

Welcome to AP[®] Night: General Information Session

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What is AP[®]?

- Advanced Placement (AP)[®] is a program of college-level courses offered at most high schools and audited by CollegeBoard[®]. The focus is not on memorizing facts and figures. It's on engaging discussions, approaching and solving problems together, and learning to write well.
- “AP courses can help students gain the skills and study habits they will need to be successful in college. AP students improve writing, problem-solving, and time-management skills. They learn how to stay focused on their work and goals.”

AP[®] Philosophy

- most rigorous academic course load
- academically challenging; students Step Up!
- most thorough college preparation
- collegiate classroom atmosphere
- advanced writing, critical thought,
and problem solving

AP[®] Courses Offered

- Biology
- Calculus AB and BC
- Chemistry
- English Language and Composition
- English Literature and Composition
- Environmental Studies
- European History
- French Language
- German Language
- Government and Politics: U.S.
- Human Geography
- Latin Literature and Vergil
- Macroeconomics
- Music Theory
- Physics
- Psychology
- Spanish Language
- Spanish Lit & Culture
- Statistics
- Studio Art: 2-D, 3-D, Drawing
- United States History
- World History
- other courses online

AP[®] Course Expectations

- rigorous work load
- extensive reading
- advanced, collegiate writing
- motivated, self-disciplined students
- advanced calculations and formulation of principles and theories
- increased laboratory instruction
- mastery of prerequisite courses
- within a supportive high school classroom

Make your decisions with this in mind!

College Admissions

“What courses should I take if I want to get into U.Va.?”

“Your academic program is very important to us; we need to see you challenging yourself in the classroom. In general, this means that you should take one of the toughest (if not the toughest) academic programs offered by your high school. The Office of Admission is also interested in academic leaders and intellectual risk-takers. ”

College Admissions

“What courses should I take if I want to get into UMCP?”

“Successful applicants typically present academic credentials which exceed the minimum, including several [...] Advanced Placement (AP/IB) courses, and additional academic electives.”

www.admissions.umd.edu

Aren't Extracurricular Activities Most Important?

“By far, the most important part of the selection process is the applicant's academic courses and his or her performance in those courses. The admission committee wants to see that students take a rigorous academic program and excel in that program. While extracurricular activities are an important way of demonstrating an applicant's ability to thrive in and contribute to the University, academics come first.”

What about my recommendations?

- “Penn State bases admission decisions on a variety of factors. The high school grade-point average (GPA) accounts for approximately two-thirds of the decision. The remaining one-third is based on other factors, which may include standardized test scores, class rank, the personal statement, and activities list. The optional personal statement and activity list are sometimes considered for students whose applications require additional review.”

What if my GPA slips because I took an AP class?

- “A grade of B in an AP (or IB) class is better than an A in an easier one.”

College Admission Handbook, Get in 2 College LLC, 2009

- “The University of Maryland does not grant admission based solely on a grade point average. The admission process is rigorous and individualized and involves over 25 different factors in the review. Typically successful freshman applicants present a transcript that reflects academic rigor in the curriculum and proficiency within the demanding schedule (mostly A’s and B’s).”

www.admissions.umd.edu

AP Classes and My GPA

At Westminster, AP courses are weighted more than honors or academic courses. Weighted grades are used when calculating class rank.

Weighted GPA Chart

	AP	Honors	Academic
A	5	4.5	4
B	4	3.5	3
C	3	2.5	2
D	1	1	1
F	0	0	0

Does participation in AP[®] help students succeed once they get to college?

Two research studies¹ from the University of California and the National Center for Educational Accountability each show that AP courses that result in students earning AP[®] Exam grades of 3 or higher are impacting college performance and completion.

These studies demonstrate that among **academically comparable students**, an AP[®] experience that culminates in an exam grade of 3 or higher has a significant impact on a student's likelihood of college success.

¹Geiser, Saul and Veronica Santelices. *The Role of Advanced Placement and Honors Courses in College Admissions*. University of California, Berkeley, 2004; and Dougherty, Chrys, Lynn Mellor, and Shuling Jian. *The Relationship Between Advanced Placement and College Graduation*. National Center for Educational Accountability, 2005.

The Power of the “2”

“A high-quality AP[®] course in high school does an excellent job of fortifying students for a successful transition into the battery of college courses they’ll experience in their first semester at college.”

Are Other Schools Teaching AP[®]?

YES! The state of Maryland leads the nation in the percentage of public high school graduates succeeding in AP[®] for the 11th year in a row. Following Maryland are New York, Utah, California, Virginia, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Florida.

We want WHS students to be competitive with these other Maryland (and East Coast) students in the college admissions process.

Advanced Placement[®] Tests

- May 1 - 12 (8:00 a.m. or 12:00 noon); \$93
- Taking the test validates the course work studied; this is **essential** for the college admissions process.
- Students may be awarded advanced standing (course exemption and academic credits) or advanced placement (course exemption without credits) by achieving specified scores on AP[®] tests. Consider them scholarships!

Prepare for Your Future

- Step up and challenge yourself
- Consider the 1, 2, 3 model (or 1,1,2,3)
- Take the most rigorous course load you can (within reason)
- Extend the challenge to include the culminating activity: the test
- Begin early!

Questions and Comments

Please join us in the main lobby.

Visit with AP teachers and students
to discuss the courses and programs
we offer here at WHS.

Thank you for joining us this evening!