

**Poster Proposal**  
**Basic Writing CCCC pre-conference workshop**

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**First Do No Harm? Placement and Assessment in Basic Writing**

In the past five years, Metropolitan State University has seen an influx of students who possess one of the technical requirements to be accepted as a student – but not the necessary skills to succeed in college-level courses. The institution is faced with fulfilling its responsibilities to the underprepared students it accepts -- or making its admission standards more exclusionary.

I developed and teach a new course at Metropolitan State University designed to better help students whose Accuplacer test scores fall in a particular range—primarily Multi-Language Learners, first-generation college students, and returning adult students. The needs of these populations converge and diverge at important points not accounted for within the Placement and Assessment machinery, though, and WRIT 101 ends up with a population with a very wide range of abilities. The Accuplacer score range for WRIT 101 was intended to be approximately 50 – 70. What it has become, however, is a range of 40 down to 8.

The proposed poster will examine the Placement and Assessment technologies in place at Metropolitan State, beginning with The College Board's "adaptive" Accuplacer test and the cut scores used to find the appropriate course for students who have not fulfilled their writing requirement. The poster will examine the basic writing population that Accuplacer has produced. Although the Assessment and Placement instrument is just one aspect of the Basic Writing apparatus, it is a particularly enlightening one to examine.