



An Introduction to the AP Capstone™ Program

Westfield High School

Welcome

- Westfield High School is committed to every student's success.
- We believe access to rigorous course work such as Advanced Placement® (AP®) plays an important role in that success.
- To complement the suite of AP courses at our school, we are proud to introduce a new AP-developed program at our school in Fall 2014 – **AP Capstone™**.

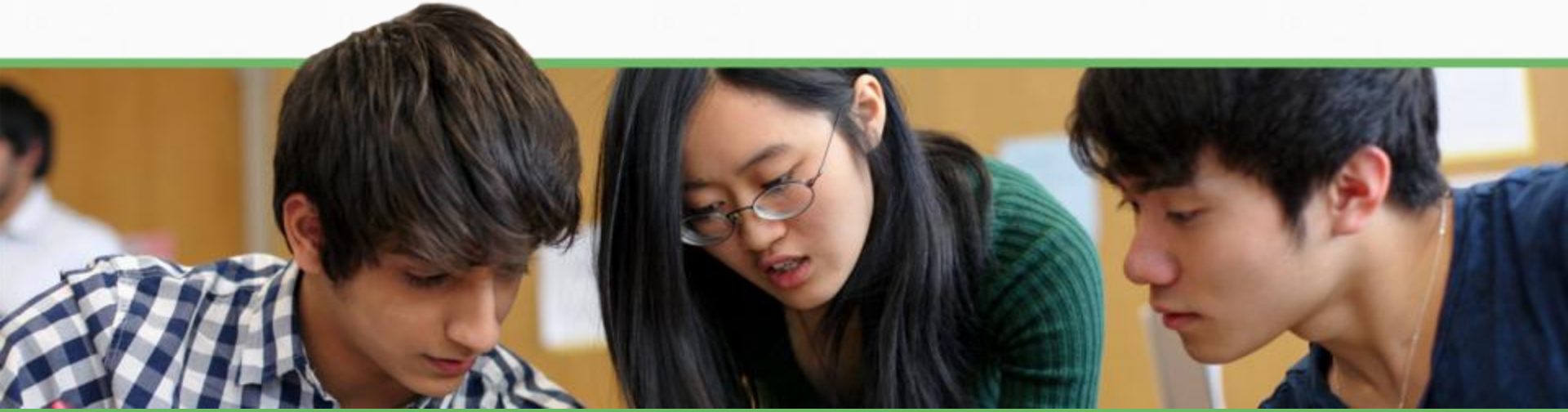




Background on Advanced Placement®

Advanced Placement[®]: The Basics

- AP[®] courses are college-level courses offered in high school
- Courses reflect what is taught in top introductory college courses
- Students take **AP Exams** at the end of the course to measure their mastery of college-level work
- A score of 3 or higher on an AP Exam can typically earn students college credit and/or placement into advanced courses in college



AP[®] Courses At WHS

- **Arts:** Music Theory, Studio Art: 2-D Design Portfolio, Studio Art: 3-D Design Portfolio
- **English:** English Language and Composition, English Literature and Composition
- **History and Social Sciences:** European History, Human Geography, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Psychology, United States Government and Politics, United States History, World History
- **Mathematics and Computer Science:** Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Computer Science A, Statistics
- **Sciences:** Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, Physics 1, Physics 2, Physics C: Mechanics
- **World languages:** French Language and Culture, Spanish Language and Culture

AP[®]: Skills & Advantages that Last a Lifetime

- Taking an AP course helps students build critical thinking skills, confidence, and the essential time management and study skills needed for college success.
- Nationally, research shows that students who score a 3 or higher on an AP Exam typically earn higher grade point averages in college and have higher graduation rates than their non-AP peers.*

*2009, The College Board, "The Relationship Between AP Exam Performance and College Outcomes"



What is the AP Capstone Program?

Introducing - AP Capstone

AP Capstone™ is an innovative program that allows students to engage in rigorous college-level study of **the critical skills** necessary for success in college. The Program of study includes a two-course sequence:

AP Seminar and AP Research

Emphasizes Critical Skills

- Considering multiple perspectives
- Careful evaluation of information
- Writing evidence-based arguments

Complements the in-depth subject-matter study in AP

- Identifying and solving problems
- Oral communication and defending an argument
- Collaboration and teamwork

AP Seminar – Starting Fall 2014

At WHS AP Seminar is embedded in AP Language and Composition.

Students interested in the AP Capstone Diploma must take AP Lang. and Comp. for the grade 11 English.

Students learn how to:

- Investigate real-world topics from multiple perspectives
- Carefully analyze information, write evidence-based arguments and effectively communicate them
- Work independently and with a team to research a topic, develop a written report and deliver a presentation

Example Topics

Democracy
Education
Revolution
Freedom
Protest
Technology
Sustainability

Exam score based on:

1. Team Project & Presentation

- 25%



2. Individual Essay & Presentation

- 35%



3. Written Exam

- 40%

Teachers & Students select and study 2-4 topics.



AP Research – Starting Fall 2015

Students learn how to:

- Design, plan, and conduct a year-long mentored, research-based investigation
- Apply research methods and practices to address a real-world topic selected by the student
- Write a college-level research paper, present and orally defend the findings and research methodology

AP Seminar is a prerequisite to AP Research. This course will be offered in grade 12.

Exam score based on:

1. Research Process
 - 15%
2. Academic Thesis Paper (~5,000 words)
 - 70%
3. Public Presentation and Oral Defense
 - 15%

AP Capstone Program Model

A two-course sequence that provides students with the critical thinking and research skills needed to succeed in college and stand-out in the admission process

AP Capstone Diploma™

Students who earn scores of 3 or higher on the AP Seminar and AP Research Exams and on four additional AP Exams of their choosing will receive the **AP Capstone Diploma™**.

AP SEMINAR

Team Project & Presentation

Research-Based Essay & Presentation

Written Exam

AP RESEARCH

Academic Thesis

Public Presentation & Defense

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

AP Research & Seminar Certificate™

Students who earn scores of 3 or higher on the AP Seminar and AP Research Exams only will receive the **AP Seminar and Research Certificate™**



AP Capstone Program: The Benefits

AP Capstone: The Benefits

- **Distinction** – Stand out in the college admission process and have the opportunity to earn valuable college credit or placement
- **Critical Skills** – Students acquire rigorous college-level analysis, writing, and research skills that are increasingly valued by colleges
- **Choice** – Students choose their own research topic and study issues and topics of interest and importance to them



What Students are saying about AP Capstone

“We get a topic, and we dive deep into it, looking at not just the facts but different perspectives, which ones are strongest, which ones are missing something... [It]...teaches us to learn and think, and prepares us for college and life in a way that no other class does...”
—Senior, North Central High School, Spokane, WA

“The expectations in the [AP Seminar] course are a lot higher. We are expected to be more responsible and more attentive about what is going on in the world around us.”
—Sophomore, N. Miami Beach High School, Miami, FL

“[In college interviews,] it gives you something to talk about. I can be really specific and colleges see that you have an interest.”
—Senior, Brooklyn Technical High School, Brooklyn, NY

“[I’ve gained] confidence... I speak more now. In this environment your opinion is needed. You feel part of a family.”
—Junior, Brooklyn Technical High School, Brooklyn, NY



What Colleges are saying about AP Capstone

“At the University of Washington, we would be very interested in enrolling students who have distinguished themselves through the AP Capstone program.”

Phillip Ballinger, Associate Vice Provost for Enrollment and Undergraduate Admissions, University of Washington

“AP Seminar and AP Research are terrific classes that prepare students to think in non-formulaic ways.”

Stuart Schmill, Dean of Admissions, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

“[Through this program] you get students turned on to higher education in a way they are not currently and they enter university with a different kind of attitude.”

Susan Roth, Vice Provost for Interdisciplinary Studies, Duke University, AP Capstone Curriculum Advisory Committee





Next Steps: Help Your Child Make the Best Choices

AP Capstone: Start the Conversation

• Help your child prepare to talk to a teacher or counselor about AP Capstone. Here are some questions to encourage your child to think about:

• Is AP Capstone right for me?

• Before you talk to a teacher or counselor, think about what interests you:

- What college majors are you considering? What careers excite you?
- Do I enjoy challenging myself to think in new ways?
- Do I like to collaborate and learn from others?

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Ask your counselor or teacher the following questions:

- May I speak with a teacher familiar with AP Capstone?
- How will the courses be structured in the school schedule?
- Are there other courses that can help me succeed in AP Capstone?

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What steps do I need to take?

- Go online and read the AP Capstone brochure to find out more
- Find out your school's enrollment deadline and sign up!

Student Considerations

- There are no specific eligibility requirements for AP Capstone
- Students enroll in AP Language and Composition/ AP Seminar their junior year and Research their senior year
- Students can take any sequence of AP courses during their high school career
- AP Seminar is the prerequisite for AP Research
- Satisfies requirements for academic honors diploma
- Fully weighted
- Colleges will recognize as an AP course

Additional Information about AP Capstone

The AP Capstone Brochure



AP Capstone online: www.collegeboard.org/apcapstone

Direct questions and concerns to:

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