

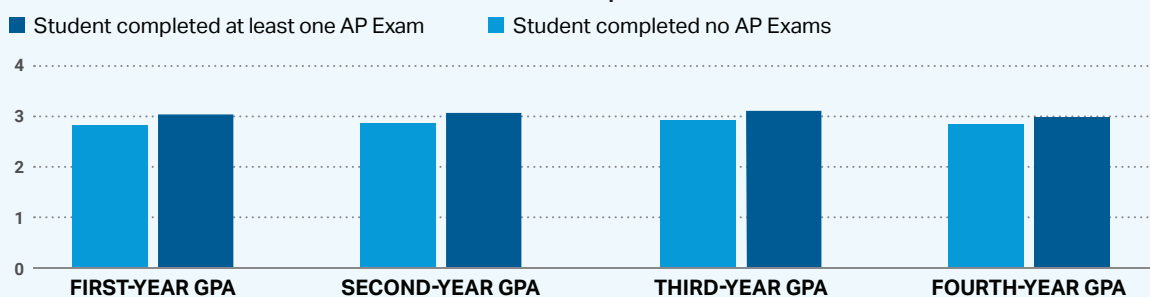
The Value of AP in Admissions

When evaluating students for admission to your institution, examining AP[®] participation helps you understand the extent to which they have challenged themselves in high school.

Key Finding

Students who earn a 3 or higher on an AP Exam are more likely to earn higher first-year GPAs in college, compared to non-AP students of similar ability.

Performance of Students With and Without AP Exam Participation



Source: Ackerman, P.L., R. Kanfer, and C. Calderwood (2013). "High School Advanced Placement and Student Performance in College: STEM Majors, Non-STEM Majors, and Gender Differences." *Teachers College Record*, 115.

Supporting Research

- Underrepresented minority and low-SES students who took an AP Exam were more likely to earn higher college grades, compared to underrepresented minority low-SES students not participating in AP—even after controlling for prior academic achievement and demographic variables.¹
- Students who earn a 3 or higher on an AP Exam are more likely to double major than those who don't.²
- Students who take an AP Exam have higher predicted retention to the second year of college, compared to non-AP students of similar ability.³

Planning Guide for Using AP in Admissions

WHY USE AP IN ADMISSIONS WORK?

The supporting research demonstrates AP is a strong indicator of student success, particularly for student populations many institutions seek to admit in greater numbers to their incoming classes. When examining your use of AP in admissions, it's important to consider the following:

- Consistency:** As a nationally delivered program with a standardized assessment of knowledge and skills, AP offers a consistent measure of academic achievement.
- Evidence of rigor:** Students with AP on their high school transcripts show exposure to rigorous, college-level curricula—a key element of college readiness.

1. Wyatt, J. and Mattern, K. (2013). *A Model-Based Examination of College Outcomes for AP Fee Reduction Students*. New York: College Board.
 2. Ewing, M. Jagesic, S., and Wyatt, J. (2018) *Choosing Double: The Relationship Between Successful AP Exams and College Double Major*. New York: College Board. And, Mattern, K., Shaw, E., and Xiong, X. (2009). *The Relationship between AP Exam Performance and College Outcomes*. New York: College Board.
 3. Mattern, K., Shaw, E., and Xiong, X. (2009). *The Relationship between AP Exam Performance and College Outcomes*. New York: College Board.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How do you use AP in your admissions decision making process? Is it consistent across all file readers?
- Do you consider AP participation in the reading process, or only those scores that meet your standards for placement?
- Do you have a sense of how many AP courses are offered at your top feeder high schools?
- Do you regularly provide updates to your staff about changes in AP courses and exams?
- Do you have data that allow you to understand the AP course offerings at every high school across the country?

ACTION ITEMS

College Board offers a range of tools to help enrollment professionals leverage AP in admitting an incoming class with a strong academic and cultural fit for your institution.

- Use the free, online AP Course Ledger to interpret transcripts from less-familiar high schools: bit.ly/2Z8OGcq
- Use existing College Board resources to help understand AP scores within the context of national score distributions, as well as other participation and performance trends.
- Examine using AP Exam scores in priority admissions by considering them as criteria for special programs or for honors colleges.
- Consider using Landscape™—a free resource offered by College Board that allows you to consider a student's AP participation within the context of their own high school's course offerings.

YOUR AP CREDIT POLICY IS IMPORTANT

Research shows that students who earn a 3 or higher on AP Exams perform as well or better than non-AP students of similar ability. You can support student engagement and success at your institution by offering fair AP credit that fulfills graduation requirements and places students into courses that will challenge and excite them. Such policies can give your students the flexibility to double major, minor, study abroad, or explore several paths without putting on-time degree attainment at risk. Given research showing the recognition of AP scores factor into students' college choices, these policies can improve your institution's position in a competitive landscape.

SPOTLIGHT ON ACES

Admitted Class Evaluation Service™ (ACES™) is a free online service from College Board for colleges and universities. It helps you answer important questions about the College Board assessments you use to admit, place, and advise students at your institution. ACES provides expert analysis of data you supply so you can validate your admissions and placement policies—or help you refine them. It can also shed light on how your AP credit policy is impacting your progress toward meeting key institutional goals. Visit aces.collegeboard.org to learn more.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

College Board is available to assist you in developing a stronger pipeline of prospective students by leveraging the AP Program. Our Higher Ed Services team and AP Higher Ed team can help you take advantage of resources offered by College Board as you plan for successful recruitment and can also provide support as you talk to campus stakeholders about the value of AP in reaching key enrollment goals.

Visit aphighered.collegeboard.org for more information.