



Combining Scholarly Practice with Academic Intensity

AP Capstone was developed in response to feedback from the College Board's Higher Education membership. The two AP Capstone courses, with their associated performance tasks, assessments, and application of research methodology, complement the rigor of AP courses and exams by challenging students to:

- Think critically and creatively to construct meaning or gain understanding
- Plan and conduct a study or investigation
- Propose solutions to real-world problems
- Plan and produce communication in various forms
- Collaborate to solve a problem
- Integrate, synthesize, and make cross-curricular connections

Benefits of AP Capstone



- Fosters the **critical and creative thinking, argumentation, and research skills** at the core of college readiness and essential for lifelong learning
- Provides a setting to build on the knowledge and rigorous course work of AP in an **interdisciplinary** format
- Offers a unique opportunity to **distinguish** oneself to colleges and universities



- Builds **professional excellence** through participation in an intensive, weeklong collaborative professional development institute
- Offers a flexible curricular content model with room for creativity and student input
- Affords schools and districts the distinction of offering a rigorous, widely recognized diploma program



- Helps identify students who are prepared to enter college with the research, writing, and collaboration skills necessary for **successful college completion**
- Provides consistent, externally validated measures of student ability
- Demonstrates student research and writing abilities through a 5,000-word scholarly research paper

Building Skills Identified by Leading Educational Organizations

AP Capstone has collaborated with colleges and universities to define its content and standards. It utilizes frameworks and learning objectives uniquely aligned with core AP skills and practices, and other skills-based learning objectives as identified by:

Advanced Placement Program, Skills and Practices

Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), *College Learning for the New Global Century, Essential Learning Outcomes*

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21), *A Framework for 21st Century Learning*

Common Core State Standards Initiative, *Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects 6–12*

Council of Writing Program Administrators, *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing*

AP Capstone Curriculum

AP Capstone Diploma™

Students who earn scores of 3 or higher in both of the AP Capstone courses and on four additional AP Exams of their choosing will receive the AP Capstone Diploma™.

AP SEMINAR (Year 1)

- Team Project & Presentation
- Research-Based Essay & Presentation
- End-of-Course Exam

AP RESEARCH (Year 2)

- Research Process Documentation
- Academic Thesis Paper
- Presentation & Oral Defense

4 AP COURSES & EXAMS
(Taken at any point throughout high school)

AP Seminar and Research Certificate™

Students who earn scores of 3 or higher in both of the AP Capstone courses but not on the four additional AP Exams will receive the AP Seminar and Research Certificate™, signifying successful performance in those courses.

AP Seminar

This foundational course, typically taken in grade 10 or 11, provides students with opportunities to think critically and creatively, research, explore, pose solutions, develop arguments, collaborate, and communicate using various media. Students explore real-world issues through a variety of lenses and consider multiple points of view to develop deep understanding of complex issues as they make connections between these issues and their own lives.

Students read articles, research studies, and foundational and philosophical texts; listen to and view speeches, broadcasts, and personal accounts; and experience artistic and literary works to gain a rich appreciation and understanding of issues.

Teachers have the flexibility to choose appropriate themes that allow for deep exploration based on student interests, local and civic issues, global or international topics, and concepts from other AP courses.

Sample Topics or Themes

- Education
- Innovation
- Revolution
- Sustainability
- Technology

Assessment

Students are assessed with two through-course performance tasks and an end-of-course exam. The AP Seminar score is based on all three assessments and is reported on the standard 1–5 AP scoring scale.

AP Research

(AP Seminar is a prerequisite for AP Research)

The second course in the AP Capstone experience allows students to design, plan, and conduct a yearlong research-based investigation on a topic of individual interest. Through this inquiry and investigation, students demonstrate the ability to apply scholarly understanding to real-world problems and issues.

Students further the skills acquired in the AP Seminar course by understanding research methodology; employing ethical research practices; and accessing, analyzing, and synthesizing information to build, present, and defend an argument.

Assessment

Students are assessed through culminating performance tasks:

- Academic thesis paper (approximately 5,000 words) with a defined structure
- Presentation, performance, or exhibition and oral defense of research and presentation

The AP Research score is based on these components and is reported on the standard 1–5 AP scoring scale.

AP CAPSTONE

Requirements

- Application
- 2 teacher recommendations
- AP Seminar is 1 semester (10th/11th grade)
- AP Research is year-long (11th/12th grade)
- When you sign up for AP Seminar, you are committing to do the year-long AP Research the next year

AP Capstone Diploma

1. 4 AP classes with 3 or better on exam
2. 3 or better on AP Seminar and AP Research

Course Descriptions

AP Seminar: AP Seminar is a foundational course where students engage in cross-curricular conversations that explore the complexities of academic and real-world topics and issues by analyzing different perspectives. 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 info from multiple sources, develop their own perspectives in 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.

AP Research: Students will work with a faculty mentor to explore an academic topic, problem, issue, or idea of individual interest. Students design, plan, and implement a yearlong investigation to address a research question. Students further the skills they acquired in AP Seminar course by learning research methodology, employing ethical research practices, and accessing, analyzing and synthesizing info. Students reflect on their skill development, document their processes, and curate the artifacts of their scholarly work through a process and reflection portfolio. The course culminates in an academic paper of 4,000-5,000 words and a presentation with an oral defense.