



What is Guided English Placement?

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The free, online Guided English Placement (or GEP) is an alternative to either standardized test scores or timed, unsupervised writing tests for placement into UWM's required composition course.

Through the GEP, students can reflect on their composition strengths, understand expectations of the courses, and offer their input on the class they believe will lead to their greatest success.

In addition to how they might place themselves, we'll be integrating their experiences, their GPAs, and their learning dispositions to help place students in the course that best suits their needs.

[illegible]

We at UWM want to make clear that the more students chart their own paths within UWM's requirements the more invested and interested they are in their work. Studies in Rhetoric and Composition suggest that students' involvement in self-directed placement represents a national best practice (Royer and Gilles, 1998, 2000, 2003; Blakesley, 2002; Inoue, 2009; Toth and Aull, 2013). The UWM GEP process instills trust and cooperation as it

- We believe the GEP serves students from historically underserved communities by inviting them to participate in the placement process.

Improved success and satisfaction with their writing course(s)

Decreased misplacement

Increased retention

Other Institutions Involving Students in First-Year Writing Placement

A self-directed approach to placement such as GEP is an emergent industry standard. Other notable forerunners (among others) of this approach include a wide variety of institutions:

- [Grand Valley State University](#) in Allendale, MI
- [Colorado State University](#) in Fort Collins, CO
- [Sacramento State University](#) (among others in the CA State University System)
- [Shoreline Community College](#) in Bellingham, WA
- [University of Michigan](#) in Ann Arbor, MI

Who is Required to Complete the GEP?



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- If a student did NOT submit ACT or SAT scores to UWM and they do not have any transferable college English credit, they will need to complete the GEP.

- A student also has the option to complete the GEP if they aren't happy with their standardized test scores and would like to use GEP to find the right course for them.
- Students may only take the GEP once.
- Testing out is not an option through GEP. (Test out is only available with ACT/SAT or AP/IB credit).

How Do Students Prepare to Take the GEP?



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No preparation is required! This is not a test, and there are no right or wrong answers. This is a tool that helps students recall their past experiences with writing and then communicate those experiences in various ways.

Things students might find helpful:

- Find a quiet place where for focus and reflection.
- Set aside 30-60 minutes to complete the survey.
- Save their progress if they're unable to complete the GEP in one sitting.
- Be honest.

What's on the GEP?



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Students will review typical college-level readings, writings, and assignments to gain insight into what will be expected of them at different levels of placement.

Assessing themselves honestly will give students the greatest chance to be successful in the class they place into.

- The GEP is a survey. It's not timed.
- It is broken down into three parts: educational background and experiences, learning dispositions toward reading and writing tasks, and example materials from current UWM Composition classes (including short readings excerpts, writing prompts, and sample student essay).
- There is no writing component of the GEP. Students do not need to upload any writing or compose new material for the GEP.
- There is no reading test.

How Do Students Complete the GEP?



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- They will be able to complete the GEP on a computer or mobile device.
- The GEP is located on the English Department's website at uwm.edu/english/GEP.
- Students will also find a link to the survey on the freshman placement website: uwm.edu/freshmanplacement.

When Should Students Take the GEP?



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- Students are being told that they should complete all course placement requirements **at least two weeks** prior to their academic advising appointment.
- However, it is important to note that incoming freshman who have not submitted ACT/SAT scores will be required to complete the GEP before they can even register for their mandatory New Student Orientation (NSO) session.
- Students should complete the GEP as soon as possible to have the best selection of orientation dates.

What if a Student Doesn't Agree with Their GEP Placement?



- If a student used ACT/SAT scores for Composition placement initially, the GEP is their appeal process. They may use the highest placement.
- If a student has no test scores and used the GEP directly and does not agree with their placement, they need to contact Shevaun Watson (watsonse@uwm.edu). To appeal, students need to submit a transcript (HS, UWM, or transfer institution) and two academic essays for review. *The decision of the Director of Composition is final and cannot be appealed.*

What Questions Do You Have?



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- Visit the English Department [GEP Page](#) or [GEP-FAQS](#) pages for more details.
- Watch this student-oriented [GEP explainer video](#).
- Or contact Professor Shevaun Watson, Director of Composition at watsonse@uwm.edu.