

Presentation to Senate on Friday, February 18, 2022

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The following policy was adopted by the Senate Gen Ed Committee on December 14, 2021:

The IUSB General Education Committee has adopted a new policy that an ALEKS score can no longer fulfill the General Education Quantitative Reasoning (QR) requirement.

Key Points:

(0). Less than one student per year used ALEKS score to fulfill Gen Ed QR requirement.

(1). First, this is not a new policy, rather to correct a mistake made by IUSB many years ago.

No other IU campuses allows ALEKS score to fulfill QR requirement.

(2). We are not taking away test-out options from students for QR requirement. See the last section.

Note: These are two separate issues: (1) corrects a mistake, (2) is about IUSB test-out policy.

Background for ALEKS Score for Gen Ed Quantitative Reasoning (QR) Waiver:

In 2015-2016, IUSB began to use ALEKS as a new math placement exam. It also started to use ALEKS score of 76 as a waiver for Gen Ed QR requirement. The rationale was “a student scored ≥ 76 on ALEKS would be placed to Math M215 *Calculus I*, therefore, no need to take its pre-requisite course M127 (M125 *Pre-Calculus* + M126 *Trigonometry*), and M127 satisfies the QR requirement”.

Why this waiver is not based on academic reasoning?

(1). ALEKS is a placement tool, it does not have quantitative reasoning content. It is mainly testing arithmetic and algebra. “Scoring 76 or above on ALEKS” means “students have algebraic background to take M215 *Calculus I* course”.

(2). “Scoring 76 or above on ALEKS” is not equivalent to “students passing M127 *Pre-Calculus & Trigonometry*”.

(3). For Gen Ed assessment, all QR course instructors file Student Learning Outcomes report based on QR rubric (4 areas). ALEKS only covers one area, and it cannot do the report.

(4). M127 *Pre-Calculus & Trigonometry* is probably the “weakest” Gen QR course because its main purpose is to prepare students for Calculus. This makes the argument of using ALEKS score for QR based on M127 even weaker.

(5). Cheating on ALEKS exam is getting worse. One of the benefits to adopt ALEKS was to allow the students to take ALEKS at home (or any place) two times. Now days, new apps like PhotoMath have made cheating super easy. For example, some students scored low at 30s in first try, then took ALEKS again to score over 80. Some “smart” students can cheat in the first try.

QR Test-Out Options: The math department continues to offer test-out options for all IUSB students for math courses. The qualified students can test out QR courses such as M111, M118 & M127. These proctored tests for M111, M118 & M127 include quantitative reasoning contents.

We encourage IUSB to develop uniform policy on test-out for all Gen Ed areas and for all courses.

Note: IUSB ALEKS Chart for Course Placement:

https://students.iusb.edu/doc/ALEKS-Flowchart_20201218091630_571840.pdf