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ABSTRACT

This booklet is intended to encourage wider participation by California high schools and colleges in the Advanced Placement Program of the College Entrance Examination Board. It briefly presents a variety of useful information on the Advanced Placement Program for college and school officials interested in the possibility of participating in the program. Although it is intended primarily for use by educational officials in California, most of its content will be useful for those in other states as well. The booklet consists mainly of questions and answers that deal with what the Advanced Placement Program is, how it operates, how much it costs, how a school or college can participate in the program, and what the experiences of participating students and educational institutions have been. (JG)

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# The Advanced Placement Program in California

Prepared in 1969 for the  
**STATEWIDE ADVANCED PLACEMENT COMMITTEE**

by  
**Mrs. Alice Coleman**  
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**CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
Wilson Riles, Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Sacramento, 1977

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Democracy demands not parity of experience but equality of opportunity; it requires that every individual be given an equal chance for full personal development, for only thus can he adequately and properly serve the society of which he is a member. The talented student who does not have opportunity to join a high-level ability group, an honors program, or an Advanced Placement course is receiving less than his full democratic heritage. These are not "special privileges" granted to a "privileged" class of students; they are the right, and at the same time the very heavy responsibility, of a group of young people whose services to society are certain to be of the highest value. — Frank O. Copley

From *American High School and the Talented Student*, the University of Michigan Press, 1961

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# Contents

THE STATEWIDE ADVANCED PLACEMENT COMMITTEE .....	iv
FOREWORD .....	v
PREFACE .....	vi
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM .....	1
What is the Advanced Placement Program? .....	1
What are the benefits of the Advanced Placement Program? .....	1
How many schools and colleges nationally and in California participate in the Advanced Placement Program? .....	2
What do college students say about the Advanced Placement Program? .....	3
What are the advanced placement examinations like? Who develops them? And what is their relationship to the program? .....	5
What is the advanced placement grading scale, and how are the examinations graded? .....	6
What advanced placement grades do colleges accept? .....	7
Can a student get a year of college credit for advanced placement? .....	7
What do the examinations cost? Are there any provisions for needy students? .....	7
How does a school go about starting, improving, or expanding an advanced placement program? .....	7
Where may the prospective advanced placement teacher obtain assistance in developing an advanced placement course? .....	9
Does the College Board "approve" or certify courses? .....	9
What criteria should be used in selecting advanced placement students? .....	9
How does a school become a participant in the Advanced Placement Program? .....	9
BASIC PUBLICATIONS OF THE ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM .....	10

# The Statewide Advanced Placement Committee

1966-1969

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NOTE The affiliations of the committee members are shown as they were in 1969

The Western Regional Office  
of the  
College Entrance Examination Board

Questions concerning the Advanced Placement Program, as well as  
other activities of the College Entrance Examination Board, should  
be directed to:

College Entrance Examination Board  
800 Welch Road  
Palo Alto, CA 94304  
Telephone (415) 321-5211

# Foreword

During the past two decades, the College Entrance Examination Board Advanced Placement Program has had a significant and positive impact on many students, schools, and collegiate institutions throughout the nation. Its continuing purpose is to encourage and assist secondary schools in meeting the needs of their more able, ambitious, and talented students by providing those students with stimulating and demanding college-level courses in one or more of 13 subjects. Nearly 4,000 secondary schools currently participate in advanced placement programs, and approximately 76,000 of their students took nearly 100,000 advanced placement examinations in 1976. Nearly 1,600 colleges throughout the United States and many institutions abroad award college credit to those who pass the examinations.

In 1966 the State Board of Education named the Statewide Advanced Placement Committee to encourage wider participation of California schools and colleges in this program. This publication, *The Advanced Placement Program in California*, is a revision of the committee's report, which was published in 1969. It contains useful, current information and guidance for public and private schools and colleges that are concerned with the Advanced Placement Program and that are interested in making the challenging program available to more of California's young people.



*Superintendent of Public Instruction*

# Preface

The Advanced Placement Program is a nationwide undertaking administered by the College Entrance Examination Board through which high schools provide college-level courses that prepare their most capable students for college enrollment in more advanced courses in the same subject. In this program the College Entrance Examination Board (1) provides numerous advanced placement publications, including course descriptions, through conferences, workshops, and the assistance of consultants to help interested schools establish courses, (2) sets the time the examinations will be given as well as the policies and procedures to be followed in their grading, and (3) reports the examination grades to the students and, together with other supporting materials, to the candidates' high schools and colleges. Currently, these services are offered in 13 disciplines common to the curricula of American schools and colleges. American history, art history, biology, chemistry, calculus, classics, English, European history, French, German, music, physics, Spanish, and studio art.

The Advanced Placement Program operates on the basis that each participating college will grant advanced placement or degree credit or both to candidates who have demonstrated competence in a discipline by earning satisfactory grades on an advanced placement examination. However, each participating college is free to assess the program in light of the objectives of the college and to decide how the information provided by an advanced placement examination will be used by the college to further the candidate's educational objectives. Advanced placement credits are treated by most colleges as ungraded transfer credits, which are equated, when they can be, with courses offered by the college or which are accepted as free electives when no equivalents exist.

The Advanced Placement Program, then, which presumes the candidates' deliberate preparation in college-level work in high school, is but another way to improve the education of ambitious, able youth. California, an acknowledged leader in the field of educational opportunity, has endorsed and is actively promoting the Advanced Placement Program in its public and private high schools.

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# Questions and Answers About the Advanced Placement Program

## What is the Advanced Placement Program?

The Advanced Placement (AP) Program is an activity of the College Entrance Examination Board. Its goal is to help meet the needs of a secondary school's able, ambitious, and talented students by providing them with stimulating and demanding college-level instruction in one or more of 13 subjects. This instruction, which may be in the form of a regular class, independent study, or a tutorial, is given by dedicated high school teachers who usually receive direct assistance from the College Board in developing and implementing their courses. Advanced placement is not limited to students with the highest IQs. Rather, it is designed for, and should be available to, *any* good student who is genuinely motivated and willing to work hard. Nor is advanced placement instruction offered only in the traditional academic courses such as English, American history, and mathematics—courses and examinations are available in music, studio art, and art history. AP courses and examinations (see page 5) include:

American History	English	Physics (three courses)
Art History	European History	Spanish Language
Biology	French Language	Spanish Literature
Calculus (two courses)	French Literature	Studio Art
Chemistry	German Literature	
Classics	Music	

## What are the benefits of the Advanced Placement Program?

The major benefits of advanced placement are fourfold: the student receives, and is challenged by demanding college-level instruction while still in high school; the high school enriches its curriculum directly and indirectly; the advanced placement teacher's professional qualifications are enhanced; and the student has an opportunity through the AP examinations to obtain college credit and advanced placement. He is therefore spared possible boredom in high school, permitted to skip repetitive courses in college, and given the opportunity to save a great deal of time and money in his undergraduate education.

## How many schools and colleges nationally and in California participate in the Advanced Placement Program?

Nearly 4,000 public and independent secondary schools and virtually every accredited four-year institution in the nation as well as a large number of two-year colleges participate in advanced placement. In 1976, 419 secondary schools in California administered examinations which were sent to 134 California two-year and four-year colleges and other colleges throughout the United States and abroad. A complete list of advanced placement colleges may be obtained from the College Entrance Examination Board, Palo Alto. A partial list includes the following California institutions and systems:

California Institute of Technology	Pomona College
California State Universities and Colleges (all campuses)	Scripps College
Foothill College	Stanford University
Glendale College	University of California (all campuses)
Mills College	University of San Francisco
Occidental College	University of Santa Clara
Pepperdine College	University of Southern California

The significant growth since 1970 of advanced placement programs in California is demonstrated by the following figures:

Year	Participating schools	Advanced placement students	Examinations taken	Colleges receiving scores
1970	264	5,258	6,091	112
1971	301	5,988	6,970	119
1972	326	6,741	7,765	124
1973	333	6,675	7,913	119
1974	342	7,981	9,556	123
1975	376	8,755	10,743	126
1976	419	9,773	12,089	134
Increase, 1970-1976	59 percent	86 percent	98 percent	20 percent

It should be pointed out that Stanford University, the University of California, Berkeley; and the University of California, Los Angeles, were among the top 20 institutions nationally in 1976 in terms of the number of advanced placement candidate grades received. A list of the 32 California high schools having the largest number of advanced placement candidates in 1976 includes the following (districts in parentheses):

Arcadia (Arcadia Unified)	Beverly Hills (Beverly Hills Unified)
Berkeley (Berkeley Unified)	Birmingham (Los Angeles Unified)

- Chatsworth (Los Angeles Unified)
- Corona del Mar (Newport-Mesa Unified)
- Cubberley (Palo Alto Unified)
- El Camino Real (Los Angeles Unified)
- Fairfax (Los Angeles Unified)
- Fountain Valley (Huntington Beach Union High)
- Granada Hills (Los Angeles Unified)
- Gunn (Palo Alto Unified)
- Harvard (Los Angeles)\*
- La Jolla (San Diego City Unified)
- Leland (San Jose Unified)
- Los Alamitos (Anaheim Union High)
- Lowell (San Francisco Unified)
- Marlborough (Los Angeles)\*
- Marshall (Los Angeles Unified)
- Miramonte (Acalanes Union High)
- Monroe (Los Angeles Unified)
- Palisades (Los Angeles Unified)
- Palo Alto (Palo Alto Unified)
- Palos Verdes (Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified)
- Patrick Henry (San Diego City Unified)
- Polytechnic (Long Beach Unified)
- Rolling Hills (Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified)
- Sanger (Sanger Unified)
- Sunny Hills (Fullerton Joint Union)
- Taft (Los Angeles Unified)
- University (Los Angeles Unified)
- Westlake (Los Angeles)\*

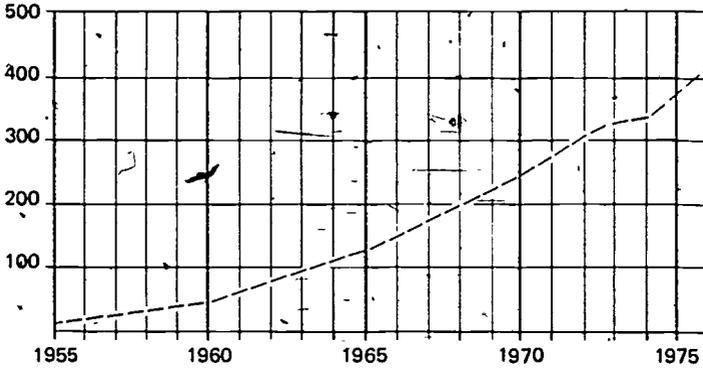
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Many other public and private secondary schools in California that for years also have had outstanding advanced placement courses cannot be listed here because of space limitations.

### What do college students say about the Advanced Placement Program?

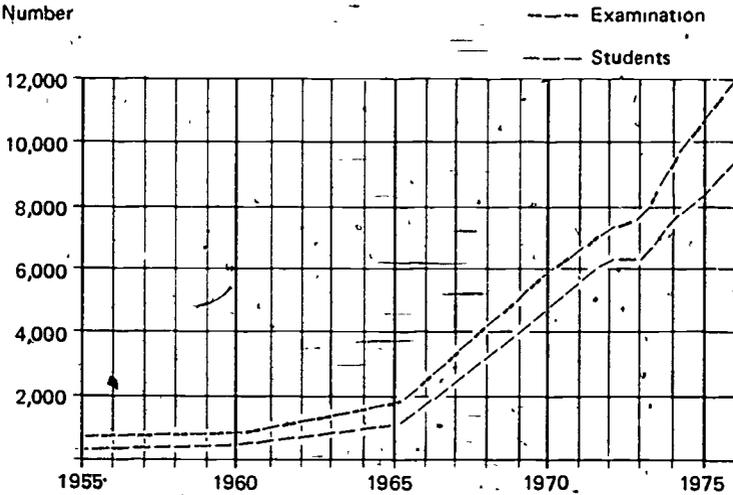
Students and educators who have taken part in the Advanced Placement Program agree that, while credit and placement are significant objectives, the enriched educational opportunities intrinsic to advanced placement courses strengthen the student for college. Detailed follow-up studies made by colleges such as Harvard indicate that, by and large, the advanced placement student is more successful in college than the average entering freshman. Furthermore, after earning credit in a particular discipline, the candidate will likely continue or major in that subject rather than use the credit to shorten his college training. Although the placement of any student is separate from his admission, the college usually regards the candidate with the advanced placement courses, all other criteria being equal, as more promising. Even those students who do not receive college credit still benefit from the superior training, which eases the transition from high school to college. In the fall, 1968, issue of the *College Board Review*, research assistant Patricia Casserly of the Educational Testing Service presented a detailed evaluation of the Advanced Placement Program made by students from 252 different high schools in different institutions of higher learning. The consensus of students was most favorable. A copy of the Casserly report may be obtained from the College Entrance Examination Board, Palo Alto.

Number  
of  
high schools



California high schools participating in advanced placement programs, 1955-1976

Number



California high school students taking advanced placement examinations, 1955-1976

The question is often asked how college students would do on advanced placement examinations after completion of a comparable course in college, compared with high school students who had completed a similar advanced placement course in their secondary schools. A comparative analysis was made recently of the performance of a sample of these two groups on the objective parts of the AP examinations in French language, calculus AB, calculus BC, physics-mechanics, and physics-electricity and magnetism. The collegiate institutions that participated in the validity study were among the 150 institutions that received 73 percent of the advanced placement candidates. These institutions included, among others, Bowdoin College, Brigham Young University, Cornell University, Harvard College, Northwestern University, Pomona College, Princeton University, Wesleyan University, and Yale University.

The results were clearly favorable to the advanced placement student in secondary school. The study demonstrated that it is easier for college students to receive a C or higher in the college courses than for the group of advanced placement candidates to receive a grade of 3 or higher. (The scale is 1 to 5. See page 6 for discussion of the grading of examinations.) A copy of a summary of the study may be obtained from the College Entrance Examination Board.

What are the advanced placement examinations like?  
Who develops them? And what is their  
relationship to the program?

In all subjects except studio art, advanced placement examinations contain both multiple-choice and free-response questions requiring essay writing, problem solving, and so forth. Most examinations are three hours long, but some examinations take only from an hour and one-half to two hours. The art history examination contains only essay questions some based on projected color slides and there is an option based on a required text and an individual study. In studio art there is no examination, rather, students submit portfolios of their work. Tape recordings are used with certain portions of the music and foreign language examinations.

The examinations are revised each year by committees of school and college teachers who are specialists in the field. The committees are assisted by test experts at the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey. The examinations are given every year in mid-May at schools throughout the United States and in many nations abroad.

Anyone may take an advanced placement examination, whether or not he or she has had AP instruction. The best preparation for the examination, of course, is an advanced placement course. The percentage of students who "pass" the examinations (see page 6)

varies from year to year and from subject to subject. In 1976 it ranged from 66 percent in calculus to 84 percent in Classics.

It should be emphasized that institutional policies relative to a passing grade (as well as the amount of credit awarded) may differ. Even more important, the worth of a course for the student should not be determined by the examination and whether or not the student passes it. Ask the college students who took advanced placement in their high schools, and they will tell you that the true and lasting value of their courses was the preparation these courses gave them later in meeting the demands of college work, rather than the credit they received.

A rough breakdown on grades received by 76,000 students who took advanced placement examinations in May, 1976, shows that 93 percent received a grade of at least 2; 71 percent, 3; 33 percent, 4; and 13 percent, 5 (1 = no recommendation; 5 = extremely well qualified).

What is the advanced placement grading scale, and how are the examinations graded?

Every advanced placement examination receives an overall grade on a five-point scale as follows:

- 5—Extremely well-qualified
- 4—Well-qualified
- 3—Qualified
- 2—Possibly qualified
- 1—No recommendation

The objective portions of the examinations are scored on special scoring equipment. The essays, problem sections, and studio art portfolios, however, are evaluated by more than 650 carefully selected professors and advanced placement teachers who devote a week each June to grading answers. In 1976 more than 100,000 essay booklets were graded. No matter how many answers there are in a booklet, each answer is graded by a different person who, prior to the reading, has been especially trained to assess this question; the typical booklet is graded by four professors and teachers. No grader ever knows the score given by another grader. The reliability factor in the evaluation of the essay/problem portions of advanced placement examinations is very high. The student test booklets are made available to schools and colleges upon request and at a very small charge.

Of particular use to teachers are the detailed reports which describe how an advanced placement examination is graded in each subject. Single copies of these reports are available at no charge from the College Entrance Examination Board, Palo Alto.

What advanced placement grades do colleges accept?

The vast majority of the 1,600 participating colleges award credit and advanced placement for advanced placement grades of 3s, 4s, and 5s. Individual departments within a college may vary, however—one department accepting a 3, another a 2, and another requiring a 4. The University of California and the California State University and Colleges have adopted a common policy of awarding credit for 3s and above on all advanced placement examinations.

Decisions on awarding credit and advanced placement are, of course, made by each collegiate institution and usually by the appropriate academic department thereof. To obtain current information regarding the policy of an institution, one may refer to the college catalog, contact the director of admissions or registrar of the college, or obtain a copy of *College Placement and Credit by Examination, 1975* (College Board Publication Orders, Box 2815, Princeton, New Jersey 08540); \$3.50 per copy.

Can a student get a year of college credit for advanced placement?

Definitely. Some of the most selective colleges are among the approximately 400 institutions that consider acceptable grades on three or more advanced placement examinations as evidence that the student has done work comparable to a year's academic program at the college. Students earning a required grade on one examination may receive credit for the equivalent of 6 to 8 semester hours or 10 to 12 quarter hours, probably worth between \$300 and \$600. More than 6,000 students are eligible each year for entry with sophomore standing. Savings of \$2,500 to \$7,500 per student for the student's total undergraduate college costs are possible.

What do the examinations cost? Are there any provisions for needy students?

The current (1977) fee for each advanced placement examination is \$32, \$2 of which is returned to the secondary school. A limited number of fee reductions, available through the high school advanced placement coordinator, are given to students with financial need.

How does a school go about starting, improving, or expanding an advanced placement program?

It is extremely important that school administrators, particularly the principal and superintendent, clearly understand advanced placement, know what commitments they will have to make to ensure that the program will be successful, and visibly and

consistently give their support to the participating teachers and students. Administrators should also realize that two or three years are required in order to get an advanced placement course firmly in place and that the program should not be subjected to a final evaluation after only one year. Finally, as one school principal has pointed out, advanced placement should not be regarded as some sort of "exotic luxury" reserved only for the most affluent or college-oriented schools. Advanced placement instruction, in one or more of several possible modes (e.g., formal class or independent study), can be made available to virtually any student. The key ingredients to the success of an advanced placement course are dedicated and well-prepared teachers, able and motivated students who are willing to work hard, and administrators who understand and support the concept of the program and recognize its unique characteristics.

One final, but important, recommendation is offered to the superintendent and the school principal: Give the advanced placement teacher a reasonable schedule which will afford him or her the time and energy not only to develop the course but also to teach and service the course and the students properly. An advanced placement course is as exacting of the teacher as it is of the student—more so than a traditional course. This is particularly true of the constant monitoring and evaluation required of the student's performance in class and the careful attention which must be devoted to reading, grading, and commenting on student reports, problems, and essays. Whenever possible, therefore, the administrator should attempt to make a special allowance for the unique demands placed on the advanced placement teacher.

There are four basic resources from which to obtain information and assistance, all available through the College Board Regional Office in Palo Alto. Perhaps the most useful overview is contained in the publications, *A Guide to the Advancement Placement Program* and "Questions and Answers about Advanced Placement," single copies of which may be obtained at no charge. The *Guide*, in turn, includes a list of all advanced placement publications such as course descriptions and recommendations on how schools may begin advanced placement courses in specific subjects. A second source of assistance is the experienced staff in the Palo Alto office, which can offer advice and answer questions. Third, under certain conditions, experienced advanced placement teachers and administrators may be made available as consultants to schools. Finally, an annual series of one-day workshops is conducted for administrators and teachers interested in starting advanced placement courses. The Palo Alto office also cosponsors one- to two-week summer workshops in specific disciplines on college campuses.

Where may the prospective advanced placement teacher obtain assistance in developing an advanced placement course?

Obviously, the teacher is important to the success of an advanced placement course. Not only must the teacher be professionally qualified to offer the course, but also he or she must be personally committed to the task and willing to accept the special demands involved. Besides immediate and useful sources of help for the teacher cited under the previous question, additional valuable assistance may be obtained from teachers of successful advanced placement courses at nearby schools, which may be identified through the College Board Regional Office.

Does the College Board "approve" or certify courses?

No. The College Board has no responsibility or authority to evaluate or judge whether a course, titled "advanced placement" or not, is a college-level course which will prepare students to pass the advanced placement examination. Obviously, the College Board is eager to maintain the high quality of the program and is always willing to assist schools and teachers to that end.

What criteria should be used in selecting advanced placement students?

It is generally agreed that the young person's previous academic performance in the subject of, or subject closely related to, the advanced placement course in which he or she intends to enroll and the student's motivation, desire, and stamina, are some of the most important criteria in selecting the student for advanced placement. That is, the prospective student not only must have the academic preparation and background necessary, but also must exhibit a genuine desire, maturity, and ability to handle the demands of college-level work. Generally, these qualities are ranked higher on the list of selection criteria than test scores, although in some instances, such as scores on the *Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test* (PSAT), test scores can be helpful. In the identification of potential advanced placement students in studio art, for example, test scores are generally of little or no value. The advice of experienced advanced placement teachers and counselors can be extremely useful to a new teacher faced with the problem of selecting students.

How does a school become a participant in the Advanced Placement Program?

No annual dues or membership fees are assessed, nor are any additional or special costs levied against the school. The only fee,

\$32 for each advanced placement examination, is the responsibility of the students. Two dollars of this fee is returned to the school to help defray the cost of administering the examinations in May.

When a secondary school decides to become formally involved in the program, the school principal is required to complete the Advanced Placement Participation Form sent to all schools each fall. On the form the principal is asked, among other things, to indicate the name of the individual at the school (AP coordinator) to whom all AP materials and publications should be sent and who will be responsible for arranging for the administration of the AP examinations in the spring. Schools may vary the procedure to fit their special needs. For example, a school district administrator may act as the AP coordinator for all of the high schools in the district. Or one high school may be selected as the AP test center for a consortium of schools.

Copies of the AP grades as well as other reports and rosters are sent to the schools during the summer. Colleges are furnished with special forms on which they may report to the sending high schools their decisions regarding AP students' grade reports and how much, if any, credit and advanced placement the students will receive.

#### Basic Publications of the Advanced Placement Program

Advanced placement publications and other materials related to the program may be obtained by writing to:

College Board Publication Orders

Box 2815

Princeton, NJ 08540

An AP order form is contained in the *Guide to the Advanced Placement Program* which, along with "Questions and Answers About the Advanced Placement Program," may be obtained free of charge from the College Board Palo Alto office (800 Welch Road, Palo Alto, CA 94034, telephone 415-321-5211).

For some of the AP publications and materials (e.g., a complete set of course descriptions, free response questions, History of Art slides and questions, and foreign language tape recordings), there is a small charge.