

The Advanced Placement (AP) Program – An Overview

What is AP?

The Advanced Placement Program (AP) offers an enriched curriculum that affords students the opportunity to take university-level courses while still in high school. The curriculum for AP courses is written by university professors, and the program is administered by the College Board in the United States. AP courses culminate in an externally-set and externally-graded AP exam, written in early May.

Why take an AP course?

Interest: Taking an AP course allows interested students seeking an extra challenge to gain a more in-depth knowledge of a subject area. The AP program offers an excellent opportunity for students to explore in greater detail their interest in a particular academic field, and to experience the way a course might be delivered at the university level, while at the same time earning a high school credit.

Credit: Many universities will grant university credit to students who earn a mark of 4 or above (approximately 86%+) on the AP exam in a particular subject.

GPA: Students who take a university course in a subject which they have covered through the AP program are very well prepared for first-year university studies in that field. Thus, they are likely to earn a higher mark in that course, boosting their overall university-level GPA. This may offer an advantage to students wishing to go on to study medicine, dentistry, law etc., since successful applicants to professional programs such as these require a high university-level GPA.

Studying Abroad: Many US and international universities look very favourably on applicants who have taken AP-designated courses.

Who Should Take an AP Course?

Students most likely to succeed in an AP course:

- have a very good academic track record in the subject (80%+ at minimum);
- have a strong interest in the subject matter;
- are intellectually curious, self-motivated and have strong work habits and study skills.

How does it work?

How will the course appear on my transcript?

Students who complete an AP course will earn an Ontario High School credit coded as “AP.” The AP designation will appear next to the course code on your transcript.

AP courses are more in-depth than standard grade 12 courses. Students enrolled in AP courses will have the final mark appearing on their Ontario Student Transcript reflect their level of achievement in the regular Ontario curriculum.

How will taking an AP course affect my university application?

Canadian universities do not give special consideration to students taking an AP course in the admission process. However, students may submit their official AP scores to the university. Many Canadian institutions will give advance credit to students who score a 4 or above (approximately 86%+) on the formal AP exam.

Will there be extra work involved?

Because the volume and complexity of the material is greater than that found in the Ontario curriculum, AP courses will run longer than the standard 110 hours (typically they will entail 150 hours of instruction).

If you are interested in taking an AP course, please speak with the principal as soon as possible.