

FACT SHEET

ADVANCED PLACEMENT¹ PROGRAM

The Advanced Placement² (AP) program, administered by the College Board³, is one of the most common singleton⁴ credit-based transition programs. AP programs offer high school students the option to take one or more college-level courses and possibly earn college credit upon successful completion of an end-of-course examination.

The College Board provides general course guidelines and national exams for 35 college-level AP courses in 19 different subject areas. These courses include art history, biology, calculus, chemistry, foreign languages and history.

Students who take AP courses and exams tend to be academically proficient and are generally college-bound before entering the program. Students in AP classes are expected to study a broad range of topics in the subject area for the course being taken, as well as develop their critical thinking skills. Every May, AP students have the opportunity to take the national AP examinations. Depending on their scores and the policy of the postsecondary institution at which they enroll, they may receive advanced standing or college credit.

AP courses do not use actual college curricula. Instead, the AP course curriculum is based on typical syllabi for introductory-level college courses in each subject. High school instructors teach the AP courses using curricular

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Location of Program: High School

Student Mix: High School Only

Instructor: High School

Course Content: Specially Designed Curriculum

How Credits are Earned: Through Completion of AP Exam in Subject Area

Degree of Intensity: Low-Middle, depending on the number of AP courses and exams taken by the student

materials provided by the College Board. AP programs do not require students to replace their entire high school curriculum with AP courses.

While the AP program gives high school students the chance to take college-level classes, and possibly earn college credit for their successful completion of AP exams, the program generally does not focus on preparing students socially and behaviorally for college life. Advanced Placement programs allow students to take college-level courses while in high school, and offers them the opportunity to reduce the time and cost required to complete a postsecondary degree.

¹This fact sheet on Advanced Placement was prepared under contract for the U.S. Department of Education by DTI Associates, Inc. (DTI) and the Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University (CCRC). The purpose of this fact sheet, and others related to this project, is to give a broad overview and description of the types of programs that the *Accelerating Student Success* project is studying. For more information on the *Accelerating Student Success* study, please see the study's webpage on the U.S. Department of Education's website at: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/cclo/cbtrans/index.html>.

²For more detailed information regarding the Advanced Placement program, please visit the College Board's website at: <http://www.collegeboard.com/splash>.

³The College Board is a private educational organization that administers the AP program.

⁴Singleton programs are credit-based transition programs that focus on exposing students to college-level academics, and providing them with the option of taking one or more college-level classes that may allow them to earn college credit.