fall semester first-time freshmen admitted to the USG institution to which he/she is applying and who has completed the equivalent of each of the areas as documented by a portfolio of work and/or other evidence that substantiates completion of the Required High School Curriculum qualifies for consideration for admission.

Students in this category must also meet the minimum SAT Verbal/Critical Reading requirement and the minimum SAT Mathematics requirement (or ACT equivalent) for the sector to which they apply.

Applicants who achieve designated scores on each of the following SAT II Subject Tests in an area will be considered to have demonstrated equivalent competence and do not need to submit additional documentation in that area: English Writing, Literature, Math IC or Math IIC, American History & Social Studies, World History, Biology, and one of the following: Chemistry or Physics.

Students admitted in this category with satisfactory documentation of competence in all areas will not be counted in the institution’s Limited Admissions (including Presidential Exceptions) category. Those with qualifying SAT I scores and documentation of partial completion of the
Required High School Curriculum may be admitted on the same basis and with the same conditions as other students with deficiencies.

**Admission of Students with Outstanding Scores**
Students who demonstrate very high academic ability by achieving a composite SAT Composite (Verbal/Critical Reading plus Math) score in the upper five percent (5%) of national college-bound seniors according to the most recent report from the College Board and who show other evidence of college readiness may be admitted under this section. An ACT score which is equivalent to this SAT score may also be used.

Institutions must carefully evaluate such students to determine their ability to benefit from college coursework. Students must satisfy any Required High School Curriculum deficiencies in areas other than English or mathematics through college coursework.

Students admitted in this section will not count in an institution’s Limited Admissions exceptions.

**Admission of International Students**
Freshman international students may be admitted in another admissions category or may be admitted in a separate category for international students under established USG procedures. If these students do not meet the alternative USG admission procedures, they might be considered as Presidential Exceptions.

**Admission of Students with Disabilities**
Because the core curriculum of each institution requires students to complete college-level courses in English, mathematics, social science, and science, all students must complete the Required High School Curriculum in these areas. Students with disabilities that preclude the acquisition of a foreign language may petition for admission without this requirement according to procedures established by the USG.

Students with disabilities are expected to meet the sector’s minimum SAT or ACT score requirements, but should request the appropriate testing accommodations from the agencies administering the SAT or ACT.

**Dual Enrollment/Joint Enrollment/Early Admission of High School Students**
The USG recognizes the need to provide academically talented high school students with opportunities for acceleration of their formal academic programs. This recognition has led to the development of three organized programs:

1. A dual enrollment program in which a student, while continuing his/her enrollment in high school, enrolls in a course(s) for both high school and college credit.
2. A joint enrollment program in which a student, while continuing his/her enrollment in high school as a junior or senior, enrolls in courses for college credit.
3. An early admissions program in which the student enrolls as a full-time college student following completion of the junior year in high school.
The minimum admissions standards for the dual enrollment, joint enrollment, and early admissions programs have been developed to allow certain students to receive both high school and college credit for some courses. Procedures for admission, course selection, and instruction can be found in Section 3.0 of the Academic Affairs Handbook (BoR Minutes, September 2004).

Residential Programs
The USG offers residential programs for gifted, talented, and motivated students at two institutions: the Advanced Academy of Georgia at the University of West Georgia, and the Georgia Academy of Mathematics, Engineering, and Sciences at Middle Georgia State College. Admissions and program requirements are established by the individual institutions (BoR Minutes, September 2004).

Early College
Early Colleges enhance students’ opportunities to accelerate their education by participating in a joint high school/college program. Each Early College represents an approved partnership between a Georgia public school system and a USG institution. Students in USG-recognized Early Colleges are eligible for enrollment in college courses while they are enrolled in the Early College (BoR Minutes, September 2004).

4.2.1.4 Non-Traditional Students

In order to make the USG more accessible to citizens who are not of traditional college-going age and to encourage a higher proportion of Georgians to benefit from life-long learning, institutions may admit as many non-traditional students as is appropriate based on institutional mission, academic programs, and success in retaining and graduating non-traditional students.

The number of non-traditional students an institution enrolls will not be counted against the percent of Limited Admissions allowed each institution. Institutions may set additional criteria for admission of non-traditional students.

Non-Traditional Freshmen
Non-traditional freshmen are defined as individuals who meet all of the following criteria:

1. Have been out of high school at least five years and whose high school class graduated at least five years ago;
2. Hold a high school diploma from an accredited or approved high school as specified in Section 4.2.1.1 of this Policy Manual or have satisfactorily completed the GED; and,
3. Have earned fewer than 30 transferable semester credit hours.

All non-traditional freshmen must be screened for placement in learning support courses using a placement test administered by a USG institution and must meet USG criteria for exemption or exit of learning support in reading, English, and mathematics.

For students transferring from a Commission on Colleges (COC)-accredited TCSG college, comparable scores from the TCSG college may be used according to guidelines issued by the USG chief academic officer.
As an alternative, an institution may allow non-traditional freshmen who have within the past seven (7) years posted SAT scores of at least 500 in both Verbal/Critical Reading and Mathematics or ACT scores of at least 21 on both English and Mathematics to exempt the placement test.

**Non-Traditional Transfers**

Non-traditional transfer students are defined as individuals who meet all of the following criteria:

1. Have been out of high school at least five years or whose high school class graduated at least five (5) years ago; and,
2. Have earned thirty (30) or more transferable hours of college credit, as defined in Section 4.2.1.1 of this Policy Manual.

A non-traditional transfer student can be admitted, according to the institution’s policy, if his/her transfer GPA is below the transfer standard for the institution’s sector. These students do not count against the number of Limited Admissions allowed for transfer students at that institution. Institutions should require placement criteria as appropriate.

**Proposed Policies Related to Learning Support**

### 3.3.2 Learning Support Programs

Each institution that admits students required by USG policy to enroll in Learning Support courses before or as they attempt core curriculum courses shall have a separate department or division for meeting the academic needs of such students. The program shall be designed, at a minimum, to meet the specific needs of students who, according to USG placement standards, must enroll in Learning Support. Institutions may set higher standards for placement, and the program may include other Learning Support components.

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The minimum FI required for admission to a:

5. Research university is 2500;
6. Regional university is 2040;
7. State university is 1940; and,
8. State or two-year college is 1830.
In addition to the FI, students must have a minimum SAT I Verbal score of 430 and Mathematics score of 400 (or ACT equivalent) for admission to a university (research, regional, or state).

Students without these minimum scores but with SAT I scores of at least 330 Verbal and 310 Mathematics may be considered for admission to a two-year college, but will be required to exempt or exit learning support Learning Support (“LS”) in the areas of deficiency.

Institutions may set higher requirements for admission. Students meeting the minimum FI requirements are not guaranteed admission.

(BoR Minutes, August 2010)

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the minimum SAT/ACT score requirements. A GED is acceptable only if the student’s high school class has graduated. Certificates of attendance or special education diplomas are not acceptable.

Students who enter under the Limited Admissions category, including Presidential Exceptions as noted below, must make up any Required High School Curriculum units deficiencies in accordance with USG procedures. They must also be screened, as applicable, for placement in Learning Support courses using a placement test administered by a USG institution and must meet USG criteria for exemption or exit of Learning Support in reading, English, and mathematics. USG placement criteria and must meet criteria for exemption or exit of Learning Support in English (reading/writing) and mathematics.

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A student whose SAT Composite (Verbal/Critical Reading plus Mathematics) (or ACT equivalent) score is at or above the average SAT score of the previous year’s fall semester first-time freshmen admitted to the USG institution to which he/she is applying and who has completed the equivalent of each of the areas as documented by a portfolio of work and/or other evidence that substantiates completion of the Required High School Curriculum qualifies for consideration for admission.

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**Dual Enrollment/Joint Enrollment/Early Admission of High School Students**
The USG recognizes the need to provide academically talented high school students with opportunities for acceleration of their formal academic programs. This recognition has led to the development of three organized programs:
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The number of non-traditional students an institution enrolls will not be counted against the percent of Limited Admissions allowed each institution. Institutions may set additional criteria for admission of non-traditional students.

Non-Traditional Freshmen
Non-traditional freshmen are defined as individuals who meet all of the following criteria:

1. Have been out of high school at least five years and whose high school class graduated at least five years ago;
2. Hold a high school diploma from an accredited or approved high school as specified in Section 4.2.1.1 of this Policy Manual or have satisfactorily completed the GED; and,
3. Have earned fewer than 30 transferable semester credit hours.
All non-traditional freshmen must be screened evaluated for placement in learning support courses using a placement test administered by a USG institution and must meet USG criteria for exemption or exit of Learning Support in reading, English, and Mathematics Learning Support status in English (reading/writing) and mathematics using USG placement criteria (see Academic and Student Affairs 2.9.1).

For students transferring from a Commission on Colleges (COC) Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)-accredited TCSG college, comparable scores from the TCSG college may be used according to guidelines issued by the USG chief academic officer.

As an alternative, an institution may allow non-traditional freshmen who have within the past seven (7) years posted SAT scores of at least 500 in both Verbal/Critical Reading and Mathematics or ACT scores of at least 21 on both English and Mathematics to exempt the placement test.

Non-Traditional Transfers
Non-traditional transfer students are defined as individuals who meet all of the following criteria:

1. Have been out of high school at least five years or whose high school class graduated at least five (5) years ago; and,
2. Have earned thirty (30) or more transferable hours of college credit, as defined in Section 4.2.1.1 of this Policy Manual.

A non-traditional transfer student can be admitted, according to the institution’s policy, if his/her transfer GPA is below the transfer standard for the institution’s sector. These students do not count against the number of Limited Admissions allowed for transfer students at that institution. Institutions should require placement criteria evaluation as appropriate.