PLACEMENT & ASSESSMENT EXAMS GUIDE
Students with a major in SESP

LANGUAGE PLACEMENT EXAMS

Foreign language is not a requirement in SESP, but many students take language courses to meet distribution requirements. If you have previously studied a language, we strongly recommend you take the placement exam for that language. Even if you think you want to start a different language, it’ll help keep your options open in the future by taking the placement exam.

If you have not previously studied a language, you do not need to take a language placement exam.

If you took a language-based AP or IB exam, you’ll need to look at that language’s website for specifics on how your scores count (scores count differently across languages, or you may still be required to take a placement exam regardless of AP/IB score).

- Arabic
- Chinese
- French
- German
- Greek (ancient)*
- Hebrew*
- Hindi-Urdu*
- Italian
- Japanese*
- Korean
- Latin
- Persian (Farsi)*
- Polish*
- Portuguese*
- Russian*
- Spanish
- Swahili
- Turkish*

*You will take this exam during Wildcat Welcome, not online during the summer

Access the online language placement exams by July 31.

CHEMISTRY ENTRANCE EXAM

For SESP, this is one you’ll probably forego. The entrance exam is required only if you plan to take any chemistry class while at Northwestern. Your major does not require chemistry, but chemistry is one of many courses that could meet your SESP natural science distribution requirement.

If you’re on the fence, it doesn’t hurt to take the exam even if you’re just thinking about chem as a possibility in the future. You have access to the entrance exam in your Canvas site; you can also learn more about the exam on the Chemistry website. This is due July 31.
MATH SELF-PLACEMENT EXAM

Just like the chem entrance exam, you don’t need to worry about this one unless you are planning to take calculus at Northwestern and studied calculus in high school. SESP has a Formal Studies distribution requirement; calculus courses are just a few of many courses you could take to meet that distribution requirement.

Learn more about the self-placement exam on the Department of Mathematics website.

PHYSICS PLACEMENT EXAM

The good thing about this one is that it is not an online exam that is due by July 31, you would take it during Wildcat Welcome (on September 12) so you have some time to decide. Physics is not a requirement for SESP, though courses could go to meet distribution requirements.

The exam is required if you took the AP Physics exam but hope to enroll in a more advanced course than what your AP score places you in. The placement exam is recommended if you didn’t take the AP Physics exam but you think you may want to take one of the basic physics courses.