

# AP Capstone™

## FOR THESE COURSES:

- AP® Seminar (including English 10: AP Seminar)
- AP Research

# Implementation Guide

**2025-26**



## Enrolling Students: Access, Opportunity, and Readiness

The AP® Program welcomes all students willing to challenge themselves with college-level coursework and career preparation. We strongly encourage educators to invite students into AP classes, including students from ethnic, racial, socioeconomic, geographic, or other groups not broadly participating in a school's AP program. We believe that readiness for AP is attainable, and that educators can expand readiness by opening access to Pre-AP® coursework. We commit to support educators and communities in their efforts to make AP courses widely available, advancing students in their plans for college and careers.

## Contact Us

### AP® Services for Educators

877-274-6474 (*toll free in the United States and Canada*)

212-632-1781

Contact Form: [cb.org/apeducatorcontact](https://cb.org/apeducatorcontact)

### AP Services for Students

888-225-5427 (*toll free in the United States and Canada*)

212-632-1780

Contact Form: [cb.org/apstudentcontact](https://cb.org/apstudentcontact)

### College Board Services for Students with Disabilities

844-255-7728 (*for school staff in the United States and Canada*)

212-713-8333

Email: [ssd@info.collegeboard.org](mailto:ssd@info.collegeboard.org)

Accommodations Inquiry Form and Contact Information:

[accommodations.collegeboard.org/contact-us](https://accommodations.collegeboard.org/contact-us)

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# AP Capstone Diploma Program Overview

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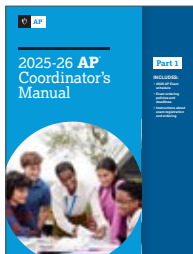
## Where to Find Information

The publications below provide details about the AP Capstone Diploma™ program. Also see the AP Capstone™ section of AP Central® at [collegeboard.org/apcapstone](https://collegeboard.org/apcapstone) and the resources listed on page 27.



AP® Seminar– and AP Research–specific policies in effect for the 2025-26 school year are posted on [collegeboard.org/apcapstonepolicies](https://collegeboard.org/apcapstonepolicies).

Policies should be reviewed each year as they evolve. For example, policies regarding the usage of generative AI and teacher requirements may change from year to year as more information becomes available.



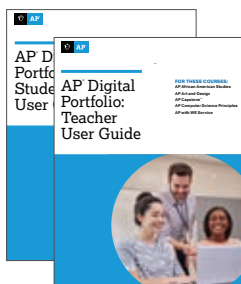
**Part 1** and **Part 2** of the *2025-26 AP Coordinator's Manual* contain important information about the AP coordinator's role in the AP Capstone program, including directions on how to order and administer AP Capstone exams. **Part 1** will be available in August 2025, and **Part 2** will be available in early 2026.



The *AP Seminar Course and Exam Description* provides the pedagogical framework, curricular requirements, instructional approaches, and assessment details for the AP Seminar course.



The *AP Research Course and Exam Description* provides the pedagogical framework, curricular requirements, instructional approaches, and assessment details for the AP Research course.



The *AP Digital Portfolio: Student User Guide* and the *AP Digital Portfolio: Teacher User Guide* help students and teachers navigate the digital portfolio and the required submission and scoring of student work.

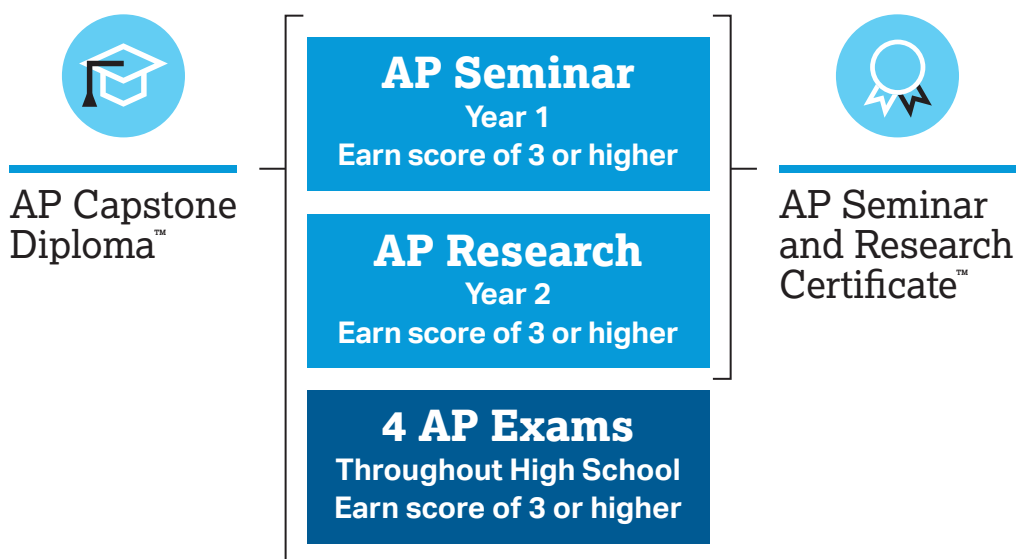
## How AP Capstone Works

The AP Capstone Diploma program is a college-level program based on two courses—AP Seminar and AP Research—that complement and enhance discipline-specific AP courses.

The program gives students a chance to practice core academic skills that are increasingly valued by colleges. The ability to think independently, write effectively, research, collaborate, and learn across disciplines is essential for success in college, career, and beyond.

Students who earn scores of 3 or higher in AP Seminar and AP Research and on 4 additional AP Exams of their choosing receive the AP Capstone Diploma. This signifies their outstanding academic achievement and attainment of college-level academic and research skills. Students who earn scores of 3 or higher in both AP Seminar and AP Research but not on 4 additional AP Exams receive the AP Seminar and Research Certificate™.

AP Capstone was developed in response to feedback from higher education and is easily implemented and flexible. It has the potential to differentiate and transform high schools and their students by elevating the learning environment through a challenging, college-level program with high standards of assessment.



# Implementation

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## How to Become an AP Capstone School

To become an AP Capstone school and offer AP Seminar and AP Research, schools must ensure that their teachers complete the required AP Capstone AP Summer Institute (APSI) prior to teaching either course. Schools must offer AP Seminar in their first year of implementation. After the first year, schools have the option to offer the sequential course, AP Research.

## Costs and Resourcing Considerations

There are no annual administrative fees charged by College Board. Administrators should consider the costs and resources outlined below when planning to implement AP Capstone courses.

### AP CAPSTONE SUMMER INSTITUTE FEE

The cost per participant for the 2026 AP Capstone Summer Institute is \$1,075 for an in-person session or \$799 for an online session. The fee is updated annually.

This fee includes tuition and electronic materials for the AP Summer Institute, as well as access to the online scoring training. It doesn't include travel, lodging, meal expenses, and incidental costs.

**All new AP Seminar and AP Research instructors are required to attend an AP Capstone Summer Institute before teaching either course for the first time.** A school can't offer an AP Course Audit–authorized AP Seminar or AP Research course without a trained teacher. This training is offered by select AP Summer Institutes throughout the summer. School leaders aren't required to attend this AP Summer Institute but may use this opportunity to deepen their understanding of the program and may make a special request to attend. Teachers complete summer training once before their first year teaching the course—this isn't an annual requirement.

A limited number of grants for teachers are available through an application process available on our [AP Participant Grants page](#).

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**Note:** The AP Summer Institute fee doesn't include travel, lodging, some meals, credit card processing fees for registration, or incidentals. Additional training may be required at the school's expense if assessment scoring performance doesn't meet College Board standards. Fees are subject to change annually.

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In addition, all AP Seminar and AP Research teachers must complete online assessment scoring training during the school year—this is an annual requirement for all AP Capstone teachers that's separate from the AP Summer Institute for new teachers.

See [collegeboard.org/apcapstonepl](https://collegeboard.org/apcapstonepl) for more information.

## EXAM FEES

The 2025-26 exam fee for AP Seminar and AP Research is \$99 per exam, and schools retain a \$9 rebate per exam. An exam order for AP Seminar and/or AP Research must be submitted for all students included in the exam roster in AP Registration and Ordering. College Board provides a \$37 fee reduction per AP Exam for students who are eligible for the College Board fee reduction. Schools are expected to forgo their \$9 rebate for these students. Many states provide funding to further reduce the exam fee for these students. The AP Program will update state subsidy information posted on AP Central ([cb.org/apexamfeeassistance](https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/apexamfeeassistance)) as soon as each state finalizes their 2026 funding plan.

See **Part 1** of the *AP Coordinator's Manual* for detailed information about fees.

## RESOURCING YOUR AP CAPSTONE PROGRAM

During the 2025-26 school year, all AP Seminar and AP Research students will receive digital access to EBSCO Academic Search Ultimate and Turnitin via the AP Digital Portfolio at no additional cost.

## REQUIREMENTS

Teachers and students need high-speed internet access and technology to conduct research, complete multimedia presentations, and submit team and individual projects. Schools should be sure their technology infrastructure offers the bandwidth to perform these tasks.

Schools and districts should consider the following recommendations even though they're **not** mandatory:

- Compensation and/or release time for teachers to take online scoring training and score students' through-course assessments
- Extra time before or after school, or on weekends, for students to give their multimedia presentations (and to free up class time)
- Staff designated to support students enrolled in the AP Capstone program (e.g., librarian, media specialist, expert adviser)
- Extra time during faculty meetings to explain the AP Capstone program and align curriculum with AP courses
- Professional learning time to allow AP Capstone teachers to meet as a professional learning community (PLC)
- Professional learning funding for AP Capstone teachers to attend AP Annual Conference sessions
- Release time for teachers to be AP readers
- Funding to reduce the AP Exam fee for AP Capstone students
- Meetings with parents to talk about the AP Capstone program
- Classroom furniture that facilitates group instruction and student collaboration
- Access to databases and online academic resources through the school library or media center
- One-to-one student access to computers, laptops, or tablets during AP Seminar and AP Research class time



## Recruiting Students

Students who are motivated and prepared for college-level coursework are best suited for the AP Capstone Diploma program, but the program also benefits those students who are likely to succeed in AP but haven't 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. Overall, AP Capstone students have an interest in becoming curious, independent, and collaborative scholars.

### RECRUITMENT TOOLS

- AP Capstone on AP Central: [collegeboard.org/apcapstone](https://collegeboard.org/apcapstone)
- Elevate English 10 with AP Seminar website: [collegeboard.org/apseminarela](https://collegeboard.org/apseminarela)
- AP Students website: [apstudents.collegeboard.org/ap-capstone-diploma-program](https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/ap-capstone-diploma-program)
- AP Capstone student brochure: [secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/ap/ap-capstone/ap-capstone-student-brochure.pdf](https://secure-media.collegeboard.org/digitalServices/pdf/ap/ap-capstone/ap-capstone-student-brochure.pdf)
- AP Potential™: [appotential.collegeboard.org](https://appotential.collegeboard.org)
- Broadening Access to AP Toolkit: [cb.org/accesstoolkit](https://cb.org/accesstoolkit)

### RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

- Present AP Capstone at a Parent Night as an extension of or introduction to AP coursework.
- Provide AP Capstone brochures during an open house.
- Meet with rising grade 10 or grade 11 students before course selection.
- Discuss the benefits and challenges of AP Capstone in face-to-face meetings with potential candidates and parents.
- Develop teacher recommendations tailored to AP Capstone characteristics and requirements.
- Plan classroom visits by school leaders, counselors, and current AP Capstone students to talk about 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 and parents to the AP Students website: [apstudents.collegeboard.org/ap-capstone-diploma-program](https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/ap-capstone-diploma-program)

### RECRUITMENT OF STUDENTS WHO ARE NEW TO AP

AP Capstone can propel a diversity of students to pursue their own interests/passions. Students develop the tools to meaningfully and thoughtfully weigh in on issues that matter to them—whether local, regional, national, or global in nature. Students choose their own research topic for their theses. For some schools, AP Seminar may be used as a way to introduce students to the rigor of Advanced Placement® while providing the foundational skills that will complement other AP courses.



## Scheduling AP Capstone Courses

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

Currently, many schools are offering AP Seminar in their English department to satisfy a graduation requirement. Learn more about this approach on [collegeboard.org/apseminarela](https://collegeboard.org/apseminarela). Although many schools are positioning AP Seminar for English 10, this course can be offered through any academic department and in grades 10, 11, or 12. AP Research follows AP Seminar. AP Research can be offered in grades 11 and 12 and can fit into any department.

It's not recommended that AP Seminar be offered in grade 9. However, students in grade 12 can be encouraged to take AP Seminar if they understand that they won't meet the eligibility requirements for the AP Capstone Diploma or the AP Seminar and Research Certificate.

AP Capstone schools can only offer AP Seminar in their first year of implementation. After the first year, schools can then introduce AP Research when ready.

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**Note:** AP Seminar is a prerequisite for AP Research. See the **Prerequisite** policy on [AP Central](#) for details.

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GRADE-LEVEL SEQUENCE	GRADE 10/11	GRADE 11/12	GRADE 10/12
<b>Pros</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Builds college-level critical skills early in the students' high school career.</li> <li>Increases participation and performance in AP courses.</li> <li>Enables grade 12 students to mentor students in AP Seminar and AP Research.</li> <li>Allows students to complete a research project before submitting college applications and participating in college interviews.</li> </ul>	<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 can structure a culminating experience for graduating seniors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enables students to acquire college-level skills early and apply those skills in a culminating research project.</li> <li>Enables development of college-level critical skills early in the students' high school career.</li> <li>Increases participation and performance in AP courses.</li> <li>Enables schools to structure a culminating experience for graduating seniors.</li> </ul>

GRADE-LEVEL SEQUENCE	GRADE 10/11	GRADE 11/12	GRADE 10/12
<b>Cons</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adds a major research project to the traditionally busy grade 11.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students have limited opportunity to retake AP Seminar and AP Research.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Requires that the curriculum bridge the grade 11 gap so AP Research doesn't need to reteach the skills acquired in AP Seminar.</li> </ul>

## English 10: AP Seminar

### OFFERING AP SEMINAR AS AN ENGLISH 10 COURSE

There are a variety of ways to implement AP Seminar. Schools are choosing to offer AP Seminar as an English course for grade 10. This approach introduces students to AP and expands access for students to engage in more relevant coursework with project based assessments. Integrating AP Seminar into English departments provides the greatest opportunity for students to fit the course within their schedules and meet a graduation requirement.

### CONSIDERATIONS TO IMPLEMENT ENGLISH 10: AP SEMINAR

#### ▪ Course Categorization

AP Seminar can fulfill an English Course Requirement\*. AP Seminar students master skills in analyzing a variety of texts, writing explanatory and argumentative essays, conducting research, working in teams, and presenting. These skills align with English 10 standards, offering teachers the flexibility to incorporate local English standards into their instruction. State crosswalks, available upon request, illustrate how AP Seminar corresponds with state ELA standards.

Teachers can supplement their AP Seminar course to meet English 10 standards by adding literary and rhetorical analysis, as well as narrative writing, into the themes they choose.

Learn how schools and districts are incorporating AP Seminar as a core course.

- ♦ Teacher Perspectives: Rethinking Your English Sequence with AP Seminar
- ♦ Administrator Insights: Rethinking Your English Sequence with AP Seminar

#### ▪ Instructor Credential

Certified English instructors in states with an approved English 10 course code for AP Seminar are eligible to teach English 10: AP Seminar.

Additionally, certified English instructors must complete the required AP Capstone Summer Institute to teach English 10: AP Seminar.

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\*Schools should contact their state department of education to find out their specific policies regarding English credit.

### Curricular Resources

A variety of curricular resources are available for English curriculum leaders and staff interested in understanding strategies and instructional approaches of English 10: AP Seminar.

- ♦ **Instructional Guide:** Strategies to incorporate English 10 skills such as literary analysis and creative writing into the course.
- ♦ **Sample Syllabus A:** Integrates full literary texts (*Night*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *Macbeth*) into the course and suggests a final unit to address narrative writing standards.
- ♦ **Sample Syllabus B:** Weaves literary fiction and nonfiction texts throughout the course.
- ♦ **Sample Syllabus C:** Connects longer works read over the summer to shorter texts (including artistic works) based on thematic links.

Learn more about this approach on AP Central: [collegeboard.org/apseminarela](https://collegeboard.org/apseminarela)

### Course Sequence

It's recommended to use AP Seminar to fulfill English 10 requirements in approved states. However, depending on the state policy, schools and districts have the flexibility to offer AP Seminar as a core English course in grades 11 and/or 12.

A typical pathway is to offer English 10: AP Seminar to all sophomores, as shown in the table below. To view the entirety of pathways, see the [English Sequence Options Table](#).

GRADE 9	GRADE 10	GRADE 11	GRADE 12
English 9 or Pre-AP® English 1	<b>English 10: AP Seminar</b>	English 11	English 12
			AP English Language
			AP English Literature
		AP English Language	English 12
			AP English Literature
		AP English Literature	English 12
			AP English Language

### Eligible Students

Offering English 10: AP Seminar to students is a local decision due to the flexible implementation options of the course. For some schools, AP Seminar can fulfill an English 10 option, or, in some, it can be the gradewide English 10 course. We recommend schools have the structures in place to support a diversity of learners before requiring all grade 10 students to take this AP course.

Learn more about this on AP Central: [collegeboard.org/apseminarela](https://collegeboard.org/apseminarela)

## Making AP Capstone Work with Your School Schedule

AP Seminar and AP Research are full-year courses enabling students to focus on 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 performance task assessments usually begin toward the end of the first or the beginning of the second semester. The second performance task can't be started prior to January, when the stimulus materials for that task are published by College Board. Final student work must be uploaded to the AP Digital Portfolio by April 30, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET. Teachers must review final student submissions, score student presentations, and affirm authenticity in the digital portfolio by May 10, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET. Recommended completion dates for both performance tasks are February 28 and April 15, respectively. The assessment schedule limits the ability to offer AP Seminar on a 4x4 block schedule. AP Seminar requirements can't be completed in a fall block-scheduled course. Although the 4x4 block schedule doesn't preclude offering the AP Capstone courses, it does require schedule variations.

AP Research may be offered in a traditional schedule or an A/B block schedule. The course can also be offered in a 4x4 block schedule, though this isn't recommended. Offering AP Research on this schedule requires support and accountability measures to make sure students are supervised throughout the research process and that teachers have ample time to teach the required skills and score student presentations and oral defenses. Schools that offer AP Research in the fall semester need to design student supports to monitor student-adviser relationships and to ensure that research projects are completed on time. AP Research teachers need time to score student presentations before the deadline unless students are required to complete the research project and presentation before the end of the first semester. However, this limits the time available to students to complete the rigorous research project while completing other course requirements. Schools that offer AP Research in the spring semester should know that students have less time to complete the research project and presentation because all student work must be submitted in the AP Digital Portfolio by April 30, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET.

## SCHOOLS OFFERING AP SEMINAR AND AP RESEARCH IN A 4X4 BLOCK SCHEDULE

Due to the design of the through-course performance tasks in AP Seminar and AP Research, it isn't ideal to offer AP Seminar and AP Research in a 4x4 block schedule. However, if your school proceeds with this type of schedule, please consider the following:

- **Schedule as full-year course.** AP Seminar and AP Research are both offered as full-year instructional classes spanning all semester formats (e.g., semesters, trimesters, quarters). Schools pursuing this schedule must ensure that the same students are enrolled in the same classes during all semesters. This would require students to pair AP Seminar or AP Research with another course.
- **Schedule as fall semester course with dedicated support during spring semester.** AP Seminar and AP Research are offered during the fall semester; this allows students to have dedicated independent work time and access to AP Seminar and AP Research teachers and classmates.

Schools pursuing this option for AP Seminar should schedule dedicated instructional days during the second semester for AP Seminar students and teachers to review the following:

- **Performance Task 1.** Team Multimedia Presentations, if not completed in the prior semester
- **Performance Task 2.** Instructions and stimulus materials, which are released in January
- **Performance Task 2.** Individual Multimedia Presentations
- **End-of-Course Exam.** Prepare for final exam administered in May

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR DETERMINING CLASS SIZES AND COMBINING CLASSES

### ▪ Class Size Recommendations

Although decisions about class sizes are made by individual schools, the recommended class size for AP Seminar and AP Research courses is 20–24 students, an optimal size for fostering collaboration and teaching presentation skills. School leaders scheduling AP Capstone courses should consider the responsibilities and requirements of teacher assessment scoring. For example, an AP Research teacher with 40 students will need to schedule and score 40 Presentations and Oral Defenses, each requiring 20 minutes. School leaders and teachers need to coordinate closely to ensure that there's enough time to schedule presentations and assessment scoring activities to meet the April 30, 2026, 11:59 p.m. ET deadline.

Schools with large class sizes and/or many class sections are strongly encouraged to assign multiple AP Seminar and AP Research teachers to manage the scheduling and scoring of student presentations because the time frame of the presentations coincides with AP Exam preparation in the spring.

### ▪ Combining AP Seminar or AP Research with Another AP Class

There are scenarios in which schools have to combine an AP Seminar class or AP Research class via an anchor AP course or a concurrent AP course. School leaders must consider additional instructional time to satisfy learning objectives in both courses. Please note: AP Seminar classes and AP Research classes can't be offered concurrently to the same students. (See the **Prerequisite** policy posted on [AP Central](#) for details.)

## OFFERING AP CAPSTONE TO HOMESCHOOLED AND VIRTUAL SCHOOL STUDENTS

### ■ For Students

Homeschooled and virtual school students who wish to participate in AP Capstone have the opportunity to do so through a virtual or local brick-and-mortar school. Independent study for AP Seminar or AP Research isn't permitted. Virtual and brick-and-mortar schools may have their own local deadlines and policies regarding instruction and testing; therefore, students should do the following as early as possible:

- Use the [AP Course Ledger](#) to find a local brick-and-mortar school that offers AP Seminar or AP Research in person or by partnering with a virtual school.
- Contact the school to arrange testing. The AP coordinator for a school that agrees to order and administer exams for homeschooled and virtual school students will create an exam only section in AP Registration and Ordering for that subject and add those students.
- AP Seminar students are required to participate in a team project and must ensure they're assigned to work with team members.
- Students must enroll in both an exam only section and a teacher-led class section in order to have access to resources assigned by the teacher for the class section as well as for teachers to submit presentation scores for students in the AP Digital Portfolio.

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**Note:** AP Research doesn't have an end-of-course exam, but an exam must be ordered for a student in order for their performance task to be scored.

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### ■ For Approved Virtual School Providers

Some best practices for offering AP Seminar or AP Research in a virtual setting include:

- Scheduling classes in a synchronous format.
- Providing opportunities for students to collaborate outside of classroom hours through online platforms (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet).
- Grouping AP Seminar students for Performance Task 1 based on their scheduling availability.

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**Note:** All AP Seminar and AP Research teachers are required to attend an AP Capstone Summer Institute before their first academic year teaching the respective course. See [collegeboard.org/apcapstonepl](https://collegeboard.org/apcapstonepl) for more information.

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More information about special ordering circumstances can be found on [AP Central](#) and in [Part 1](#) of the *AP Coordinator's Manual*.

## Positioning AP Capstone Courses in Your Master Schedule

The flexibility of AP Capstone allows program implementation in a variety of settings and in academic disciplines of choice. Because AP Seminar and AP Research are both skills based, the courses can be associated with any academic content area. Schools may position the courses as required core classes or as electives as long as they abide by any applicable state and district policies. Schools should also confirm that course designations of AP Seminar and AP Research align with entry requirements of higher education destinations for their students.

The following table lists implementation models, along with the pros and cons associated with each. These options help meet the demands of the school curriculum, state and district requirements, and local school traditions and culture.

SCHEDULE VARIATION TYPE	EXAMPLE	PROS	CONS
<b>Core course, English</b>	AP Seminar is offered as an English course, satisfying both a core credit and/or a fourth year of English for graduation requirement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gives more students the opportunity to access AP Seminar. Allows teachers the flexibility to integrate state standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires additional funding to train and support English teachers.</li> </ul>
<b>Gradewide implementation</b>	AP Seminar is offered as a required course for all students in grade 10.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gives students a chance to develop critical research skills that can apply across all disciplines and transfer to other courses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requires additional funding to train and support teachers.</li> </ul>
<b>AP course anchor</b>	<p>All AP Capstone students are enrolled in a common AP course known as an anchor course.</p> <p>For example, all AP Seminar students are enrolled in AP U.S. History or all AP Research students are enrolled in AP Biology.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Permits interdisciplinary instruction that supports student mastery of AP Capstone skills and enhances performance in the AP anchor course.</li> <li>Gives students a chance to apply AP Capstone skills in an AP content area.</li> <li>Fosters collaboration between teachers in different content areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presents master schedule complications in scheduling students for 2 courses and in scheduling common planning time for teachers to develop instructional strategies and lesson plans.</li> <li>Increases program costs because the AP content teacher should be trained in AP Seminar and/or AP Research curriculum and assessment.</li> </ul>



SCHEDULE VARIATION TYPE	EXAMPLE	PROS	CONS
<b>Concurrent enrollment in an AP course</b>	<p>AP Capstone courses are integrated with AP courses.</p> <p>For example, AP Seminar and AP United States Government and Politics are taught concurrently, or AP Research and AP Chemistry are taught concurrently.</p>	<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 1 teacher to balance the demands of 2 AP courses in 1 course.</li> </ul>
<b>Distinct, tailored sections or academy setting</b>	<p>AP Capstone courses are offered in multiple sections tailored to emphasize a specific area of interest or in the context of an existing school program.</p> <p>For example, AP Seminar or AP Research or both are offered as both a science and a social science course or as part of a public service or health sciences academy</p>	<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 interest areas.</li> <li>Limits the interest of students who may not fall within specific departmental or academy requirements.</li> </ul>
<b>Anchor course that's not AP</b>	<p>AP Capstone courses are integrated with existing courses that aren't AP.</p> <p>For example, AP Seminar and an art history elective are taught concurrently, or AP Research and a statistics elective are taught concurrently</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides an instructional framework for the existing course.</li> <li>Provides students with the opportunity to learn specific academic content, along with the skills taught in AP Seminar and AP Research.</li> <li>Fosters collaboration between teachers in different content areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates tension between the original curriculum and the requirements of AP Seminar and AP Research.</li> <li>Limits students' ability to explore issues that speak to their personal interests.</li> </ul>

SCHEDULE VARIATION TYPE	EXAMPLE	PROS	CONS
<b>Independent, interdisciplinary elective</b>	AP Capstone courses are offered as independent electives. (Note: AP Seminar is a prerequisite to AP Research. AP Research can't be offered independently.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides students with college-level critical skills that can be applied across disciplines.</li> <li>Benefits those students who show potential for AP coursework but haven't yet enrolled in AP courses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elective designation may limit opportunities for students to complete both AP Seminar and AP Research.</li> </ul>

## Adding AP Capstone to Student Transcripts

Schools may choose to add a subtitle to their AP Seminar or AP Research courses (e.g., AP Seminar: [Subtitle]) that indicates a special disciplinary focus or emphasis as long as it complies with local, district, and/or state/country policies.

### INCORPORATING AP SEMINAR AS AN ENGLISH COURSE

Many schools offer AP Seminar as an English course due to a growing number of states granting AP Seminar as a state graduation requirement for English.

Schools adopting this implementation model can add a specific designation to students' transcripts. For instance, 10th-grade students who take AP Seminar as their English course can have the designation "English 10: AP Seminar" on their transcript. Similarly, for 11th grade, the course can have the designation "English 11: AP Seminar."

## Addressing the AP Capstone Diploma Requirements

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 4 additional AP Exams of their choosing. The exams may be taken at any time during high school 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.

## Accessing AP Capstone Awards

Students who earn the AP Capstone Diploma or AP Seminar and Research Certificate can view and print their diploma or certificate online through their AP score report in July. The award is also acknowledged on any AP score report that's sent to colleges after the award has been conferred.

Administrators can access this information through their AP educator score reports at [AP Score Reports for K-12 Educators](#).

## Staffing AP Capstone Courses

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, are competent in teaching a skill-based rather than a content-based course, and are master facilitators of student learning, allowing students to take charge of their own learning. Teachers who have experience conducting and/or supervising independent research may be considered as well.

**AP Seminar and AP Research teachers aren't required to have specific content-area certification unless this is stipulated by local, district, or state/country policy.**

All AP Seminar and AP Research teachers are required to attend an AP Capstone Summer Institute before their first academic year teaching the respective course.

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**Note:** Administrators should be aware of the amount of time needed for scoring student work when assigning teachers to multiple sections of AP Seminar and/or AP Research. Although AP Seminar teachers may also teach AP Research, administrators should ensure that they're properly supported, especially in the spring when student work and teachers' scores are submitted.

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The most 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 expert advisers.
- Manage scoring and submit student work according to submission deadlines.
- Modify instruction style in order to accommodate through-course performance tasks and skills-based learning outcomes.

Prior experience teaching AP or other college-equivalent courses taught in their high school isn't required.

The following table offers several staffing models along with the pros and cons associated with each.

SCENARIO	PROS	CONS
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 2 teachers with different strengths that support 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 2 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 2-year experience that fully develops student strengths and bridges student weaknesses.</li> <li>Teachers are able to build a seamless transition from AP Seminar to AP Research by maximizing use of available instructional time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools incur a training cost increase because they must send 2 teachers to the required AP Seminar and AP Research summer institute.</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 or AP Research in a team-teaching structure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers from 2 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 because schools must send 2 teachers to the required AP Seminar or AP Research summer institute.</li> <li>FTE or local district requirements may limit shared responsibility for 1 course.</li> </ul>

## Getting Others Involved

School leaders should consider convening an AP Capstone team of faculty members to support the implementation of this new diploma 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 College Board. It's suggested that this point person be the school principal, AP coordinator, or AP Capstone teacher, who will receive important messaging from College Board on key updates and deadlines.

Additional AP Capstone team roles and responsibilities include the following:

### **SCHOOL LEADERS**

- Form the AP Capstone team and collaborate with faculty and 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 complete online scoring training and score student presentations.
- Be sure that teachers and students have access to required high-speed internet and technology appropriate to conduct research, complete multimedia presentations, and submit team and individual projects.
- Fund required AP Capstone Summer Institute, Ensure release time for teachers to complete online scoring training.
- Support AP Capstone implementation in communications with students, faculty, parents, and the community.
- Read all communications from College Board about updates to the AP Capstone program.

### **TEACHERS**

- Attend required AP Capstone Summer Institute for AP Seminar and/or AP Research.
- Facilitate student learning.
- Score student presentations. Ensure timely upload of student work to College Board.
- Initiate relationships with colleagues or leaders from community organizations, getting them involved in the AP Capstone Diploma program as guest lecturers or expert advisers.
- Manage student–adviser 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. Access to EBSCO Academic Search Complete is provided to AP Seminar and AP Research teachers and students at AP Capstone schools.
- Assist students in identifying and researching a variety of questions across multiple disciplines.
- Contribute to workshops and tutorials that address specific research issues.
- Work with teachers to conduct relevant lessons on research practices.

### **COUNSELORS**

- Familiarize themselves with AP Capstone so they can share highlights of the program with parents and visiting college admissions representatives.
- Assist in identifying students for participation in AP Capstone.
- Help students communicate AP Capstone accomplishments to colleges and universities.
- Ensure that student course selections meet AP Capstone Diploma and/or AP Seminar and Research Certificate requirements.

## Expert Advisers for AP Research

Expert advisers 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 advisers for the AP Research course and match students with advisers. AP Research teachers and school administrators identify school and district policies that pertain to students who are engaging virtually or face-to-face with external advisers, and they communicate such policies to parents, students, and potential advisers. See the **Role of Expert Advisers in the Academic Paper** section of the [AP Research Course and Exam Description](#).

## Recognition from Higher Education

### ADMISSIONS BENEFITS

AP Capstone Diploma candidates enjoy a variety of admissions benefits from colleges and universities before, during, and after application cycles. Various benefits include opportunities to meet with research faculty, direct admission into honors programs, and join undergraduate research projects.

To facilitate admissions recognition, school leaders and students should indicate participation in the AP Capstone Diploma program in the following ways:

- **School reports to higher education.** School leaders include their school's participation in the AP Capstone Diploma program, along with the number of AP Capstone Diploma awards.
- **Counselor recommendations.** Counselors identify students as AP Capstone Diploma candidates on recommendation forms, including third-party applications such as the Common Application and the Coalition Application.
- **Teacher recommendations.** AP Seminar and AP Research teachers highlight student research projects.
- **Individual honors.** Students designate themselves as AP Capstone Diploma candidates, AP Capstone Diploma recipients, or AP Seminar and Research Certificate recipients in the awards/honors sections of their applications.
- **Including courses on transcripts.** Students and schools indicate AP Seminar and AP Research on high school course transcripts.
- **Admissions interviews and essays.** Students discuss their AP Seminar or AP Research work during admissions interviews and in their admissions essays, where appropriate.
- **Sending AP Seminar and AP Research scores.** Students send AP Seminar and AP Research scores to their preferred higher education institutions.

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**Note:** AP Capstone Diploma candidates are defined as students who have earned a score of 3 or higher in AP Seminar and are enrolled or plan to be enrolled in AP Research. They're also likely to earn a 3 or higher on 4 additional AP Exams, as determined by school administrators.

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## **CREDIT AND PLACEMENT BENEFITS**

Several colleges and universities award credit for the successful completion of AP Seminar and AP Research. College Board currently provides information that colleges, universities, and state systems need to make sound, data-driven policy decisions regarding recognition of success in AP Capstone courses.

Visit [collegeboard.org/apcapstonehedsupport](https://collegeboard.org/apcapstonehedsupport) to see a list of colleges and universities that endorse the AP Capstone program and to use the [AP Credit Policy Search](#) to find specific credit and placement policies.



# For Teachers

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## AP Capstone AP Course Audit Steps

Following the required summer training, new AP Seminar and AP Research teachers are equipped to prepare a course syllabus. The following activities must be completed within their AP Course Audit account:

- Teacher—Complete the course audit form
- Teacher—Submit course syllabus
- AP Course Audit Administrator—Review and approve the course audit form

Schools don't need to specify their implementation approach in the AP Course Audit, though teachers can specify it in the AP Digital Portfolio. There's a variety of implementation approaches for AP Seminar and AP Research, though students complete the same AP Seminar and AP Research Exam.

New teachers can access AP Classroom and the AP Digital Portfolio after their course audit form has been approved.

Some countries, states, and districts may have earlier submission deadlines. Teachers are encouraged to check with school administrators to determine if they should submit syllabi to other authorizing systems before the deadline.

AP Seminar and AP Research teachers must develop and submit a syllabus of their own creation and can't submit the sample syllabus provided during training.

All new 2025-26 AP Capstone teachers must complete a course audit form and submit a syllabus for review.

All previously authorized courses can be renewed by a school administrator beginning March 1, 2025.

## Teacher Roles During the AP Capstone Performance Tasks

We recommend that all AP Capstone teachers be transparent with students about their roles and what any individual providing guidance to students should and shouldn't do. As a reminder, students shouldn't receive specific, directive feedback on their performance tasks.

For more information about the roles of AP Capstone teachers, see the [AP Seminar Course and Exam Description](#) and the [AP Research Course and Exam Description](#).

## Submitting Student Work Using the AP Digital Portfolio

Students taking AP Seminar and AP Research must use the [AP Digital Portfolio](#) at [digitalportfolio.collegeboard.org](https://digitalportfolio.collegeboard.org) to submit performance tasks as final by the April 30, 2026, 11:59 p.m. ET submission deadline.

Each school's AP Capstone teachers, students, and AP coordinator interact with the digital portfolio throughout the school year. The following diagram illustrates the roles and major tasks in the process.

## Digital Submission for AP Capstone

■ Completed in My AP ■ Completed in the AP Digital Portfolio

- 1** **AP coordinator or AP teacher** signs in to [myap.collegeboard.org](https://myap.collegeboard.org) at the start of the school year and creates AP Seminar and AP Research class sections. If applicable, the AP coordinator notifies teachers when class sections have been created.
- 2** **Teachers** sign in to [myap.collegeboard.org](https://myap.collegeboard.org) and get the join code for each class section they teach to distribute to students during class.
- 3** **Students** sign in to [myap.collegeboard.org](https://myap.collegeboard.org) with College Board login information and enroll in an AP Seminar or AP Research class section using the join code provided by their teacher or AP coordinator. If instructed to do so by the AP coordinator, students also indicate their exam registration in My AP.
- 4** **AP coordinator** submits the exam order for all students included in the exam roster in AP Registration and Ordering.
- 5** **Teacher** creates AP Seminar student teams for team assignments.
- 6** **Teacher** distributes College Board–provided source material to AP Seminar students.
- 7** **Students** submit written performance tasks as final in the AP Digital Portfolio no later than April 30, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET or an earlier deadline set by their teacher.
- 8** **Teacher** submits scores for student presentations and completes affirmations for required checkpoints in the AP Digital Portfolio by May 10, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET.
- 9** **AP coordinator** verifies that all students have submitted their written performance task components as final in the AP Digital Portfolio by April 30, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET and that teachers have submitted scores for student presentations and completed affirmations in the digital portfolio by May 10, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET.
- 10** Performance tasks and scores for all students that the AP coordinator has ordered an exam for will be automatically submitted to **the AP Program** at the deadline.

### TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE AP DIGITAL PORTFOLIO

- Use a computer, tablet, or mobile device that supports the latest versions of Chrome (preferred), Safari (preferred), Firefox, or Edge, and is connected to the internet.
- The scoring feature isn't available on mobile devices.

For more information about the digital portfolio, see the [AP Digital Portfolio: Teacher User Guide](#) and the [AP Digital Portfolio: Student User Guide](#).

## Due Dates for AP Seminar and AP Research Performance Tasks

The deadline for all student work to be submitted to the [AP Digital Portfolio](#) is April 30, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET. Teachers must review final student submissions, score student presentations, and affirm authenticity in the digital portfolio by May 10, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET. Although the AP Program recommends interim deadlines for each component of the performance tasks, teachers may choose to set their own interim deadlines, which will be determined by their school calendars and schedules.

## AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam Date

The 2026 exam date for the AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam is Monday, May 11, 2026, at 12 p.m. local time. See the complete [2026 AP Exam schedule](#).

For detailed information about ordering exams for late testing, see [Part 1](#) of the *AP Coordinator's Manual*.

## Getting Involved with the AP Reading

College Board encourages AP Seminar and AP Research teachers to apply to become AP readers. By participating in the AP Reading, teachers ensure that AP Exams continue to measure a student's ability to master college-level work. Ninety-eight percent of high school AP teachers and college faculty who have participated in more than one AP Reading say that their participation has had a positive impact on their teaching.

AP readers for AP Capstone courses can take advantage of flexible scheduling options, opportunities for professional learning hours, and continuing education credits (CEUs), as well as compensation.

For more information and to apply, visit [collegeboard.org/readap](https://collegeboard.org/readap).

# For AP Coordinators

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The AP Capstone section of **Part 2** of the *AP Coordinator's Manual* is the primary source of information for AP coordinators at schools offering AP Seminar or AP Research. Download the manual. Review the AP Capstone page for AP coordinators at [collegeboard.org/apcapstonecoordinator](https://collegeboard.org/apcapstonecoordinator).

## Role of the AP Coordinator in AP Capstone

AP coordinators:

- Create class sections in AP Registration and Ordering for their school's AP classes (if teachers haven't already created their own class sections).
- Order AP Seminar and AP Research Exams.
- Request student extensions, as needed, in the AP Digital Portfolio.
- Validate that uploaded student work is submitted as final by the April 30, 2026, (11:59 p.m. ET) submission deadline.
- Validate that teachers have submitted scores for student presentations and completed affirmations for required checkpoints in the AP Digital Portfolio by May 10, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET.

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**Important:** AP Research doesn't have an end-of-course exam, but an exam must be ordered online through AP Registration and Ordering for a student in order for their performance task to be scored by the AP Program.

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AP coordinators don't have to manually submit work to the AP Program through the **AP Digital Portfolio** for it to be scored at the AP Reading. All performance tasks that have been submitted as final by a student, and any teacher scores and affirmations associated with those performance tasks, will automatically be sent to the AP Program for scoring after the deadline as long as an exam was ordered for them.

## Accessing the AP Digital Portfolio

After signing in to [digitalportfolio.collegeboard.org](https://digitalportfolio.collegeboard.org) with their College Board login information, AP coordinators will see all of the AP Capstone class sections that were created in [myap.collegeboard.org](https://myap.collegeboard.org) and all students enrolled in each section. A legend at the top of the page helps AP coordinators determine each student's progress toward final submission of their work and whether their presentations have been scored by their teacher.

## Checking for Missing Data in the AP Digital Portfolio

AP coordinators should view the status of their AP Seminar and AP Research students' submissions and work with the teacher(s) to resolve:

- Missing student final submissions (before April 30, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET).
- Missing teacher scores on presentations (before May 10, 2026, at 11:59 p.m. ET).

## Additional Resources

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You may find the following resources helpful. Share these resources with the appropriate stakeholders in your school community to foster a successful implementation.

- The [AP Course Ledger](#) helps you find other schools that offer AP Seminar and/or AP Research.
- The [AP Capstone student brochure](#) provides an overview of the AP Capstone program and is geared toward a student audience.
- The [AP Seminar](#) and [AP Research](#) Course Overviews are short, 2-page overviews of course content and assessments.
- The [AP Capstone section of AP Central](#) shares an overview of the program, the program benefits, and frequently asked questions.
- The [AP Capstone Higher Education Support page on AP Central](#) explains how institutions support the program and provides a link to the [AP Credit Policy Search](#) for finding specific credit and placement policies for AP Seminar and AP Research.
- This [AP Capstone video](#) provides an overview of the program. It includes supporting commentary from prominent higher education admissions professionals.
- The second [AP Capstone video](#) features 2 of our current AP Seminar students, who speak about their experiences with AP Seminar and the AP Capstone program.
- The third [AP Capstone video](#) features students discussing their projects and topics of inquiry in the AP Research course.
- The [AP Seminar](#) and [AP Research](#) course pages on AP Central contain information, resources, and other helpful content for both courses.
- The [English 10: AP Seminar](#) page shares sample syllabi and other resources to help English 10 teachers integrate AP Seminar into their courses.
- The [AP Digital Portfolio: Student User Guide](#) tells students how to use the digital portfolio, including submitting work as final.
- The [AP Digital Portfolio: Teacher User Guide](#) tells teachers how to use the digital portfolio, including managing teams and scoring student work.

## 2025-26 Important Dates

DATE	ACTIVITY
June–August	AP Seminar and AP Research summer institute.
July–August	<a href="#">AP Classroom</a> and <a href="#">AP Registration and Ordering</a> open.
August–September	AP Seminar and AP Research instruction begins. Students can access EBSCO and Turnitin through the <a href="#">AP Digital Portfolio</a> once they have enrolled in their AP Seminar or AP Research class section in My AP.
October 3	Preferred deadline for AP coordinators to order AP Exams through <a href="#">AP Registration and Ordering</a> .
November 14 by 11:59 p.m. ET	Final deadline to submit your exam order for all full-year and first-semester AP courses, and all exam only sections, without incurring additional fees. Exams can be ordered or canceled after this date, although a fee applies in some cases.
November 30	Recommended deadline for students to submit and teachers to approve AP Research Proposal Forms.
December/January	Required online scoring training for AP Seminar and AP Research launches.
January	Stimulus material for the AP Seminar Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation is released to AP Seminar teachers in the <a href="#">AP Digital Portfolio</a> .
January 31	Final deadline for new teachers to complete and returning teachers to renew the AP Course Audit.
January–March	Begin scheduling current AP Seminar students for AP Research and recruiting new AP Seminar students.
March 13 by 11:59 p.m. ET	Spring course orders and fall order changes deadline for AP coordinators to make final updates to the school's order through <a href="#">AP Registration and Ordering</a> , if needed. Fees may apply.
March 27	Recommended deadline for all AP Seminar and AP Research teachers to complete required online scoring training modules.
April 30 by 11:59 p.m. ET	Deadline for all student work to be submitted as final in the <a href="#">AP Digital Portfolio</a> .
May 10 by 11:59 p.m. ET	Deadline for teachers to submit scores for student presentations and complete affirmations in the AP Digital Portfolio.
May 11	Administration of AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam.
May 20	Late-testing administration of the AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam.
May–June	AP Research teachers should meet with AP Seminar students to discuss the course, get students ready to work with a consultant/expert adviser, identify a topic of interest, and develop a research question.
July	AP score reports, including AP Capstone awards, released online.

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# About College Board

College Board reaches more than 7 million students a year, helping them navigate the path from high school to college and career. Our not-for-profit membership organization was founded more than 120 years ago. We pioneered programs like the SAT® and AP® to expand opportunities for students and help them develop the skills they need. Our BigFuture® program helps students plan for college, pay for college, and explore careers. Learn more at [cb.org](https://collegeboard.org).