



RESEARCH BRIEF

OIR

Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Student Success Initiatives

No. 15-15

April 2015

Implementation of Mandatory Placement Testing and Enrollment in Developmental English (If Placed): Fall 2014

As part of NOVA’s efforts to increase student success outcomes, NOVA enacted six policy changes in Fall 2014. Two of these policy changes mandate that all GPS students¹ 1) Take Virginia Placements Tests (VPT) and 2) Enroll in developmental courses, if placed. This Research Brief examines the testing and enrollment for Developmental English.² As presented in Table 1, from Fall 2013 to Fall 2014, the percentage of GPS students who took the VPT-English increased from 73 percent (6,140 students) to 74 percent (6,674 students).

Table 1. English Placement Testing of GPS Students: Fall 2013 and Fall 2014

Status	Fall 2013		Fall 2014	
	#	%	#	%
Took VPT-English	6,140	73.1	6,674	74.0
Did Not Take VPT-English	2,257	26.9	2,349	26.0
Total GPS Population	8,397	100.0	9,022	100.0

The increases in VPT-English placement testing varied across campuses (Table 2 and Figure 1 on next page). Excluding the Medical Education Campus, which had a small GPS population, each campus experienced an increase in the number of GPS students who took the VPT-English. Every campus except for Loudoun experienced an increase in the proportion of their GPS population who took the VPT-English. Loudoun is a unique case because its GPS population grew significantly more than any other campus’ between Fall 2013 and Fall 2014. Excluding Loudoun, each campus experienced an average increase of 4 percentage points in the proportion of their GPS population who took the VPT-English. In Fall 2014, Woodbridge had the highest placement testing rate (85 percent, 1,083 students) while Loudoun had the lowest rate (66 percent, 1,524 students).

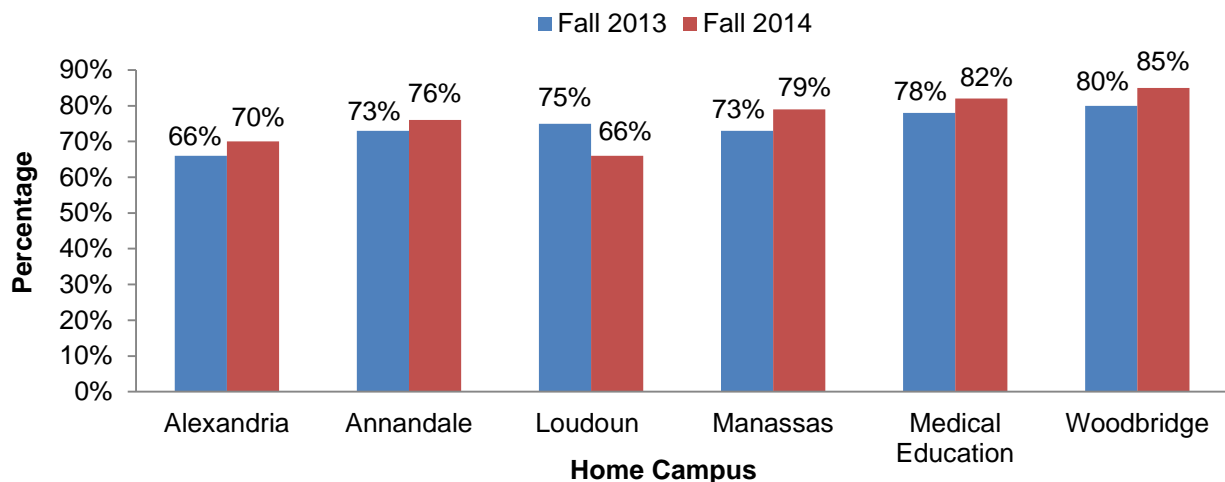
¹NOVA’s GPS population: Recent high school graduates or GED recipients between the ages of 17 and 24 who have never previously attended college (unless it was dual enrollment during high school), who are not members of the College Pathway Initiative program, and are not transient students.

² A separate Research Brief examines the testing and enrollment in developmental math.

**Table 2. GPS Students who took English Placement Test by Home Campus:
Fall 2013 and Fall 2014**

Home Campus	Fall 2013			Fall 2014		
	Total GPS Students	Took VPT-English		Total GPS Students	Took VPT-English	
		#	%		#	%
Alexandria	1,380	905	65.6	1,351	943	69.8
Annandale	2,628	1,908	72.6	2,588	1,956	75.6
Loudoun	1,654	1,237	74.8	2,326	1,524	65.5
Manassas	1,383	1,011	73.1	1,394	1,099	78.8
Medical Education	92	72	78.3	83	68	81.9
Woodbridge	1,260	1,007	79.9	1,280	1,083	84.6
Total	8,397	6,140	73.1	9,022	6,673	74.0

**Figure 1. GPS Students Who Took the English Placement Test by Home Campus:
Fall 2013 and Fall 2014**



Placement Status in Developmental English of GPS Students

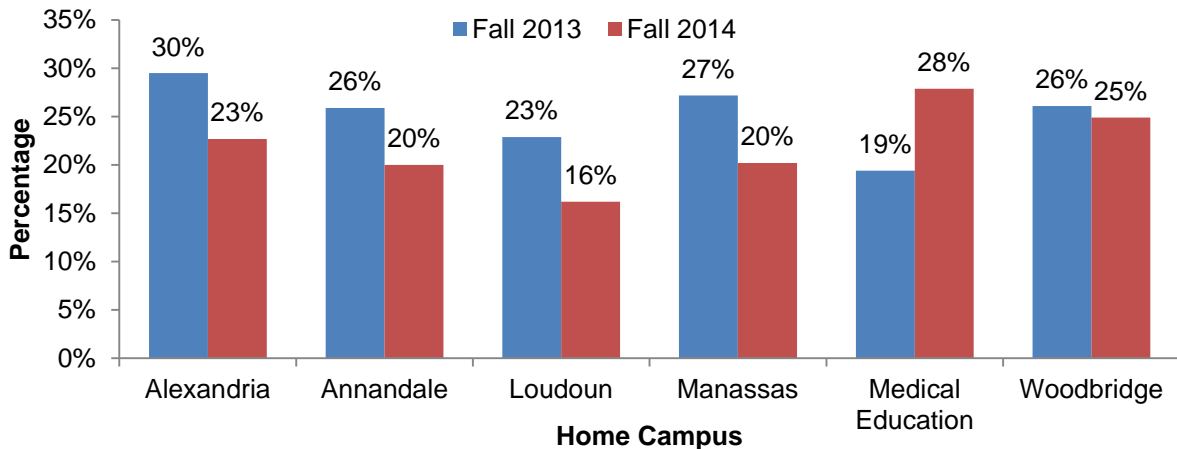
As shown in Table 3 and Figure 2 (both next page), between Fall 2013 and Fall 2014, the percentage of GPS students placed into developmental English decreased from 26 percent (1,596 students) in Fall 2013 to 20 percent (1,364 students) in Fall 2014. Although the number and percentage of GPS students taking the VPT-English increased, the number and percentage of students placed into a developmental English course decreased. In the Spring of 2013, NOVA implemented the VCCS Developmental English Redesign, however at this time, it is not possible to comment on the impact the redesign may have had on placement into and enrollment in developmental English courses.

The number and percentage of students placed in developmental English decreased at all campuses except for the Medical Education Campus and Woodbridge, where the number increased but the proportion of test takers decreased. The Alexandria, Loudoun, and Manassas Campuses each experienced a 7 percentage point decrease while Annandale experienced a 6 percentage point decrease in the rate at which students were placed into developmental English.

**Table 3. GPS Students Placed in Developmental English by Home Campus:
Fall 2013 and Fall 2014**

Home Campus	Fall 2013			Fall 2014		
	GPS Students who took VPT-English	Placed in Dev. English		GPS Students who took VPT-English	Placed in Dev. English	
		#	%		#	%
Alexandria	905	267	29.5	943	214	22.7
Annandale	1,908	494	25.9	1,956	392	20.0
Loudoun	1,237	283	22.9	1,524	247	16.2
Manassas	1,011	275	27.2	1,099	222	20.2
Medical Education	72	14	19.4	68	19	27.9
Woodbridge	1,007	263	26.1	1,083	270	24.9
Total	6,140	1,596	26.0	6,673	1,364	20.4

**Figure 2. GPS Students Placed in Developmental English by Home Campus:
Fall 2013 and Fall 2014**



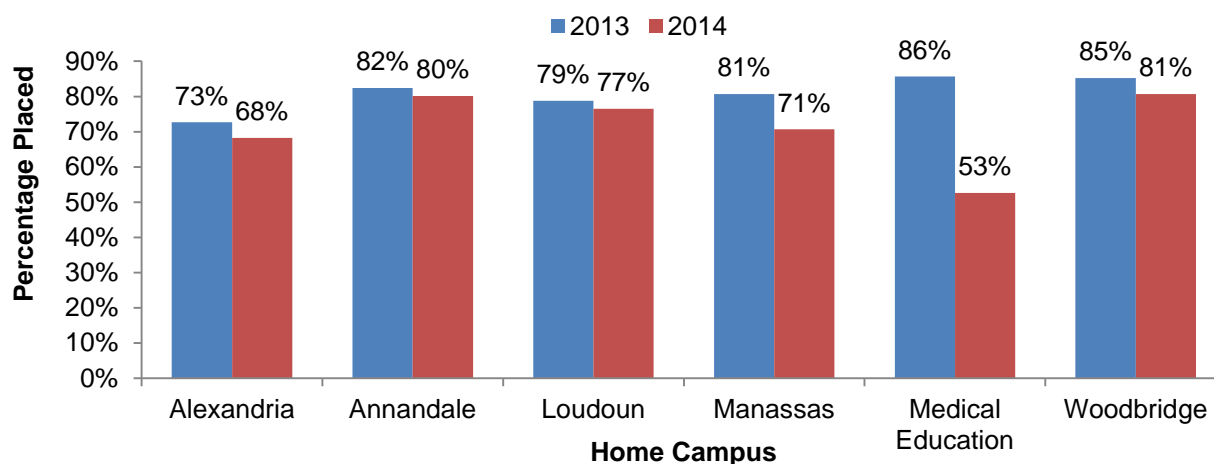
As can be seen in Table 4 and Figure 3 (both next page), the proportion of placed students who enrolled in developmental English decreased by 4 percentage points from 80 percent (1,282) in Fall 2013 to 76 percent (1,034 students) in Fall 2014. In Fall 2013, the percentage of enrolled students was already relatively high, but it is unclear what caused the rate to decrease after enactment of the mandate.

The enrollment rate decreased at all campuses. Excluding the Medical Education Campus, where there were fewer than 20 students placed in developmental English, the Manassas Campus experienced the largest percentage point decrease, going from 81 percent (222 students) in Fall 2013 to 71 percent (157 students) in Fall 2014. In Fall 2014, the Woodbridge Campus experienced the highest percentage of placed-students who enrolled in developmental English (81 percent, 218 students), followed by Annandale (80 percent, 314 students), Loudoun (77 percent, 189 students), Manassas (71 percent, 157 students), and Alexandria (68 percent, 146 students).

Table 4. GPS Students Enrolled in Developmental English after Placement by Home Campus: Fall 2013 and Fall 2014

Home Campus	Fall 2013			Fall 2014		
	GPS Students Placed in Dev. English	Enrolled in Dev. English		GPS Students Placed in Dev. English	Enrolled in Dev. English	
		#	%		#	%
Alexandria	267	194	72.7	214	146	68.2
Annandale	494	407	82.4	392	314	80.1
Loudoun	283	223	78.8	247	189	76.5
Manassas	275	222	80.7	222	157	70.7
Medical Education	14	12	85.7	19	10	52.6
Woodbridge	263	224	85.2	270	218	80.7
Total	1,596	1,282	80.3	1,364	1,034	75.8

Figure 3. GPS Students Enrolled in Developmental English after Placement by Home Campus: Fall 2013 and Fall 2014



ENF Courses Taken by GPS Students Who Were Placed in Developmental English

Table 5 presents data on enrollment in developmental English by course for GPS students. Between Fall 2013 and Fall 2014, there was little change in the composition of developmental English courses at the College. In Fall 2014, 69 percent of first-time in college (FTIC) students (766 students) enrolling in a developmental English course enrolled in ENF 3.

Table 5. ENF Courses Taken by FTIC Students Who Were Placed in Developmental English: Fall 2013 and Fall 2014

Course	Fall 2013		Fall 2014	
	#	%	#	%
ENF 1	102	7.5	86	7.8
ENF 2	345	25.5	252	22.8
ENF 3	907	67.0	766	69.4
Total Enrolled	1,354	100.0	1,104	100.0