



# Implementation Guide

2014-15

REVISED: December 2014

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## About the College Board

The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of over 6,000 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT® and the Advanced Placement Program®. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators, and schools.

For further information, visit [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org).

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## AP® Equity and Access Policy

The College Board strongly encourages educators to make equitable access a guiding principle for their AP® programs by giving all willing and academically prepared students the opportunity to participate in AP. We encourage the elimination of barriers that restrict access to AP for students from ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups that have been traditionally underserved. Schools should make every effort to ensure their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population. The College Board also believes that all students should have access to academically challenging course work before they enroll in AP classes, which can prepare them for AP success. It is only through a commitment to equitable preparation and access that true equity and excellence can be achieved.

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## Contact Us

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## AP Capstone™ Program Overview

The College Board's AP Capstone™ is an innovative college-level program based on two new courses — AP Seminar and AP Research — that complement and enhance discipline-specific AP courses.

The program immerses high school students in the challenging practice of the critical skills students need today. The ability to think independently, write effectively, research, collaborate, and learn across disciplines is essential for success in college and in life.

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™. This option allows students taking multiple AP courses to distinguish themselves to colleges and universities. 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 Capstone was developed in response to feedback from higher education and is easily implemented, affordable, and flexible. It has the potential to differentiate and transform high schools and their students by elevating the learning environment through a rigorous, college-level program with high standards of assessment.



## 2014-15 QUICK FACTS

### Fees

- ▶ The exam fee for AP Seminar is \$139 with schools retaining a \$9 rebate per exam.
- ▶ Additional \$45 fee for alternate exams administered during late testing (depending on the reason for testing late).
- ▶ \$1,195 fee for teacher professional development (per attendee).

### AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam Date

- ▶ May 5, 2015, at 12:00 p.m.

## Benefits of AP Capstone

### Students:

- ▶ Fosters the research, argumentation, and communication skills that are 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 students a unique opportunity to distinguish themselves to colleges and universities by choosing to challenge themselves with this program, and by showing their passion and interest in specific topics.
- ▶ Transforms students into independent thinkers; they gain self-confidence as they find their voice and pursue their passions and are more prepared to face academic challenges ahead.

### High Schools:

- ▶ Gives high schools the opportunity to differentiate themselves by implementing this rigorous program.
- ▶ Offers a more rigorous approach to learning. Teachers improve their own skills, and the teaching experience is enhanced by more motivated learners.
- ▶ Allows for customization that can meet school scheduling requirements, fit into the existing curricular structure, and meet state or district standards.
- ▶ Builds professional excellence through participation in an intensive weeklong collaborative professional development institute.

## AP Capstone Dates and Deadlines for Academic Year 2014-15

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### AP Seminar

Date	Activity
July/August 2014	AP Seminar teacher training
Fall 2014	AP Seminar instruction begins
Oct. 1, 2014	Deadline for teachers to complete the <a href="#">AP Course Audit</a> form and submit course syllabus. Principals (or designated administrators) must approve Course Audit form prior to this date.
November 2014	Authorized courses appear on the AP Course Ledger
January/February 2015	AP Seminar teachers complete online assessment training for the Team Project and Presentation and Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation.
January–March 2015	AP Coordinators should order AP Seminar Exams and preadministration materials at the <a href="#">AP Exam Ordering website</a>
January 2015	Stimulus material for the Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation released to AP Seminar teachers.
February 2015	Resources for 2015-16 AP Seminar syllabus development become available on the AP Course Audit website
March 2015	The AP Course Audit begins accepting AP Seminar syllabi for 2015-16 authorization. All teachers must submit a syllabus for approval in 2015-16, even if their syllabus was approved in 2014-15.
April 1, 2015	Schools provide AP Seminar teacher information and estimated 2015-16 AP Seminar student enrollment to the AP Program
April 1, 2015	Deadline for AP Coordinator to order AP Seminar Exams and preadministration materials
April 30, 2015	Deadline for holding AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam preadministration session for AP Seminar students (input AP numbers located in Student Packs into the AP Capstone Digital Portfolio)

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## AP Seminar

Date	Activity
April 30, 2015	All teacher-assessed performance tasks must be scored by teachers and then submitted to the College Board by the AP Coordinator using the AP Capstone Digital Portfolio
May 5, 2015 (at 12:00 pm)	Administration of AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam
May 31, 2015	Deadline for professional development registration; all new AP Seminar teachers for 2015-16 must enroll in one of the professional development sessions — locations TBD
July 2015	AP Score Reports released online

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## AP Research

Date	Activity
February 2015	Schools begin scheduling current AP Seminar students for AP Research. Students must complete the AP Seminar course before taking AP Research.
April 1, 2015	Schools provide AP Research teacher information and estimated 2015-16 AP Research student enrollment to the AP Program
May 31, 2015	Deadline for professional development registration; all AP Research teachers must enroll in one of the professional development sessions — locations TBD
May/June 2015	After the AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam, AP Research teachers should meet the AP Seminar students and discuss the components of the course and get students thinking about working with a mentor, identifying a topic of interest, and developing a research question to yield a yearlong investigative task.
July/August 2015	AP Research teacher training
Fall 2015	AP Research instruction begins



## AP Seminar — Year 1

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 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.

### *What Students Will Do*

Exploring different points of view and making connections across disciplines are fundamental components of the AP Seminar experience. Students will consider one topic or issue 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 have the flexibility to choose one or more appropriate themes that allow for deep interdisciplinary exploration based on:

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

Teachers should encourage students to explore a topic through several of the following lenses:

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

As they explore various issues and topics, students will use a pedagogical framework provided by the College Board 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.

<b>Q</b>	<b>Question and Explore</b>	Questioning begins with an initial exploration of complex topics or issues. Perspectives and questions emerge that spark one's curiosity, leading to an investigation that challenges and expands the boundaries of one's current knowledge.
<b>U</b>	<b>Understand and Analyze Arguments</b>	Understanding various perspectives requires contextualizing arguments and evaluating the authors' claims and lines of reasoning.
<b>E</b>	<b>Evaluate Multiple Perspectives</b>	Evaluating an issue involves considering and evaluating multiple perspectives both individually and in comparison to one another.
<b>S</b>	<b>Synthesize Ideas</b>	Synthesizing others' ideas with one's own may lead to new understandings and is the foundation of a well-reasoned argument that conveys one's perspective.
<b>T</b>	<b>Team, Transform, and Transmit</b>	Teaming allows one to combine personal strengths and talents with those of others to reach a common goal. Transformation and growth occur upon thoughtful reflection. Transmitting requires the adaptation of one's message based on audience and context.

### ***How Students Are Assessed***

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.

#### ***Team Project and Presentation*** — 25% of AP Seminar Score

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

#### ***Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation*** — 35% of AP Seminar Score

- ▶ Individual Written Argument
- ▶ Individual Multimedia Presentation
- ▶ Oral Defense

**End-of-Course Exam (3 Hours)** — 40% of AP Seminar Score

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

## AP Seminar Performance Assessment Task: Team Project and Presentation

**Recommended Completion Date:** Feb. 28, 2015

**Submission Deadline:** April 30, 2015

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**Note:** Teachers must carefully plan a calendar that provides sufficient time for **all** the tasks to be completed, scored, and uploaded by April 30.

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In this project, three to six students collaborate as a team to identify a problem or issue (e.g., local, national, global, academic/theoretical/philosophical). Each team develops a team research question and conducts preliminary research. They identify approaches, perspectives, or lenses and divide responsibilities among themselves for individual research that will address the team's research question.

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.
- ▶ Cites and attributes any information included.

Working collaboratively, the team considers all of 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, and proposes additional research that may be done to further develop the team report. 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.

- ▶ Appropriately acknowledges, attributes, and/or cites the ideas and work of authors of outside sources.
- ▶ Includes a bibliography of works cited.

The team develops an 8- to 10-minute presentation that conveys its key findings and delivers it to the class using appropriate media. The presentation and the media used to enhance the presentation should consider audience, context, and purpose. The presentation should reflect the major components of the written team report. 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 writes a reflection, which will be added to his or her individual research report, that describes:

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

## AP Seminar Performance Assessment Task: Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation

**Recommended Completion Date:** April 15, 2015

**Submission Deadline:** April 30, 2015

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**Note:** Students must be given at least 30 school days (state testing, spring breaks, holidays, etc., would not count toward those days) to complete their research, compose their essays, and develop their presentations. The actual presentations must take place outside the 30-day window. The task is complex and rigorous, so students must be given sufficient time to complete it. Teachers would disadvantage students by giving them less time. Giving more time could also disadvantage students by reducing the time available for completing the Team Project and Presentation. Teachers should collect written work and presentation media from every student in the school's AP Seminar course(s) before any student actually delivers the oral presentation.

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

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

The following will be represented in the texts:

- ▶ Visual text and/or multimedia
- ▶ 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.

Students each develop a 6- to 8-minute presentation using appropriate media and present it to an audience. 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.

## AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam

**2015 Exam Date:** Tuesday, May 5, at 12:00 p.m.

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.

## AP Seminar Course Audit Steps

Following the five-day face-to-face training, AP Seminar and AP Research teachers will be equipped to prepare a course syllabus. The following activities must be completed by Oct. 1:

- ▶ Teacher — Complete Course Audit form
- ▶ Teacher — Submit course syllabus
- ▶ Principal/Administrator — Review and approve Course Audit form

AP Seminar teachers must develop and submit a syllabus of their own creation and may not submit a sample syllabus provided during training.

### A TIP FOR ADDING AP SEMINAR TO STUDENT TRANSCRIPTS:

Schools may choose to add a subtitle to their AP Seminar course that indicates a special disciplinary focus or emphasis. This subtitle may warrant consideration for college credit or placement.

## AP Research — Year 2

AP Research allows students to deeply explore an academic topic, problem, or issue of individual interest. Through this exploration, students design, plan, and conduct a yearlong mentored, research-based investigation to address a specific question.

In the AP Research course, students further develop the skills acquired in the AP Seminar course by learning about and understanding research methods; employing ethical research practices; and accessing, analyzing, and synthesizing information as they address a research question. The course culminates in an academic paper of 4,000–5,000 words and a presentation, performance, or exhibition with an oral defense.

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**Prerequisite:** *Students must complete the AP Seminar course before taking AP Research.*

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### ***What Students Will Do***

Although the topic of each research study will vary, the course requires students to plan and conduct an individual investigation. The course provides opportunities (activities/assignments) for students to:

- ▶ Understand principles of qualitative and quantitative research methods.
- ▶ Employ appropriate disciplinary research methods (working with a mentor) to develop, manage, and conduct an in-depth study or investigation in an area of personal interest, culminating in a 4,000–5,000-word paper.
- ▶ Present (using appropriate media), exhibit, or perform and defend the research design, approach, and findings.
- ▶ Document and reflect upon the research process and communication with mentor using a research log.

As they explore topics, students will use the pedagogical framework introduced in AP Seminar to develop, practice, and hone their critical and creative thinking skills as they make connections between various issues and their own lives.

### ***How Students Are Assessed***

Students are assessed on the academic paper; public presentation, performance, or exhibition; and oral defense of research and presentation. The academic paper is 4,000–5,000 words in length, and the presentation and defense take 15–20 minutes.

**Academic Paper** — 75% of AP Research Score

Students submit a 4,000–5,000-word paper that:

- ▶ Introduces and contextualizes the research question.
- ▶ Synthesizes information and perspectives related to the research question.
- ▶ Explains and rationalizes the research method.
- ▶ Analyzes and interprets the evidence.
- ▶ Illustrates a cogent argument that uses a clear line of reasoning based on evidence provided.
- ▶ Reflects on the research project and the implications and limitations of the conclusion(s) reached.
- ▶ Acknowledges and cites sources.

**Presentation and Oral Defense** — 25% of AP Research Score

Students present and defend their findings before an audience; this includes:

- ▶ Choosing an appropriate format or medium (e.g., multimedia presentation, performance, exhibition).
- ▶ Responding to three to four questions from a panel of a minimum of two trained evaluators.

## AP Capstone Policies

There are certain policies that are critical to the successful implementation of AP Capstone at your school. Adherence to program policies and exam procedures, including performance tasks, is critical to producing valid AP scores. Violations of program policies and/or exam procedures may result in the cancellation of student scores and/or the school being withdrawn from the AP Capstone program by the College Board's AP Program.

### Plagiarism

A student who fails to acknowledge (i.e., through citation, through attribution, by reference, and/or through acknowledgment in a bibliographic entry) the source or author of any and all information or evidence taken from the work of someone else will receive a score of 0 on that particular component of the AP Seminar and/or AP Research Performance Assessment Task. In AP Seminar, a team of students that fails to properly acknowledge sources or authors on the Written Team Report will receive a group score of 0 for that component of the Team Project and Presentation.

To the best of their ability, teachers will ensure that students understand ethical use and acknowledgment of the ideas and work of others, as well as the consequences of plagiarism. The student's individual voice should be clearly evident, and the ideas of others must be acknowledged, attributed, and/or cited.

### Preadministration

**All schools offering AP Capstone must hold a preadministration session for the AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam.** Ordering preadministration materials ensures that students have sufficient time to enter the AP number located in their Student Packs (received in the preadministration materials shipment) into their AP Capstone Digital Portfolio account before the submission deadline for their performance assessment tasks. Teachers will be able to score student performance tasks that do not have an AP number associated with them; however, AP Coordinators will be unable to submit student performance assessment tasks and teacher scores for final scoring/College Board validation until a valid AP number has been entered for the student portfolio being submitted. It is critical that students use the same AP number in their portfolio and on their AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam. Preadministration sessions allow students to complete identification information on their AP registration answer sheet ahead of time, which will save valuable time when they take the end-of-course exam. The answer sheet serves to capture student identification information only; there is no multiple-choice section in the AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam.

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**IMPORTANT:** AP Coordinators must order AP Seminar Exams and preadministration materials on the **AP Exam Ordering website** no later than the preadministration deadline noted in the AP Coordinator's Manual.

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### Ordering and Billing

AP Coordinators must order exams in the AP Exam Ordering website for each student enrolled in AP Seminar and AP Research by the preadministration ordering deadline.



When any student Performance Assessment Task component is submitted for scoring and/or the end-of-course exam is started, the full exam fee will be charged.

However, if an exam order has been placed for a student for whom no Performance Assessment Tasks have been submitted to the College Board AND the end-of-course exam was never started, the unused exam fee of \$15 will be charged.

### **Rescore Policy**

The AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam is composed entirely of free-response questions, and therefore will not be rescored. Students may obtain their AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam Section I and II Free-Response booklets for a fee. No comments, corrections, or scores are included. Booklets for exams whose sources are not released on the College Board website (for example, late-testing exams) are not available.

### **Score Withholding and Cancellation**

If a student chooses to withhold or cancel his or her score for AP Seminar, the entire AP Seminar score will be withheld or canceled. Students cannot withhold or cancel individual performance assessment tasks or components of performance assessment tasks.

### **Test Security and Sharing of Exam Content**

All AP students deserve a fair and uniform testing experience. The College Board's test security and test administration policies and procedures are designed to protect the integrity of the AP Exam and AP Exam scores. The policies and procedures have been developed to afford all students equivalent opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge on exam day and prevent any students from gaining an unfair advantage. Schools and students must adhere to all test security policies as outlined in the *AP Coordinator's Manual*, *AP Bulletin for Students and Parents*, and any addenda. Students may only discuss free-response questions that are released on the College Board website. If the questions in the exam are not released, students may not discuss them with anyone. Violation of test security policies may result in score cancellation, and under some circumstances individuals may be permanently barred from future testing.

### **Teacher Assistance**

It is important that teachers clearly understand their role in the classroom as it pertains to the through-course assessment tasks as outlined in the course and exam descriptions. Teachers must ensure that students are aware of the timeline, components, and scoring criteria for each assessment task. It is perfectly acceptable for teachers to explore issues, discuss topics and perspectives, and/or question students as necessary. Teachers should also oversee the formation of groups for the Team Project and Presentation. Students are solely responsible for generating research questions and conducting research, so teachers must not assist students in this work. It is also the students' responsibility to complete all required assessment components on their own without the assistance of the teacher.

### **AP Capstone Conflict of Interest Policy**

Because AP Capstone courses and assessments involve the scoring of student through-course performance assessment tasks by the classroom teacher, it is important to explain how the existing AP Conflict of Interest Policy (e.g., *AP Program Guide*, *AP Coordinator's Manual*) applies. To avoid any perceived conflict of interest, the College Board recommends that AP Seminar and AP Research teachers should not be the classroom teacher for anyone who is an immediate family or household member who is enrolled in AP Seminar or AP Research as this would put the teacher in the position of scoring official AP assessments. To avoid a perceived conflict of interest, the College Board recommends that the immediate family or household member who is enrolled in AP Seminar or AP Research (student) should be transferred to another class section that is taught by another teacher who does not pose a conflict of interest. Alternatively, if there is only one AP Seminar or one AP Research teacher and a schedule change will not resolve the conflict, the school should designate a different teacher and ensure that the individual is properly trained on curriculum and assessment scoring — at the school's expense — for the year(s) in which the student is enrolled in AP Seminar and/or AP Research.

*The College Board renders the aforementioned recommendations in an effort to ensure that all AP Capstone exams and courses are administered under standardized conditions and prevent any student from receiving an unfair advantage on the AP Capstone course and exam. Such recommendations should be enforced by participating schools, their personnel, and students to the extent feasible and in accordance with each school's then current policies and procedures applicable to such situations.*

### **Student Extended Absence and Performance Assessment Tasks**

In the event that a student experiences an unavoidable and extended absence from school and is not able to participate in the AP Capstone Performance Assessment Tasks (AP Seminar: Team Project and Presentation; Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation; AP Research: Academic Paper; Presentation and Oral Defense) or any individual components of these tasks, the school/teacher should be as accommodating as possible, using technology or other means that allow the student to participate in the entire task or one or more of its components. If the student is unable to participate, for example, in the entire Team Project and Presentation or is unable to complete one or more components of either of the two performance assessment tasks, the College Board recommends to the student the following options:

1. Continue in the course and accept the final AP score of 1–5 that he or she earns for the completed tasks or components. For example, if an AP Seminar student is unable to participate in the Team Project and Presentation, the student could choose to complete the Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation and the End-of-Course Exam and accept the AP score earned from these two completed assessments. (In this scenario, the teacher would remove the student from the team, and the student would receive a score of 0 for any assessment components not completed.); or

2. Continue in the course and then cancel his or her score by completing and submitting the AP Score Cancellation Form. (Scores may be canceled at any time. However, for scores not to be sent to any college indicated on a student's AP answer sheet, AP Services must receive the score cancellation request by June 15 of the year in which the student took the AP Exam). For example, if a student is unable to participate in the AP Seminar Team Project and Presentation, he or she may complete the other Performance Assessment Task and, if the student does not think his or her performance on the Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation and End-of-Course Exam will earn a score the student wants to keep on record, he or she may cancel the score; or
3. The student may elect to drop the course altogether and consider reenrolling the following academic year.

*The College Board renders the aforementioned recommendations in an effort to ensure that all AP Capstone exams and courses are administered under standardized conditions and prevent any student from receiving an unfair advantage on the AP Capstone course and exam. Such recommendations should be enforced by participating schools, their personnel, and students to the extent feasible and in accordance with each school's then current policies and procedures applicable to such situations.*

If the student is unable to contribute to the creation of the Written Team Report in the AP Seminar Team Project and Presentation Task, the student would be ineligible to participate in the Team Multimedia Presentation, since the presentation is dependent upon the Written Team Report. (However, a student may contribute to, and receive credit for, the team report, even if he or she is unable to participate in the presentation.)

If the student is unable to complete the Individual Research and Reflection in the AP Seminar Team Project and Presentation Task, the student would be ineligible to receive a score for the Written Team Report and would be ineligible to participate in the Team Multimedia Presentation since the Written Team Report is dependent on the Individual Research and Reflection and the presentation is dependent upon the Written Team Report.

It is also acceptable for a student who has not completed one or more AP Seminar Performance Assessment Tasks to take the End-of-Course Exam.

## Program Costs

There are no school application or registration fees required to be a part of the AP Capstone program, and there are no ongoing annual fees charged by the College Board to the school or district.

### Professional Development

Professional development is **required** for all AP Seminar and (beginning summer 2015) AP Research instructors. School leaders are not required to attend this professional development but may use this opportunity to deepen their understanding of the program and may make a special request to attend. Teachers complete training once prior to the first year of teaching the course — this is not an annual requirement.

The 2014-15 fee for Professional Development is \$1,195 per attendee and includes:

- ▶ Five days of face-to-face AP Seminar training at a location to be determined in the spring.
- ▶ Materials used for training purposes.
- ▶ Web-based assessment scoring training sessions, to take place in January/February.
- ▶ Breakfast and lunch each day.

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**Note:** *The Professional Development fee **does not** include travel, lodging, dinner, or incidentals. Additional training may be required (at the school's expense) if assessment scoring performance does not meet College Board standards.*

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### Exam Fees

The 2014-15 exam fee for AP Seminar is \$139 with schools retaining a \$9 rebate per exam. **It is expected that an exam will be ordered for all students enrolled in the course.** The College Board provides a \$29 fee reduction per exam for students with financial need. Schools are expected to forgo their \$9 rebate for these students. Many states use federal and state funding to further reduce the exam fee for these students and these amounts are usually finalized in the spring of each academic year. The fee reductions available in each state can be found at [collegeboard.org/apexamfeeassistance](http://collegeboard.org/apexamfeeassistance) in the spring.

Occasionally, circumstances make it necessary for students to test late using an alternate form of the exam. Depending on the reasons for late testing, schools may be charged an additional fee (\$45 per exam), part or all of which the school may ask students to pay. Students eligible for the College Board fee reduction will not be charged the \$45 per exam late-testing fee, regardless of their reason for testing late.

## School Resource Requirements

Teachers and students will require high-speed Internet access and technology appropriate to conduct research, complete multimedia presentations, and submit team and individual projects.

No additional mandatory resources are required, but schools and districts may consider the following recommendations:

- ▶ Textbook and general reference materials to support instruction
- ▶ Access to databases and online academic resources through the school library or media center
- ▶ Release time for teachers working on internally scored assessments
- ▶ Staff designated to support students enrolled in the AP Capstone program

## Submitting Student Work Using the AP Capstone Digital Portfolio

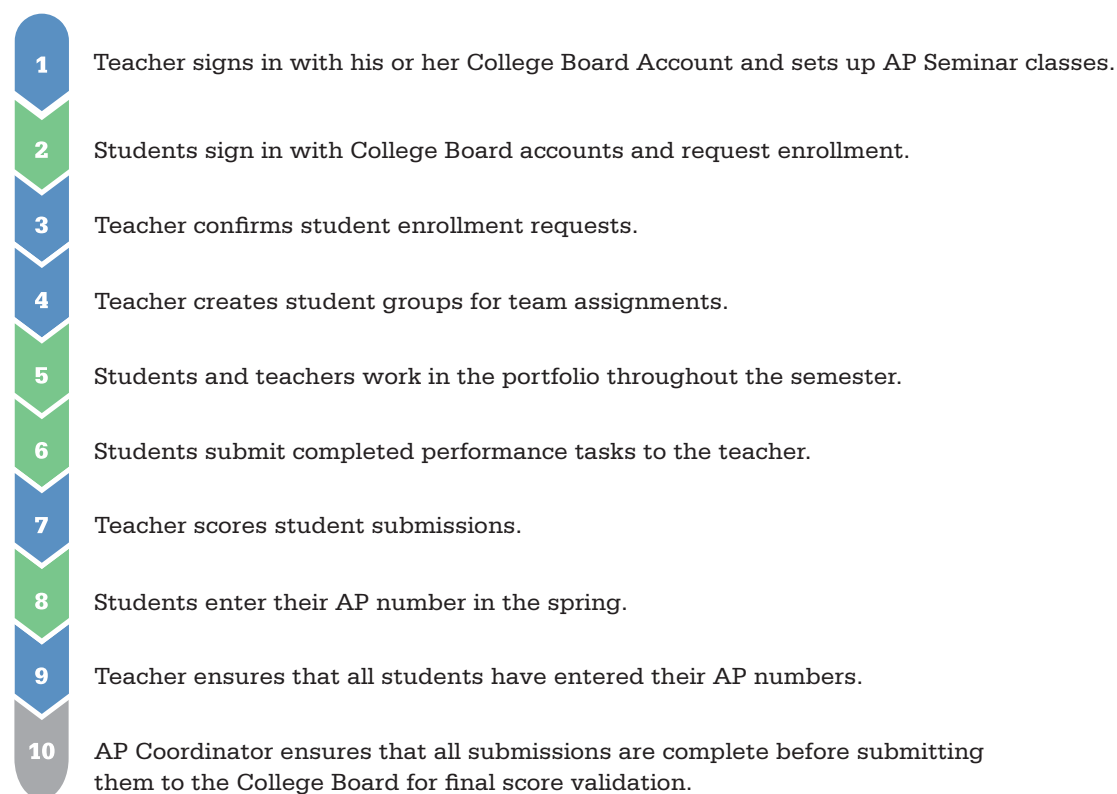
Students taking AP Seminar and AP Research will use the AP Capstone Digital Portfolio to work individually and in teams to submit finalized assessment tasks to their teachers for scoring. In the spring, the AP Coordinator at your school will log in to the digital portfolio and confirm that all student work has been scored by the teacher and assigned a unique AP number prior to submitting as final to the College Board.

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### How Digital Submission Works

Your school's AP Capstone teachers, students, and AP Coordinator will interact with the Digital Portfolio throughout the school year. The diagram below illustrates the roles and major tasks in the process for AP Seminar.

#### Digital Submission for AP Seminar



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## Using the AP Capstone Digital Portfolio

Below is general information about how students, teachers, and Coordinators will use the Digital Portfolio Application. Full instructions are available online in the help section.

### Students

All students participating in AP Seminar (and AP Research, in 2015) have access to the AP Capstone Digital Portfolio. To begin using the Digital Portfolio, students will go to [collegeboard.org/apcapstoneportfolio](http://collegeboard.org/apcapstoneportfolio) and sign in with their College Board account, which they may already have if they have registered for the SAT® or viewed AP scores online previously. If they do not have an account, they can create one by clicking “sign up.” On their first visit, students will see a list of AP Capstone classes taught at their school. Students request access by clicking “Enroll” for their class section. After their teacher confirms the enrollment request, they will be able to sign in to the Digital Portfolio using their College Board account.

Students use the Digital Portfolio to work individually and with team members, and to upload final performance assessment tasks for scoring by their teacher.

### Teachers

In order to use the Digital Portfolio, AP Capstone teachers must first create classes for students to enroll in. Teachers use the same URL as students: [collegeboard.org/apcapstoneportfolio](http://collegeboard.org/apcapstoneportfolio), and log in with their professional account. Once logged in, teachers will use the “AP Class Creation” feature to set up a class section/period. To do so, they will select the course from the drop-down, enter a name for the class section/period, and click “Add Class.” After the class is created, it will appear in the “My Classes” menu. When teachers sign in to the Digital Portfolio, they can view their class sections using the slider navigation at the top of the portfolio page. AP Capstone teachers should visit the Digital Portfolio “Class Roster” page often to confirm student enrollment requests and create student groups to enable submission for the team projects.

Teachers use the Digital Portfolio to review student comments and submissions, post supplemental documents on the performance task pages, set performance task assignment deadlines, attest to originality of student work, and score each task before final submission to the College Board by the school’s AP Coordinator.

### AP Coordinators

Your school’s AP Coordinator will work with the AP Seminar teacher(s) to confirm the number of students enrolled in AP Seminar and place an exam order by the April 1 deadline for ordering preadministration materials. If necessary, AP Coordinators should support AP Seminar teacher(s) in holding a preadministration session for AP Seminar students to enter their AP number (located in their Student Pack) into their digital portfolio accounts. The AP Coordinator is also responsible for validating that unique AP numbers have been associated with each student’s portfolio account before final submission of student work to the College Board for scoring validation.

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## Technical Requirements and Recommendations

- Desktop browsers: Internet Explorer 10 & 11; Chrome 31–35; Firefox 26–30; Safari 6 & 7
- Mobile browsers: Internet Explorer 10 & 11; Chrome 31–32; Firefox 26–30; iOS 6 & 7

## Scheduling AP Capstone Courses (with Implementation Models)

AP Seminar and AP Research are flexible and may be offered as a sequence in grades 10/11, grades 11/12, or grades 10/12. Schools may also choose to offer a combination of sequences and may align the AP Capstone courses with an existing senior project requirement.

Grade Level Sequence	Pros	Cons
<b>Grades 10/11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enables development of college-level critical skills early in the student's high school career.</li> <li>• Increases participation and performance in AP courses.</li> <li>• Grade 12 students are able to mentor students in AP Seminar and AP Research.</li> <li>• Students complete research project prior to submitting college applications and participating in college interviews.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires careful attention to differentiated instruction or risks limiting student enrollment.</li> <li>• Requires additional support for enrolled students.</li> <li>• Adds a major research project to the traditionally busy grade 11.</li> <li>• Students do not have a culminating experience in the senior year.</li> </ul>
<b>Grades 11/12</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student maturity provides a larger pool of students able to participate in AP Seminar.</li> <li>• Students have a broader foundation of skills and content knowledge before beginning college-level work.</li> <li>• Schools are able to structure a culminating experience for graduating seniors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have limited opportunity to retake AP Seminar and AP Research.</li> <li>• Students complete AP Research while navigating the college admission process.</li> <li>• Students will not complete the AP Capstone Diploma before beginning the college admission process.</li> </ul>
<b>Grades 10/12</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are able to acquire college-level skills early and are able to apply those skills in a culminating research project.</li> <li>• Enables development of college-level critical skills early in the student's high school career.</li> <li>• Increases participation and performance in AP courses.</li> <li>• Schools are able to structure a culminating experience for graduating seniors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires that the curriculum bridge the grade 11 gap so that AP Research does not need to reteach the skills acquired in AP Seminar.</li> <li>• Requires careful attention to differentiated instruction or risks limiting student enrollment.</li> <li>• Requires additional support for enrolled students.</li> <li>• Students will not complete the AP Capstone Diploma before beginning the college admission process.</li> </ul>



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## School Schedules

AP Seminar and AP Research are designed to be full-year courses enabling students to focus on the development of college-level critical skills (AP Seminar) and college-level research skills (AP Research).

AP Seminar may be offered in a traditional schedule or an A/B block schedule. The Team Project and Presentation and the Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation assessments begin in January and must be scored and uploaded to the College Board by April 30. Recommended completion dates for both are Feb. 28 and April 15, respectively. The assessment schedule limits the ability to offer AP Seminar on a 4x4 block schedule. AP Seminar requirements cannot be completed in an August to December block-scheduled course. While the 4x4 block schedule does not preclude offering the AP Capstone courses, it does require schedule variations.

AP Research may be offered in a 4x4 block schedule but is **not** recommended. Offering AP Research on this schedule requires support and accountability measures to ensure that students are supervised throughout the research process and that teachers have ample time to score research assignments. If offered in the August to December semester, schools will need to design student supports to monitor student-mentor relationships and to ensure that research projects are completed on time. AP Research teachers will also need time to score the research projects and presentations before the April 30 submission deadline unless students are required to complete the research project and presentation before the end of the first semester; however, this will limit the time available to students to complete the rigorous research project while also completing the requirements for other courses. If offered in January to June, students will have less time available to complete the research project and presentation given that all scored student work must be submitted to the College Board by April 30.

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## Additional AP Courses

To earn the AP Capstone Diploma, students must earn a score of 3 or higher in both AP Seminar and AP Research as well as a score of 3 or higher on four additional AP Exams of their choosing. The examinations may be taken at any time during the high school experience and need not be concurrent with the AP Seminar and the AP Research courses. No specific AP courses, other than AP Seminar and AP Research, are required for the AP Capstone Diploma.

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## Class Size

The recommended class size for AP Seminar and AP Research courses is 20–24 students, as this permits the development of student collaboration and presentation skills. In scheduling AP Capstone courses, school leaders should carefully consider the responsibilities and requirements of internal scoring. For example, an AP Seminar teacher with 40 students will potentially score 190,000 words (630 pages) of student work as well as 50 student presentations as part of the Team Project and Presentation and Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation assessments.

## Implementation Models

The flexibility of AP Capstone allows program implementation in a variety of settings. The following table offers several implementation models along with the pros and cons associated with each. These options can help to meet the demands of the school curriculum, state and district requirements, and local school traditions and culture.

Schedule Variation	Pros	Cons
All AP Seminar students are enrolled in a common AP course known as an anchor course. For example, all AP Seminar students are enrolled in AP United States History.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permits interdisciplinary instruction that supports student mastery of AP Seminar skills and enhances performance in the AP anchor course.</li> <li>Provides students with an opportunity to apply AP Seminar skills in an AP content area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presents master schedule complications in scheduling students for two courses and in scheduling common planning time for teachers to develop instructional strategies and lesson plans.</li> <li>Increases program costs as the AP content teacher should be trained in AP Seminar curriculum and assessment.</li> </ul>
AP Seminar is offered in multiple sections tailored to emphasize a specific area of interest or in the context of an existing school program. For example, AP Seminar is offered as both a science and a social science course or as part of a public service or health sciences academy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows students to focus on a particular area of interest while acquiring a broad perspective on real-world issues.</li> <li>Enhances an existing content curriculum or academy curriculum in preparation for specialized higher education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limits the opportunity for students to explore topics and perspectives outside of their comfort zones.</li> <li>Limits the interest of students who may not fall within specific departmental or academy requirements.</li> </ul>
AP Seminar is integrated with an existing non-AP course. For example, AP Seminar and an environmental science elective are taught concurrently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides an instructional framework for the existing course.</li> <li>Provides students with content knowledge framing mastery of AP Seminar skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates tension between the original curriculum and the requirements of AP Seminar.</li> <li>Limits student ability to explore issues that speak to their personal interests.</li> </ul>
AP Seminar is integrated with an AP course. For example, AP Seminar and AP English Language and Composition are taught concurrently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides students with an immediate opportunity to apply rigorous college-level critical skills to rigorous college-level content.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires that one teacher balance the demands of two AP courses in one course.</li> </ul>

Schedule Variation	Pros	Cons
AP Seminar is offered as an independent elective. (Note: AP Seminar is a prerequisite to AP Research. AP Research cannot be offered independently.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides students with college-level critical skills that can be applied across disciplines.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students taking only AP Seminar will NOT be eligible for the AP Capstone Diploma or the AP Seminar and Research Certificate.</li> </ul>
Different teachers are assigned to AP Seminar and AP Research courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers are able to specialize in the skills required for success in each course.</li> <li>Students are exposed to two teachers with different strengths supporting a diverse learning experience.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers must coordinate a transition from AP Seminar to AP Research to take advantage of the weeks after the AP Seminar assessments are complete.</li> <li>Teachers must establish and maintain expectations across two courses through collaborative planning.</li> </ul>
Teachers loop with a cohort of students from AP Seminar to AP Research.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers establish a relationship with students in a two-year experience fully developing student strengths and bridging student weaknesses.</li> <li>Teachers are able to build a seamless transition from AP Seminar to AP Research maximizing use of available instructional time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training costs increase as schools must send two teachers to the required AP Seminar and AP Research professional development.</li> <li>Teachers need expertise and a level of comfort in college-level skill development and college-level research methodology.</li> </ul>
Two teachers are assigned to AP Seminar in a team-teaching structure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers from two different disciplines support a variety of student interests.</li> <li>Teachers share responsibility for scoring assignments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training costs increase as schools must send two teachers to the required AP Seminar professional development.</li> <li>FTE or local district requirements may limit shared responsibility for one course.</li> </ul>

## Staffing AP Capstone (Roles and Responsibilities)

The selection of AP Seminar and AP Research teachers is critical to the success of the AP Capstone program. The most effective AP Capstone teachers are those who are curious about real-world issues, competent in teaching a skill-based rather than a content-based course, and are master facilitators of student learning who allow students to take charge of their own learning. Teachers who have experience conducting and or supervising independent research may be considered as well.

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**Note:** *All AP Seminar and AP Research teachers are required to attend professional development prior to their first academic year of teaching the course.*

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Successful AP Seminar and AP Research teachers demonstrate the ability to:

- ▶ Explore academic and real-world questions, problems, and issues from different disciplines and from multiple perspectives.
- ▶ Teach college-level thinking and research skills such as writing a thesis, conducting research, evaluating sources, developing arguments, and designing, planning, and conducting a research-based investigation.
- ▶ Teach time management, collaboration, oral communication, and presentation skills.
- ▶ Facilitate student learning in collaborative settings such as workshops and tutorials.
- ▶ Motivate students to think critically and innovatively about research questions.
- ▶ Collaborate closely with an AP Capstone team that includes administrators, AP teachers, media specialists, school counselors, and mentors.
- ▶ Manage scoring and submitting student work according to submission deadlines.

AP Seminar and AP Research teachers are not required to have specific content-area certification unless this is stipulated by local district or state policy. Prior experience teaching AP or other college-equivalent courses taught in their high school is also not required.

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## Forming an AP Capstone Team

School leaders should consider convening an AP Capstone team to aid in the implementation of this new program. Regular team meeting agenda items might include management of program implementation, student and teacher support issues, student recruitment, communication with parents and the community, and planning for vertical and horizontal articulation of AP Capstone skills. School or district leaders might also consider appointing a point person for AP Capstone to chair team meetings, ensure effective internal and external communication, and serve as program liaison to the College Board. AP Capstone team roles and responsibilities may include the following:

### **School Leaders**

- ▶ Form the AP Capstone team and collaborate with staff to develop an AP Capstone implementation strategy.
- ▶ Create a master schedule that supports broad student enrollment and effective instruction.
- ▶ Ensure that teachers have time to assess student work and upload scored assessments.
- ▶ Provide access to technology necessary for research and assessment.
- ▶ Fund required summer professional development and ensure release time for teachers to attend Web-based assessment scoring training.
- ▶ Support AP Capstone implementation in communications with students, faculty, parents, and the community.

### **Teachers**

- ▶ Attend required professional development for AP Seminar and/or AP Research.
- ▶ Facilitate student learning.
- ▶ Score student assessments and ensure timely upload of scored student work to the College Board.
- ▶ Manage student-mentor relationships.
- ▶ Assist school leadership in the vertical and horizontal expansion of AP Capstone skills.

### **Librarians/Media Specialists**

- ▶ Ensure that students have access to college-level research materials including online tools such as EBSCO, JSTOR, and ProQuest.
- ▶ Assist students in identifying and researching a variety of questions across multiple disciplines.
- ▶ Contribute to workshops and tutorials addressing specific research issues.

### **Counselors**

- ▶ Assist in identifying students for participation in AP Capstone.
- ▶ Ensure that student course selections meet AP Capstone Diploma requirements.
- ▶ Assist students in communicating AP Capstone accomplishments to colleges and universities.
- ▶ Be familiar with the AP Capstone program so they can highlight the program with visiting college admission representatives.

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## **The Role of the AP Coordinator in AP Capstone**

AP Coordinators will manage the ordering, receipt, distribution, administration, and return of AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam materials as well as the final submission of student work to the College Board for scoring using the AP Capstone Digital Portfolio.

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## Mentors for AP Research

Mentors are an essential part of the AP Research course and may be drawn from the faculty, the community, local business and industry, or higher education. A designated staff member may also coordinate a pool of mentors for the AP Research course and assist in matching students and mentors. AP Research teachers and school administrators should identify school and district policies pertaining to students engaging virtually or face-to-face with external mentors and communicate such policies to parents, students, and potential mentors. Further information on mentors and student–mentor relationships will be provided in future AP Research materials.

## Student Recruitment

Students who are motivated and prepared for college-level course work are best suited for the program, but the program also benefits those students who show potential for AP course work but have not as yet enrolled in AP courses. Students should demonstrate curiosity about real-world issues, a willingness to take intellectual risks, and a dedication to acquiring the skills that colleges and universities value — critical inquiry, analysis, and research. In short, AP Capstone students have an interest in becoming curious, independent, and collaborative scholars.

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## Recruitment Tools

AP Potential™: [appotential.collegeboard.org](http://appotential.collegeboard.org)

AP Capstone Student Brochure (included in Welcome Kit)

AP Capstone Recruitment PowerPoint presentation

AP Capstone website: [collegeboard.org/apcapstone](http://collegeboard.org/apcapstone)

AP Students website: [apstudent.collegeboard.org](http://apstudent.collegeboard.org)

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## Recruitment Strategies

- ▶ Present AP Capstone at AP Parent Night as a logical extension of AP course work.
- ▶ Provide AP Capstone brochures during open house.
- ▶ Meet with rising grade 10 or grade 11 students prior to course selection.
- ▶ Discuss the benefits and challenges of AP Capstone in face-to-face meetings with potential candidates and their parents.
- ▶ Develop teacher recommendations tailored to AP Capstone characteristics and requirements.
- ▶ Plan classroom visits by school leaders, counselors, and current AP Capstone students to explain the benefits of the program, how the program works, and how it fits into students' schedules.
- ▶ Recognize student participation and achievement through academic letters and honors distinctions.
- ▶ Direct students to the AP Capstone website at [collegeboard.org/apcapstone](http://collegeboard.org/apcapstone).

# Accessing the AP Capstone™ Digital Portfolio

Welcome to AP Capstone™. In order to submit your work, you will need to enroll online in your AP® Seminar class and then access the digital portfolio. It only takes a few steps:

- 1 Go to **[collegeboard.org/apcapstoneportfolio](http://collegeboard.org/apcapstoneportfolio)**.
- 2 Log in with your College Board username and password (you may already have an account if you've viewed your AP scores online or registered for the SAT®). If you don't have an account, click "Sign Up" to create one.
- 3 Once you're logged in, find the AP Seminar class that you're taking and click "Enroll" next to the class name. Your enrollment request will be automatically sent to your AP Seminar teacher for approval. If you don't see your AP Seminar class, please let your teacher know.
- 4 After your teacher approves your enrollment request, you will be able to access the AP Capstone Digital Portfolio application.
- 5 Visit the online Help section for FAQs and more information.

**[collegeboard.org/apcapstoneportfolio](http://collegeboard.org/apcapstoneportfolio)**

Note: The AP Capstone Digital Portfolio is available only to students at schools that are participating in the AP Capstone program.





