

AP CAPSTONE PROGRAM

AP SEMINAR

Ryan Jackson
AP Coordinator
Langley HS

rnjackson@fcps.edu

CAPSTONE OVERVIEW

AP Capstone™ is an innovative diploma program from the College Board that equips students with the independent research, collaborative teamwork, and communication skills that are increasingly valued by colleges.

AP Capstone is built on the foundation of two AP courses — AP Seminar and AP Research — and is designed to complement and enhance the in-depth, discipline-specific study experienced in other AP courses.

OVERVIEW OF INDIVIDUAL COURSES

In AP Seminar (YEAR 1) students investigate real-world issues from multiple perspectives, gathering and analyzing information from various sources in order to develop credible and valid evidence-based arguments.

In AP Research (YEAR 2), students cultivate the skills and discipline necessary to conduct independent research in order to produce and defend a scholarly academic thesis.

[AP Capstone Promotional Video](#)

AP SEMINAR

AP Seminar is a foundational course that engages students in cross-curricular conversations that explore the complexities of academic & real-world topics & issues by analyzing divergent perspectives.

Using an inquiry framework, students practice reading & analyzing a variety of source materials and learn to synthesize information from these various sources to develop their own perspectives in research-based writings as well as oral and visual presentations, both individually & as part of a team.

AP SEMINAR CONTINUED

Students engage in conversations about complex academic and real-world issues through a variety of lenses, considering multiple points of view.

Students use the QUEST framework as they explore issues and topics:

- **Q**uestion and Explore
- **U**nderstand and Analyze Arguments
- **E**valuate Multiple Perspectives
- **S**ynthesize Ideas
- **T**eam, Transform, and Transmit

Summative AP Seminar Assessments

Students are required to be 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.

Format of Assessment

Team Project and Presentation | 20% of AP Score

- Individual Research Report
- Team Multimedia Presentation and Defense

Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation | 35% of AP Score

- Individual Written Argument
- Individual Multimedia Presentation
- Oral Defense

End-of-Course Exam (2 Hours) | 45% of AP Score

- Understanding and analyzing an argument (3 short-answer questions); suggested time 30 minutes
- Synthesizing information to develop an evidence-based argument (evidence-based argument essay); suggested time 90 minutes

TEAM PROJECT AND PRESENTATION

3 – 5 students collaborate as a team to identify a problem / issue and work together to develop a research question, identify approaches for examining the question, and divide responsibilities for individual research.

Individually, students investigate their assigned approach on the topic of the team research question. Each student presents their findings and analysis to the group in a well-written individual report that:

- identifies the area of investigation
- evaluates the main ideas and reasoning in the chosen sources
- identifies & interprets a range of perspectives about the problem or issue
- cites all sources used and includes a list of works cited or bibliography.

TEAM PROJECT AND PRESENTATION CONTINUED

Working collaboratively, the team:

- collaboratively synthesizes individual findings to create a collective understanding of different approaches to the issue
- considers potential resolutions & conducts additional research to evaluate different solutions
- proposes one or more solutions & prepares an argument to support their proposal.

The team develops and delivers an 8–10 minute presentation of a convincing argument for the proposed solutions or recommendations and defends its argument, with each student responding to a question posed by the teacher.

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH-BASED ESSAY & PRESENTATION

On or around Jan. 2, the College Board releases academic, cross-curricular source material focused on a theme representing a range of perspectives from each of the following domains:

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

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH-BASED ESSAY & PRESENTATION CONTINUED

Students read and analyze the provided materials to identify thematic connections among the sources and possible areas for inquiry, then compose a research question prompted by their analysis of the stimulus material.

Students:

- gather additional information through research
- analyze, evaluate, and select evidence
- develop a logical, well-reasoned argument of 2,000 words. The final paper must refer to & incorporate at least one of the sources provided.

INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH-BASED ESSAY & PRESENTATION CONTINUED

Students develop a 6–8 minute presentation of their conclusions by building arguments that convey their perspectives.

The presentations use the evidence to support students' own arguments and situate their perspectives in their larger contexts.

Finally, students defend their research process, use of evidence, and conclusion through oral responses to two questions asked by the teacher.

END OF COURSE EXAM

During the AP Exam administration window, students will take the AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam. The exam consists of four items (three short-answer and one essay question):

- The three short-answer questions assess analysis of an argument in a single source or document.
- The essay question assesses students' skills in synthesizing and creating an evidence-based argument.

AP RESEARCH (YEAR 2)

SEMINAR REQUIRED AS A PREREQUISITE

AP Research allows students to deeply explore an academic topic, problem, or issue of individual interest. Students design, plan, and conduct a year-long research based investigation to address a research question.

AP Research students further their skills acquired in the AP Seminar course by understanding research methodology, employing ethical research practices, and accessing, analyzing, and synthesizing information as they address a research question. Students explore skill development, document processes, and curate artifacts of the development of their scholarly work in a portfolio.

AP RESEARCH CONTINUED

Students are assessed on the academic paper and presentation and oral defense of research. The academic paper is 4,000–5,000 words, and the presentation and defense take approximately 15-20 minutes.

Assessment Overview

- Academic Paper — 75% of score
- Presentation and Oral Defense — 25% of score

For more information on AP Capstone, visit [AP Central](#)