

AP at a Glance



The College Board's Advanced Placement Program® (AP) is a collaborative community of AP teachers and students, states, districts, schools, colleges, and universities committed to the daily work of developing college-level knowledge and skills. We've been delivering excellence in education to millions of students across the country since 1955.

The Advanced Placement Program enables willing and academically prepared students to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. The program consists of college-level courses developed by the AP Program that high schools can choose to offer, and corresponding exams that are administered once a year.

Fast Facts

- There are 38 AP courses in seven subject categories.
- Each AP course is modeled on a comparable introductory college course in the subject.
- Each course culminates in a standardized college-level assessment, or AP Exam.
- AP Exams are given in May each year at testing locations all over the world.
- Schools must be authorized by the AP Course Audit to offer approved AP courses and use the AP designation.

Benefits

Taking AP courses and exams can help students:

- **Stand out on college applications:** AP courses on a student's transcript shows that they've challenged themselves with the most rigorous courses available to them. And success on an AP Exam shows that they're ready for college-level coursework.
- **Earn college credit and/or skip introductory courses in college:** Most four-year colleges and universities in the United States—as well as many institutions in more than 100 other countries—grant students credit, placement, or both for qualifying AP Exam scores.

AP Exams Assess Knowledge and Skills Learned in the Course

- Each AP course concludes with an AP Exam. These assessments are designed by the same expert committee that designed the course.
- The exams are scored on a scale of 1 to 5 by college and university professors and experienced AP teachers. Many U.S. colleges offer credit for AP Exam scores of 3 or higher.

Which Students Should Take AP Courses?

- All students who are willing and academically prepared to accept the challenge of a rigorous academic curriculum should be considered for admission to AP courses.
- The College Board encourages the elimination of barriers that restrict access to AP courses for students from ethnic, racial and socioeconomic groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in the AP Program. Schools should make every effort to ensure that their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population.