The Advanced Placement Program (AP) and College & University Enrollment
What Is AP?

The College Board’s Advanced Placement Program (AP) offers more than 30 college-level courses. Each course culminates in a rigorous exam, which provides willing and academically prepared students with the opportunity to earn college credit and/or advanced placement.

AP course and exam development is a collaborative effort between high schools and colleges and universities. Most colleges offer credit, placement and admission benefits based on students’ AP experiences.
What Is the Value of AP?

- AP courses and exams help colleges identify students who have the knowledge, skills and academic behaviors for college success.
- AP scores may be used to appropriately place students in courses that engage and challenge them.
- AP students who do well on AP Exams are more likely to succeed in subsequent college course work and to graduate in four or five years.
## AP Exams

### Arts
- Art History
- Music Theory
- Studio Art: Drawing Portfolio
- Studio Art: 2-D Design Portfolio
- Studio Art: 3-D Design Portfolio

### English
- English Language & Composition
- English Literature & Composition

### History & Social Science
- Comparative Government & Politics
- European History
- Human Geography
- Macroeconomics
- Microeconomics
- Psychology
- US Government & Politics
- US History
- World History

### Mathematics & Computer Science
- Calculus AB
- Calculus BC
- Computer Science A
- Statistics

### Natural Sciences
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Environmental Science
- Physics B
- Physics C: Electricity & Magnetism
- Physics C: Mechanics

### World Languages
- Chinese Language & Culture
- French Language & Culture
- German Language
- Italian Language & Culture
- Japanese Language & Culture
- Latin: Vergil
- Spanish Language
- Spanish Literature
Topics

I. AP and College Enrollment
II. AP Course and Exam Revision and Course Audit
III. AP Students in 2010
IV. AP and College Administrators: Findings from 2011 Research
V. Resources and References
AP and College Enrollment
How Does AP Fit Within the College Admission and Enrollment Process?

Here’s how institutions have used AP to help meet enrollment goals.

- **Student Identification**: Identify prepared and motivated students
- **Recruitment**: Recruit to specific majors. Provide an incentive to high-achieving students
- **Admission**: Consistent measure of academic achievement
- **Credit & Placement**: Appropriate course placement, contributing to efficient enrollment management
- **Academic Success**: Student success in subsequent courses. Graduation
Use AP Data to Identify Students for Recruitment

**Student Search Service® (SSS®), Enrollment Planning Service® (EPS®), and the free AP course ledger can help you identify AP students who are a good fit for your institution, including:**

- High-achieving students
- Students for recruitment to specific majors
  - Find high schools that offer AP courses in particular disciplines
- International and underrepresented students
Use AP to Recruit High-Achieving Students

- **Early outreach:** Conduct AP student searches to reach out to high-achieving 10th and 11th graders.

- **Recruitment to specific majors:** AP students tend to major in disciplines related to their AP Exam.

- **Incentive:** Offer students recognition for their academic achievement by awarding credit and/or placement for exam scores.

- **Scholarship criteria:** Consider AP participation and performance when awarding scholarships.
AP Students Tend to Major in Disciplines Related to Their AP Exam

The correlation between AP Exam and major is particularly strong for STEM subjects.

College Majors—AP Students and Non-AP Students

- Biological & Biomedical Sciences
- Computer and Information Science
- Foreign Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics
- Humanities & Liberal Arts
- Mathematics, Statistics, Engineering, & Physical Sciences
- Social Sciences

- Students Who Did Not Take an AP Exam
- Students Who Took an AP Exam in a Related Subject Area

Adapted from Mattern, Shaw, & Ewing, 2011
The Correlation Between AP and Majors Is Strong for Underrepresented Populations

Traditionally underrepresented students who take AP Exams in some STEM subjects tend to major in these subjects.

Adapted from Morgan & Klaric, 2007
AP and Admission

*Most colleges use AP as a factor in evaluating candidates for admission.*

- **Consistency:** As a nationally recognized program, offers a consistent measure of academic achievement.

- **Evidence of rigor:** Shows exposure to rigorous, college-level curriculum—a key element of college readiness.

- **Priority admission:** Can be used as admission criteria for special programs or honors colleges.
AP Exam Scores Can Be Used for Appropriate Placement and to Award Credit to Capable Students

- Exams are scored on a 1-5 scale. The American Council on Education (ACE) recommends awarding credit for AP scores of 3 or higher.

- Students who earn credit and placement for AP Exam scores tend to earn more credits overall, particularly in the subject area in which they took the exam.
AP Exam Scores Represent Recommendations for College Credit and/or Placement

AP scores are reported on a 5-point scale.

1. No recommendation
2. Possibly Qualified
3. Qualified
4. Well Qualified
5. Extremely Well Qualified

Equivalent to grades of B-, C+, and C in the corresponding college course
Equivalent to grades of A-, B+, and B in the corresponding college course
Equivalent to grades of A and A+ in the corresponding college course
How Are AP Scores Determined?

- Combination of the scores for the free-response and multiple-choice sections of the exam.

- For each exam, boundaries for the five AP grades are determined using:
  - Statistical data
  - Previous grade distributions
  - Statistical equating
  - Comparability studies
  - Standard-setting studies
Institutions Participating in AP College Comparability Studies
AP Students Tend to Take More Courses in the Exam Subject Area

Mean Subject Credit Hours

Adapted from Murphy & Dodd, 2009
AP students who earn credit for the introductory course:

• Perform well in subsequent courses within the same discipline

• Tend to earn higher final GPAs than non-AP students.

• Are more likely to graduate from college in four or five years.
Students Who Earn 3+ on AP Exams Tend to Earn Higher GPAs in Sequent Courses

Adapted from Morgan & Klaric, 2007
Students Who Earn Credit for AP Tend to Earn Higher Fourth-Year GPAs than Non-AP Students

Adapted from Hargrove, Godin, & Dodd, 2008
AP Is an Indicator of Successful Degree Completion

College Graduation Rates: Matched AP and Non-AP Students

- Non-AP
- AP Course, No Exam
- AP Exam, Scored 1 or 2
- AP Exam, Scored 3, 4, or 5

Adapted from Dougherty, Mellor and Jian, 2006
AP Course and Exam Revision and Course Audit
AP Course & Exam Revision

- Developed as part of the AP Program’s commitment to continually enhance alignment with current best practices in college-level learning
- Represents a collaboration among college faculty, AP teachers, and learning and assessment specialists
- Is designed to meet colleges’ expectations of students who complete a comparable college course
Key Components of the Revised AP Courses and Exams

Revisions build on the strengths of the current program, incorporating:

- A greater emphasis on 21st-Century college-readiness skills, including critical thinking, inquiry, reasoning, and communication
- Current pedagogy and research within the discipline
- The results of curriculum studies conducted at four-year colleges and universities
AP Course Launch Schedule

Fall 2011
• French Language and Culture
• German Language and Culture
• World History

Fall 2012
• Biology
• Latin
• Spanish Literature and Culture

Fall 2013
• Chemistry
• Spanish Language and Culture
Created at the request of secondary school and college members of the College Board, the AP Course Audit was designed to:

- Provide teachers and administrators with clear guidelines on curricular and resource requirements that must be in place before labeling a course “AP”; and
- Ensure consistency and currency across the curriculum of courses labeled “AP.”
Course Audit Outcomes

- Qualifying schools receive authorization to use the AP label.
- Provides assurance of the rigor of AP courses appearing on student transcripts.
- Searchable database of all authorized AP courses is available online for verification of student transcripts and targeted student recruitment.

www.collegeboard.org/apcourseaudit
AP Students in 2010
Who Participates in AP?

- 18,000+ secondary schools worldwide are authorized to offer AP Exams
- In 2011, nearly 2 million students took more than 3.4 million exams
- 5,000+ college faculty develop and score the AP Exams
- About 3,600 colleges receive AP Exam scores annually
- The American Council on Education reviews AP Exams every 3-4 years and sets credit-granting and placement recommendations.
How Many Students Participate and Succeed?

More students are succeeding on AP Exams today than took exams in 2001.

Source: 8th Annual AP Report to the Nation, 2012
Why Do They Take AP Courses?

Students take AP to be exposed to academic rigor and to establish college-level skills.

- 75% Challenge myself academically
- 67% Build skills I’ll need to succeed at college
- 63% Stand out in the admission process
- 55% Interested in a specific AP subject area
- 49% Save money by earning college credit
- 44% Place out of an intro course

Source: Crux Market Research Inc., 2007: Q310
How Has the AP Test-Taking Population Changed?

*A P continues to serve an increasing number of underrepresented students.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Underrepresented Minority (%)</th>
<th>Low-Income (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AP exam administration data, 2002-2010
How Has the AP Test-Taking Population Changed?

- Participation among traditionally underrepresented students has grown at a higher rate when compared with other students.

- Low-income and African American students are the fastest growing groups participating in AP.

Source: AP Exam administration data, 2002-2010
AP Access: Exam Fee Reduction

The College Board believes the cost of an AP Exam should not be a barrier for low-income students.

- AP Exams cost $87.
- The College Board provides a $26 fee reduction per exam for students with financial need. Secondary schools should forgo the $8/per exam rebate they receive for each exam, resulting in a cost of $53 per exam for the student.
- More than 40 states use federal and/or state funds to help cover all or part of the remaining cost to the student.

More information on state exam fee subsidies:

www.collegeboard.org/apexamfeeassistance
AP and College Administrators: Findings from 2011 Research
Perceptions of the AP Program

• Enrollment administrators highly rate the AP Program on offering students the opportunity to earn college credit and for helping students become more competitive on college applications.

• Most enrollment administrators believe that AP students tend to perform better in college than non-AP students.

• Concerns remain that not all students have equal access to AP.
Most Colleges and Departments Represented Grant Both Credit and Placement for Successful AP Scores

Source: Harris Interactive Research, 2011
Most Believe that AP Students Perform Better in College than Non-AP Students

**Academic administrators:**
Compared to non-AP students, AP students perform...

- 5% Much better
- 26% Somewhat better
- 56% About the same
- 14% Somewhat worse
- 5% Much worse

**Admission administrators:**
Students with AP background tend to be:
- Better students
- Well-rounded
- Highly motivated
- Better prepared for college
- Interested in an academic challenge

However, students who do not have access to AP may also be high performers.

Source: Harris Interactive Research, 2011
Resources and References
College Board Resources

Learn more

- AP website for higher education professionals: www.collegeboard.org/aphighered.
- The latest AP research studies: www.collegeboard.org/apresearch
- Summary report of AP scores reported to your institution: Available in Winter 2011.
College Board Resources

*Take advantage of College Board tools*

- **AP Course Ledger**: Access a free, searchable database of more than 150,000 AP courses at 18,000 secondary schools.

- **Student Search Service® (SSS®)**: Recruit AP Exam takers: www.collegeboard.org/sss

- **Free ACES™ placement study**: Compare student performance in selected courses with student AP scores. Use the results to evaluate your placement policy for AP Exams. www.collegeboard.org/aces
Find Your AP Credit and Placement Policy on the AP Website

- Is a link to your institution’s AP credit policy included in the AP Credit Policy Info tool?
- How accessible is the policy from the link on AP’s website?
- Can prospective students and families easily understand the description of your AP credit/placement policy?

www.collegeboard.org/APcreditpolicy
Research


Research


Questions or Comments?

*For more information, contact:*

*Name*
*Title, Region*
*Email*
*Phone*