



AP RESEARCH 2024-2025

Summer Communication & Assignment

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Dear AP Research Students,

Welcome to the second phase of the AP Capstone program, AP Research! As you continue your QUEST journey toward the AP Capstone Certificate and Diploma, there are a few things I would like to remind you of as we transition to the upcoming year. In choosing to pursue this second course, you are committing yourself to an advanced interdisciplinary course that will build on your previous learning and extend your scholarly research skills through an inquiry into a research topic **of your own choosing** that appeals to your interests and curiosity. Unlike in AP Seminar, where the focus is on analyzing the perspectives of others, in AP Research, you will design **your own methodology** to gather data that will inform **your own perspective**. Simply put, YOU are taking your place in the scholarly conversation through your research!

As you know by now, the Capstone program is a two-year course at Malden Catholic that begins with AP Seminar in the junior year and culminates with AP Research in the senior year. Presently, the AP Capstone program satisfies your theology requirement for grade 11 (AP Seminar) and grade 12 (AP Research). We will incorporate regular prayer, spiritual reflection, and your Christian Service responsibilities through this course.

Although you may elect not to pursue the second course (AP Research), *it is expected of students to follow through with the commitment over two years unless you receive a score below passing on your AP Seminar exam or have decided that the course will not be a good fit for you*, in consultation with your family and school counselor.

As with AP Seminar, coursework in AP Research is rigorous but entirely manageable. Laziness, disorganization, and poor self-motivation will be big disadvantages here, since disciplined time management and effective organization of research materials will be critical for your success. And because this course requires peer feedback, presentations, and collaborative discussion, non-participation will not be tolerated. Having completed AP Seminar, you know the drill. This is largely a collegiate **seminar-style** course. The engine that makes it run is your collective, regular, and thoughtful participation, exhibited by thorough preparation with course materials and sufficient attention devoted to individual research and reflection.

AP Research is a research-based course driven by **recursive inquiry**, which means that we will go back and forth between different stages of the QUEST process as we consider different questions, assumptions, hypotheses, perspectives, methods, data sets, and conclusions. Since your exam score is based on one **Through-Course Performance Task** (the Academic Paper and Presentation/Oral Defense), I strongly encourage you to treat each day as though it is part of your exam task, because it is. Your academic paper and presentation/oral defense are the *only* components of your exam score.

We will review your performance task in greater detail in class, but for now, here is a summary of the major components of the course (College Board, 2017):

Academic Paper (75% of Exam Score)

In the classroom and independently (with the consultation of expert advisers), students learn and employ research and inquiry methods to develop, manage, and conduct an in-depth investigation of an area of personal interest, culminating in an academic paper of 4,000 – 5,000 words that includes the following elements:

- Introduction and Literature Review
- Method, Process, or Approach
- Results, Products, or Findings
- Discussion, Analysis, and/or Evaluation
- Conclusion and Future Directions
- Bibliography

***** The Academic Paper is submitted to your College Board Digital Portfolio before April 30th. Formal due date TBA. Papers not submitted, like your final English paper, will result in you being ineligible to receive course credit and graduate on time.***

Performance and Oral Defense (25% of Exam Score)

Students develop and deliver a 15-20 minute presentation (using an appropriate medium) and a three-question oral defense to a panel on their research processes, method, and findings.

***** PODs must be completed before April 30th. Formal presentation dates TBA.***

Process and Reflection Portfolio – PREP (Curricular Requirement)

Using a process and reflection portfolio (PREP), students document their inquiry processes, communication with their teachers and any expert advisers as needed, and reflections on their thought processes. Students have regular work-in-progress checks with their teachers to review the progress and to receive feedback on their scholarly work. All assigned classwork and homework will be kept in the PREP folder as well.

***** All students must make a folder in Google Drive called **Your Name – PREP** and share it with Mrs. Connolly as soon as possible, no later than June 17. If it is incorrectly labeled or not shared with me, you can expect to hear from me.***

The broad overview of the year for AP Research is as follows:

<p><u>Quarter 1</u> (Sept. – Oct.)</p>	<p>Recap of Summer Work Study Discipline-Specific Ways of Knowing, Types of Research Finalize Research Questions; Conduct Further Preliminary Research Develop Annotated Bibliographies Contact Expert Advisers (As needed) Write Initial Inquiry Proposals; Choose Your Research Method Peer Feedback and Reflection</p>
<p><u>Quarter 2</u> (Nov. – Dec.)</p>	<p>Finalize Inquiry Methods Write and Present Final Inquiry Proposals for Review (Teacher, IRB) Write Introduction and Literature Review</p>
<p><u>Quarter 3</u> (Jan. – Mar.)</p>	<p>Finish Introduction and Literature Review Draft Method Section, Implement Method, Gather and Analyze Data Draw Conclusions, Evaluate Implications, Limitations, and Further Directions Peer Evaluations and Feedback of Academic Paper Compose Final Academic Paper</p>
<p><u>Quarter 4</u> (Apr. – May)</p>	<p>Submit Academic Paper as Final (75% of AP Seminar Exam Grade) Prepare and Deliver Presentation & Oral Defense (25% of AP Seminar Exam Grade) Showcase Your Research, Talk to AP Seminar Students Turn in Senior Christian Service Paper</p>

On the pages that follow, I will discuss your summer assignment and any required course texts that you have to obtain. Your summer assignment – which centers largely on the work of finding a topic, a question, and a purpose for research – is a multi-step process that you will document in your PREP folder. It will be due at the date and time specified in the assignment and all materials must be stored in your PREP (the PREP is the equivalent to the AP Seminar folder from last year). Please adhere to the instructions and let me know if you have any questions. **You will be held accountable for any missing work past the due dates.**

In the weeks ahead, you will receive an invitation to our new AP Research Google Classroom page. **Please accept this invitation immediately.** Email and Google Classroom are the primary ways I will be communicating with you throughout the summer, so I will expect that you are checking your email and Google Classroom at least 1-2 times per week unless your family is on vacation and has no access to the internet.

I look forward to another successful year together. You have all demonstrated yourselves to be worthy of contributing to dynamic scholarly conversations in unique and compelling ways. This is likely the first task of this kind you are being asked to produce, so you should be proud of yourself for taking on this challenge. If you invest the proper time and energy into it, this experience will benefit you for the rest of your life. I am confident that you are up for it.

Happy Research!

Mrs. Connolly

For this year, there are no course texts that are required for purchase. However, several high-quality research aids are recommended below. These will also be useful in college.

Recommended but Not Required Texts

APA 7th Manual Made Easy: Full Concise Guide Simplified for Students: Updated for the APA 7th Edition. 2021. Appearance Publishers.

https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B091QXBDW1/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o00_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1

Bergin, Tiffany. *An Introduction to Data Analysis: Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Methods*. 1st Edition. 2018. SAGE Publications Ltd (ISBN: 978-1446295144).

<https://www.amazon.com/Introduction-Data-Analysis-Quantitative-Qualitative/dp/1446295141>

Leedy, Paul and Ormrod, Jeanne. *Practical Research: Planning and Design*. 12th Edition. 2018. Pearson (ISBN: 978-0134775654).

https://www.amazon.com/Practical-Research-Planning-Design-12th/dp/0134775651/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=practical+research+planning+and+design&qid=1622555886&s=books&sr=1-1

[^] ***Students in previous years have used this book significantly.***

NOTE: Based upon your choice of research question and method, there may be other texts that surface throughout the year that you will want to consider purchasing.

To-Do List

- Purchase any recommended texts you'd like
- Check MC E-mail for invitation to AP Research Google Classroom and accept as as soon as you see it come through
- Create a folder in your MC Google Drive labeled: **Your Name – PREP**
- Reflect thoroughly and complete Question Work Assignment by **Tuesday 9/3**

Your assignment instructions can be found on the pages that follow.

Summer Assignment: Identifying a Research Problem and Conducting Question Work

Due: Upon return to school on **Tuesday, September 3rd, in class**

Submitted via: Google Docs, shared with me (Iconnolly@maldencatholic.org) by placing it in your PREP folder.

Suggested time: 1-2 hours per week of reflection and research and 1 hour to work through the reading, *at least* 10-12 hours total over the course of the summer (varies according to your disciplinary habits)

The following assignment is adapted from: Emily Lott, Chestatee HS, Gainesville, GA

Late work will result in a deduction of 10% per day beginning on Wednesday, September 4th.

Instructions

Similar to AP Seminar, College Board wants you to present your AP Research paper with a research question (RQ). In AP Research however, the question takes on a new dimension: an inquiry into something that is not yet fully known. Your job is to generate a new understanding. The following concepts are things to consider when attempting to build an AP Research RQ. You will complete the requirements in the chart below and write your initial RQ by the end of the summer. Remember, *the topic you decide to work with **must** hold your interest for the entire year.* It is critical that you reflect thoughtfully over the summer about your true interests prior to completing this assignment.

Step 1: Understanding the Heart of the Research Process

First, you will read pp. 30-34 of chapter 2 of *Practical Research: Planning and Design* by Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod. This reading will be posted to our AP Research Google Classroom page, so it is imperative that you join Google Classroom right away when you receive the invitation.

As you read, please edit in your own copy of the document on Google Classroom labeled “**Chapter 2 Discussion Questions**,” fill out your answers, and keep your copy in your PREP folder.

Step 2: Question Work

For each of the 4 concepts below, create a Google Document and place it into your PREP. Then complete the tasks that go with each. Reflection questions can be answered in a paragraph or two. Be thorough enough but not excessive. This step is essential to set up a productive and successful first quarter for you so please take it seriously!

Once you have completed the 4 tasks below, proceed to the third and final step of the question work assignment.

1. FOCUS | Choosing a Research Discipline and Topic

Description	Reflection Questions to Answer	Research Element
<p>Disciplines are sections of focus such as art, history, humanities, hard sciences, social sciences, etc.</p> <p>Topics are specific interests within a discipline that create the basis for RQs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At this point, what discipline are you most interested in working within? - What further detail can you add to more clearly shape a topic interest? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gather 5 peer-reviewed scholarly research articles in the discipline and topic of your interest. Post the identifying information and URLs underneath your reflections. <p><i>Note: you are not bound to them but they will help inform the structure and style of your academic paper.</i></p>

2. SCOPE | Thinking about the Depth and Size of Your Research Project

Description	Reflection Questions to Answer	Research Element
<p>Context is the specific setting of your research.</p> <p>Variables are the items, people, situations, issues, concepts to be studied and/or manipulated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What types of things are you most interested in studying? People? Animals? Concepts? Theories? Objects? Phenomena? Naturally-occurring? Man-made? - How do you think you might want to work with these things to shape your research? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gather 5 peer-reviewed research articles that work with similar variables to your research interests. Post the identifying information and URL underneath your reflections. <p><i>Note: you are not bound to them but they will help inform your eventual research method.</i></p>

3. VALUE | Making a Contribution to the Body of Knowledge

Description	Reflection Questions to Answer	Research Element
The Value of your research is determined by how your contribution enhances what we already know. You are expected to either add to the current conversation or create new knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do you think your research will change the way we currently see the topic? How do you <i>hope</i> it changes the way we currently see the topic? - How will your research benefit society or your discipline of study? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gather 5 current conversations about your topic. Try to find at least one contrasting view. Post the identifying information and URL underneath your reflections. <p><i>Note: you will be able to use this content to ground your literature review or discussion. This will help you locate the need for your project.</i></p>

4. FEASIBILITY | Considering the Possibility of Research

Description	Reflection Questions to Answer	Research Element
Time, money, and resources can play a part in determining the feasibility of your research. Keep in mind that you will have 2-3 months to complete your actual research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What things might you physically, logistically, or monetarily need? Do you think you'll have access to everything you'll need? - How long will your research take? - Who can help you with your research? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify an adult "expert" (teacher, college professor, professional expert e.g. doctor, lawyer, scientist) and include their contact information below your reflection. If you feel ready, make contact with them and ask if they would be interested in supporting your research.

Step 3: Creating an Initial Research Question and Writing a Problem Statement

Once you have completed the 4 tasks above, create another document labeled "Initial Research Question" and place it into your PREP folder. In this document, include your initial attempt at a written Research Question (1 sentence). This will be a working document that will be revised as the year goes on.

If you have any questions about your summer assignment, AP Research, or Christian Service, I can be reached at any time by email at lconnolly@maldencatholic.org.

I hope you enjoy a safe and restful summer and come back ready to create your own contribution to an important scholarly conversation in AP Research!