



## COM-FSM Entrance Test

frequently  
asked

# QUESTIONS

A publication of the COM-FSM Committee on Recruitment, Admissions and Retention

## What is the COMET?

**COMET** is the **College of Micronesia-FSM's Entrance Test**. It is a three-section test given to high school seniors, high school graduates, and General Educational Development (GED) holders who want to enroll at COM-FSM and who have not attended college previously.

The purpose of the COMET is to assist the college in making decisions about admitting students to the college and allow the college to gather some information about how well prepared and "college-ready" prospective students are in English writing and reading, and in mathematics.

The COMET is also used to place students who are admitted into an appropriate COM-FSM academic degree, developmental educational courses, and vocational and technical certificate programs.

## Why does the College have to use the COMET?

**COM-FSM** can't accept and enroll every high school graduate or GED holder who wants to attend the college and has to make decisions on admitting and enrolling students. Having a high school diploma or GED by itself is not enough for the college to determine admissions to the college.

Additionally, most high schools in the FSM do not administer high school exit tests or comprehensive standard tests like SAT, ACT or TOEFL test to help the college make a decision about how well prepared a person who is to be admitted and do college level work. Therefore, COM-FSM developed the COMET to help identify, select, and admit students.

The COMET test scores are also used to place newly admitted students into appropriate college courses.

## Who can take the COMET and when is it offered?

If you are a high school graduate or GED holder, you can take the COMET at any of the testing times offered throughout the year at each of the four campuses.

If you are a high school senior, you can take the COMET during the second semester of your senior (12th grade) year.

The test is given usually in early February to March for high school seniors.

## How can I get the test results?

If an individual wants to see his or her score, he or she can contact the local COM-FSM campus student services.

## How is the COMET scored and who scores the COMET essays?

All test answer sheets and essays are sent to the Office of the Vice President for Student Services (VPSS) located at the COM-FSM National Campus in Palikir, Pohnpei.

### Reading Comprehension and Math Sections

The reading comprehension and math answer sheets are machine scored, and the scores are compiled by the staff of the VPSS Office.

### The Essays

The COMET essays are sent to the VPSS Office then corrected by a team of college faculty members who are trained to read and score the essay based on a scoring "rubric." The rubric has five categories worth 0-5 points for each category for a possible overall total of 25 points.

Every essay is read and scored separately by two essay readers. The scores from the two readers are then added together for the final "essay score."

The final combined essay scores range from 0-50 points.

For more information about the COMET, please see, call or stop by the COM-FSM campus in your state.

You can also check the college's website at [www.comfsm.fm](http://www.comfsm.fm), e-mail the Office of Admissions, Records and Retention, [oar@comfsm.fm](mailto:oar@comfsm.fm), or contact the Office of the Vice President for Student Services, phone (691) 320-2480 extension 129.

## Educational Mission

Historically diverse, uniquely Micronesians and globally connected, the College of Micronesia-FSM is a continuously improving and student centered institute of higher education. The college is committed to assisting in the development of the Federated States of Micronesia by providing academic, career and technical educational opportunities for student learning.

## What are the parts of the COMET?

The COMET has three sections: (a) the essay, (b) the reading comprehension, and (c) the math sections.

The Essay Section

The Reading Comprehension Section

The Math Section

## The Essay Section

This section takes 40 minutes and the test taker is given a writing task and asked to write an essay of at least 250 words that includes an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.

## The Reading Comprehension Section

The reading comprehension section of the COMET is the **Nelson-Denny Reading Test (NDRT)** which has a vocabulary section and separate comprehension section.

The NDRT vocabulary section has 80 items and students are given 24 minutes using the extended time for ESL students.

The NDRT reading comprehension section is seven reading passages with 38 questions. Students are given 32 minutes to complete the comprehension section using the extended time for ESL students.

## The Math Section

The math section is a one hour test and includes 40 items with multiple choice answers. The math section tests basic math, algebra, geometry, and problem solving.

## How does the college use COMET scores?

The COMET scores are used to make decision on accepting and admitting students into the regular associate degree college programs, vocational certificate programs, and placement into developmental courses. If the student decides to attend the college, the COMET test scores are also used by the college to place underprepared students into appropriate developmental English and math courses.

## If I attended another college and want to transfer into COM-FSM, do I have to take the COMET to be admitted?

No, you don't have to take the COMET in advance to be admitted to COM-FSM as a transfer student, if you have been officially enrolled at another U.S. accredited college.

While you may be admitted as a transfer student, depending on your course work and level at the previous college, you may be asked to take some or all of the COMET test sections to determine best placement into appropriate courses.

## If I am a high school senior or a high school graduate and I have official SAT, ACT or TOEFL scores, can I use these scores to be considered for admissions to COM-FSM, or do I still need to take the COMET?

At this time, COM-FSM has no established policy or procedure for admitting students based only on SAT, ACT or TOEFL scores. For now, the college is handling requests on a case-to-case basis. Nonetheless, the college welcomes applications for admission and will consider your application. If you are in the FSM, plan to take the COMET. If you are attending high school outside of the FSM and plan to return to the FSM to attend COM-FSM and cannot take the COMET, you should contact the college early about your plans.

You will need to submit an application, report your SAT, ACT or TOEFL scores to COM-FSM, and have an official copy of your high school transcript sent to the college.

For more information and assistance in applying from outside the FSM, please contact any of the COM-FSM state campuses, or e-mail the Vice President for Student Services at [vpss@comfsm.fm](mailto:vpss@comfsm.fm) or the Director of Admissions, Records and Retention at [joducado@comfsm.fm](mailto:joducado@comfsm.fm).

FREQUENTLY

ASKED

QUESTIONS

## What are the COMET main and alternate criteria?

The COMET was designed as an entrance test for the internal use of the College of Micronesia-FSM. It is used to determine if a student has the potential to be successful at the college level. It was not designed to be used as a measure of performance nor was it designed to be compared to U.S. nationally standardized tests such as SAT and ACT.

The **main criteria** for each level at the college is:

### Degree Level

Essay  $\geq 34$ , and reading comprehension  $\geq 9$ th grade

### Achieving College Excellence (ACE)

Essay  $\geq 28$ , and reading comprehension  $\geq 7$ th grade

### Certificate (ACE)

Essay  $\geq 20$ , and reading comprehension  $\geq 5$ th grade

A set of **alternate criteria** was also established since some students may have good reading comprehension scores and math scores, but an essay or reading score that is a little low. This alternate criteria is implemented after the first set of criteria is applied.

1. Alternate criteria applied to those students who placed into ACE after the main criteria. This is used to recommend advancing ACE level student to degree level.
  - Reading comprehension  $\geq 10$ th grade
  - Essay  $\geq 28$ , and reading comprehension  $\geq 8$ th grade, and MS  $\geq 096$
  - Essay  $\geq 42$ , and reading comprehension  $\geq 6$ th grade, and MS  $\geq 096$
2. Alternate criteria applied to those students who placed as Certificate after the main criteria. This is used to recommend advancing a certificate level student to ACE level.
  - Reading comprehension  $\geq 10$ th grade
  - Essay  $\geq 36$  and reading comprehension  $\geq 6$ th grade, and MS  $\geq 096$
3. Alternate criteria applied to those students who placed as non-admit after the main criteria. This is used to recommend advancing non-admit student to certificate level.
  - Reading comprehension  $\geq 10$ th grade
  - Essay  $\geq 20$ , and reading comprehension  $\geq 4$ th grade, and MS  $\geq 096$

## College of Micronesia-FSM Admissions Requirements

**Applicants** must meet the following admission requirements to be matriculated into a degree program:

- Have graduated or will graduate from high school at the end of the current school year, or have a General Educational Development (GED) certificate;
- Have a minimum high school grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 measured on a 4.0 scale, or a minimal score of 35 on each section and an average score of 45 for all five sections of the GED test; and
- Be accepted by the Committee on Recruitment, Admissions, and Retention.

## Admissions Procedure

- Take the COMET and be placed into a program at the college. A test fee of \$5.00 will be collected. The COMET is administered in November at the State campuses for Spring admission, and in February to March at all high schools and in the State campuses for Fall admission.
- Obtain an **Application for Admission** from a high school counselor, COM-FSM State Campus Dean, or the COM-FSM Office of Admissions, Records and Retention. Printable **Application for Admission** form may be downloaded from the college's website ([http://www.comfsm.fm/dev/oar\\_forms/Application\\_for\\_Admission.pdf](http://www.comfsm.fm/dev/oar_forms/Application_for_Admission.pdf)).
- Complete the **Application for Admission**, and mail it with the \$10.00 application fee to:

Office of Admissions, Records and Retention  
College of Micronesia-FSM  
P.O. Box 159  
Kolonias, Pohnpei FM 96941

- Complete the **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** or the FAFSA renewal, and mail it to the address indicated.
- Request that all official high school transcripts or General Educational Development (GED) scores are sent to the Office of Admissions, Records, and Retention (OARR). High school seniors should submit a seven-semester transcript. College transfer students must also submit official transcripts from all colleges previously attended.

## How can students and schools best prepare for the COMET test?

There is no "quick and easy" way to best prepare to score well on the COMET. The goal of the COMET is to get an indication of how prepared the student is to read, write and compute at college level. His or her success on the COMET therefore is the result of the skills the student has developed from K-12. Be familiar with how to use machine scored answer sheets. Be familiar with test taking strategies for using time as well. COM-FSM also recommends test takers become familiar with essay test requirements and practice writing essays. Ask the college for a sample of the essay scoring rubric.

## Nelson-Denny Practice Test

[http://www.testprepreview.com/nelson\\_denny\\_practice.htm](http://www.testprepreview.com/nelson_denny_practice.htm)