

About the Advanced Placement Program[®] (AP[®])

The Advanced Placement Program[®] enables willing and academically prepared students to pursue college-level studies — with the opportunity to earn college credit, advanced placement, or both — while still in high school. AP Exams are given each year in May. Students who earn a qualifying score on an AP Exam are typically eligible, in college, to receive credit, placement into advanced courses, or both. Every aspect of AP course and exam development is the result of collaboration between AP teachers and college faculty. They work together to develop AP courses and exams, set scoring standards, and score the exams. College faculty review every AP teacher's course syllabus.

AP Capstone™ Program

AP Capstone™ is an innovative diploma program from the College Board that equips students with the independent research, collaborative teamwork, and communication skills that are increasingly valued by colleges. AP Capstone is built on the foundation of two AP courses — **AP Seminar** and **AP Research** — and is designed to complement and enhance the in-depth, discipline-specific study experienced in other AP courses.

In AP Seminar, students investigate real-world issues from multiple perspectives, gathering and analyzing information from various sources in order to develop credible and valid evidence-based arguments.

In AP Research, students cultivate the skills and discipline necessary to conduct independent research in order to produce and defend a scholarly academic paper.

Students who earn scores of 3 or higher in AP Seminar and AP Research and on four additional AP Exams of their choosing will receive the AP Capstone Diploma. Students who earn scores of 3 or higher in AP Seminar and AP Research but not on four additional AP Exams will receive the AP Seminar and Research Certificate. AP Seminar may also be taken as a stand-alone option.

AP Seminar Course Overview

AP Seminar is a foundational course that engages students in cross-curricular conversations that explore the complexities of academic and real-world topics and issues by analyzing divergent perspectives. Using an inquiry framework, students practice reading and analyzing articles, research studies, and foundational literary and philosophical texts; listening to and viewing speeches, broadcasts, and personal accounts; and experiencing artistic works and performances. Students learn to synthesize information from multiple sources, develop their own perspectives in research-based written essays, and design and deliver oral and visual presentations, both individually and as part of a team. Ultimately, the course aims to equip students with the power to analyze and evaluate information with accuracy and precision in order to craft and communicate evidence-based arguments.

RECOMMENDED PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisite courses for the AP Seminar course.

AP Seminar Course Content

Students engage in conversations about complex academic and real-world issues through a variety of lenses, considering multiple points of view. Teachers have the flexibility to choose one or more appropriate themes that allow for deep interdisciplinary exploration based on:

- Concepts or issues from other AP courses
- Student interests
- Local and/or civic issues
- Academic problems or questions
- Global or international topics

Exploring different points of view and making connections across disciplines are fundamental components of the AP Seminar experience. Students consider each topic through a variety of lenses and from multiple perspectives, many of which are divergent or competing. Analyzing topics through multiple lenses aids in interdisciplinary understanding and helps students gain a rich appreciation for the complexity of important issues. Teachers should encourage students to explore a topic through several of the following lenses:

- Cultural and social
- Artistic and philosophical
- Political and historical
- Environmental
- Economic
- Scientific
- Futuristic
- Ethical

Pedagogical Framework

Throughout the program, students consider and evaluate multiple points of view to develop their own perspectives on complex issues and topics through inquiry and investigation. The AP Capstone program provides students with a framework that allows them to develop, practice, and hone their critical and creative thinking skills as they make connections between various issues and their own lives.

Students use the following framework as they explore issues and topics:

- **Q**uestion and Explore
- **U**nderstand and Analyze Arguments
- **E**valuate Multiple Perspectives
- **S**ynthesize Ideas
- **T**eam, Transform, and Transmit

AP Seminar Assessment Structure

Students are assessed with two through-course performance assessment tasks and one end-of-course exam. All three assessments are summative and will be used to calculate a final AP score (using the 1–5 scale) for AP Seminar.

Format of Assessment

Team Project and Presentation | 25% of AP Score

- Individual Research and Reflection
- Written Team Report
- Team Multimedia Presentation and Defense

Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation | 35% of AP Score

- Individual Written Argument
- Individual Multimedia Presentation
- Oral Defense

End-of-Course Exam (3 Hours) | 40% of AP Score

- Understanding and analyzing an argument (3 short-answer questions)
- Evaluating and comparing the effectiveness of arguments (essay)
- Synthesizing information to develop an evidence-based argument essay (evidence-based argument essay)

Overview of Assessment Tasks

Team Project and Presentation

In this project, three to six students collaborate as a team to identify an academic or real-world problem or issue. Team members work together to develop a research question; they then identify approaches, perspectives, or lenses for examining the question and divide responsibilities among themselves for individual research.

Individually, students investigate an approach, perspective, or lens on the issue or topic of the team research question. Each student presents his or her findings and analysis to the group in a well-written individual report that

- identifies the area of investigation and its relationship to the overall problem, question, or issue;
- describes and analyzes the line of reasoning and evidence of the information collected;
- explains and synthesizes the range of information and perspectives considered and the relevance of that information to the problem, question, or issue;
- justifies the inclusion and exclusion of information advanced to the team; and
- cites and attributes any information included.

Working collaboratively, the team considers all the research and analyses from individual team members for the purpose of proposing or creating one or more solutions, conclusions, or recommendations. The team evaluates and integrates the findings and perspectives from individual research, synthesizing the most effective arguments and supporting evidence.

Together, the team prepares a well-written report that

- introduces, situates, contextualizes, and/or explains the problem, or issue and identifies each team member's approach to that problem or issue;
- proposes one or more solutions, conclusions, or recommendations to the problem or issue that are based on evidence and consider consequences and implications;

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- appropriately acknowledges, attributes, and/or cites the ideas and work of authors of outside sources; and
- includes a bibliography of works cited.

The team develops an 8–10 minute presentation that conveys its key findings and delivers the presentation to an audience of its peers. The presentation and the media used to enhance the presentation should consider audience, context, and purpose. Following the presentation, the team will defend its argument, with each student responding to a question posed by the teacher. Each team member should be prepared to answer questions about any part of the presentation.

Finally, each student adds to his or her individual research report, a description of:

- how he or she approached the process of researching and solving a problem or issue
- how his or her understanding of the problem or issue developed and/or changed
- how working with the group deepened or otherwise influenced his or her thinking and writing

Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation

On or about Jan. 2 of each year, the College Board will release academic, cross-curricular source material (texts) focused on a theme representing a range of perspectives from each of the following domains:

- Natural Sciences, Technology, Mathematics, Environment
- Social Sciences, Politics, Economics, Psychology
- Arts (Visual Arts, Music, Dance, Theater)
- Culture, Languages, Linguistics
- History
- Literature, Philosophy, Critical Theory/Criticism

The following will be represented in the texts: visual text and/or multimedia and quantitative data.

Students identify a research question of their own prompted by the stimulus material. They then gather additional information through research; analyze, evaluate, and select evidence; and develop a logical, well-reasoned argument of approximately 2,000 words. The final paper must refer to and incorporate at least one of the sources provided.

Students must avoid plagiarism by acknowledging, attributing and/or citing sources throughout the paper and including a bibliography (see AP Capstone Policy on Plagiarism).

Students each develop a 6–8 minute presentation using appropriate media and present it to an audience of their peers. This presentation is an opportunity for students to present their conclusions by building arguments that convey their perspectives. The presentations should use the evidence to support students' own arguments and situate their perspectives in their larger contexts rather than merely summarizing student research. Finally, students defend their research process, use of evidence, and conclusion through oral responses to two questions asked by the teacher.

End-of-Course Exam

During the AP Exam administration window, students will take the AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam. The exam consists of five items (three short-answer and two essay questions). The three short-answer questions assess analysis of an argument in a single source or document. The first essay question requires the students to perform a close reading of two documents and perform a comparative analysis and evaluation of the authors' arguments. The second essay question assesses students' skills in synthesizing and creating an evidence-based argument.