

CLEP[®]: College-Level Examination Program



Rigor
Success
Access
Retention
Completion

Rigor

CLEP exams are rigorous and relevant; college faculty members are an integral part of the test development process.

Success

CLEP candidates outperform their peers in subsequent course work.

Access

CLEP allows capable students to move ahead, opening seats in introductory classes.

Retention

CLEP students are more likely to be retained semester to semester.

Completion

CLEP students complete their degrees at a higher rate than students not earning credit-by-exam.

Retention

CLEP allows students to focus on the courses they need. A recent study at a major research institution² showed that **students earning credit through CLEP are more likely to be retained semester to semester.**

- The study indicated that, on average, CLEP students had a higher number of hours per semester than the course-taking group.
- In the same study, results also showed that CLEP students took additional course work in the area for which they received credit-by-examination, or they took additional electives.

“**I wanted to make the most of my time the summer before I entered college, so I decided to take the CLEP Spanish exam. I scored high enough to earn six college credits and to feel confident that I could perform at a college level. I took two more CLEP exams that summer and entered Valdosta State University with 12 credits. Now I can concentrate on higher-level classes.**”

Steven A. Brown
Class of 2011
Valdosta State University

Completion

Students who earn credit through CLEP tend to complete their degrees at a higher rate than students who don't earn credit-by-examination.

- CLEP students were as likely, or significantly more likely, to graduate than their non-CLEP-earning peers, according to a recent study.²
- 91% of CLEP test-takers reported that CLEP made some difference to a significant difference in helping them to complete their degrees.³
- 70% of CLEP test-takers claim that earning CLEP credit made some difference to a significant difference in their ability to finance tuition and fees.³

“**Students who take advantage of CLEP opportunities can advance expeditiously and move into a career or graduate/professional school as soon as possible. CLEP goes hand-in-hand with Texas Tech University's Graduate-On-Time program, which helps students save money by developing an educational plan to assist in on-time graduation. Both of these opportunities help students attain their goals much sooner.**”

Becky Wilson
Director, Student Financial Aid
Texas Tech University

² Scammacca, N., and Dodd, B. (2005). *An Investigation of Educational Outcomes for Students Who Earn College Credit through the College-Level Examination Program*. College Board Research Report No. 2005-5 (New York: The College Board).

³ Based on a 2004 survey of 4,031 CLEP candidates.



photos (left to right):
Daniel Pichardo, earned 12 credits;
Tim Kulig, earned 27 credits;
Shannon Kranz, earned 6 credits

Rigor

CLEP exams are developed by faculty members at institutions across the country. Test development is ongoing.

- Faculty members write exam questions, set score standards, and establish credit-granting policies.
- More than 600 faculty members are involved in setting the standards for CLEP examinations.
- National curriculum surveys ensure that CLEP exams are closely aligned with introductory college courses as they are currently taught.

“**The CLEP U.S. History test is the product of collaboration among leading scholars in their fields. Students who pass this test have demonstrated a wide-ranging and in-depth knowledge of the American past. The test is rigorous and reflects recent trends in historiography as well as established topics on any college-level U.S. history syllabus.**”

Carol Berkin, Ph.D.
Former Chair

Test Development Committee, CLEP U.S. History examination
Professor of History, Baruch College and The Graduate Center

Success

Students earning credit through CLEP outperform peers who took introductory courses instead.

A recent study by 12 universities and community colleges¹ indicated that:

- CLEP students perform very well in the subsequent courses in which they enroll.
- CLEP students who were exempted from College Algebra and Freshman College Composition were far more likely to earn course grades of A or B than any other grade in subsequent courses.
- Exempted CLEP students outperformed students in the classroom by approximately one-half of a grade point on average.

“**As a member of the Calculus Test Development Committee, I can assure faculty and administrators that the Calculus exam was carefully constructed and validated. It is an exam that stresses the fundamental ideas of calculus and asks the kind of questions that you hope your students can answer the first day of the second semester of calculus.**”

Jane Coffee, Ph.D.
Former Member

Test Development Committee, CLEP Calculus examination
Professor of Mathematics, College of Staten Island

Access

CLEP students move more quickly into upper-level courses, giving faculty the opportunity to focus on the students enrolled in introductory-level courses.

- Capable students move ahead, opening seats in classes for students who truly need introductory course work.
- CLEP improves affordability for underserved groups who find rising college costs increasingly challenging.

“**I would not be a college graduate today without CLEP. I was able to skip introductory courses in the subjects that I wanted to study more rigorously, and earn credit for electives in other areas of interest. I walked away from the testing room confident that the exams were valid and thorough assessments of my independent learning.**”

Adam Gutcheon
2005 graduate
Charter Oak State College

¹ Moulder, B., Adbulla, A., and Morgan, D. (2005) *Validity and Fairness of CLEP Exams*. College Board Research Notes RN-22 (New York: The College Board).



CLEP

Take action:

1. Find out more about CLEP.

For a complete overview of the CLEP program, listings of CLEP credit-granting institutions and test centers, and information for your students, visit www.collegeboard.com/clep.

2. Learn more about the exam content and the test development process.

For a content outline and a description of the test development process for each exam, read the Test Information Guides (TIGs) in the CLEP Resource Center. Visit www.collegeboard.com/highered/clep and select “CLEP Resource Center” from the right-hand menu.

3. Establish or expand the CLEP policy on your campus.

To learn more about developing or expanding your CLEP policy, visit www.collegeboard.com/CLEPresources to order or download a free copy of “CLEP: Promoting Academic Success in Higher Education”

4. Support advisement to your CLEP policy.

Visit www.collegeboard.com/CLEPresources to order a free CLEP Advising Kit. Developed for faculty members and academic advisers, the kit offers practical suggestions for helping students take advantage of CLEP.

5. Learn more about CLEP use on your campus.

Order a free copy of your institution’s Summary Report to see how your institution’s CLEP use compares with state and national data. Send an e-mail request to clep@collegeboard.org.

The College-Level Examination Program

(CLEP) allows students to demonstrate that they have acquired college-level mastery of course content in 34 different subject areas. There are 2,900 institutions that grant credit for CLEP exams and 1,400 that administer the exams at on-campus test centers. Students who successfully complete a CLEP exam can enrich their degree programs with higher-level courses in the same discipline, expand their horizons by taking a wider array of electives, and avoid the need to repeat material that they already know.