**AP Research Syllabus**

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**Overview (pg. 8, Course and Exam Description)**

AP Research, the second course in the AP Capstone experience, allows students to deeply explore an academic topic, problem, issue, or idea of individual interest. Students design, plan, and implement a yearlong investigation to address a research question. Through this inquiry, they further the skills they acquired in the AP Seminar course by learning research methodology, employing ethical research practices, and accessing, analyzing, and synthesizing information. Students reflect on their skill development, document their processes, and curate the artifacts of their scholarly work through a process and reflection portfolio. The course culminates in an academic paper of 4,000-5,000 words (accompanied by a performance, exhibit, or product where applicable) and a presentation with an oral defense.

AP Research is not tied to a specific content area, rather it emphasizes and strives for competency in core academic skills. Students gain Essential Knowledge (EK; “What students will know…”) and develop and apply discrete skills identified in the Learning Objectives (LO; “What students will demonstrate…”) of the Enduring Understandings (EU; “What students will remember in the long term…”) within the five big ideas represented by the acronym QUEST introduced in the prerequisite AP Seminar course:

• Question and Explore: Read critically; pose questions and identify issues that compel you to want to explore further.

• Understand and Analyze: Use specific tools – such as re-reading, questioning in the text, and considering multiple perspectives – to break down an idea or argument into parts that make sense to you.

• Evaluate Multiple Perspectives: Identify a variety of perspectives, viewpoints, and/or arguments of an issue and consider any bias to determine the validity of that point of view.

• Synthesize Ideas: Create new perspectives after evaluating other varying perspectives and establishing a unique position or claim using a variety of resources designed for a specific audience.

• Team, Transform, and Transmit: Communicate the message clearly and effectively so as to transform both participants and audience.

# Course Resources

### AP Capstone Research Course and Exam Description (2017). New York: College Board.

* **AP Research Workshop Handbook and Resources (2017). New York: College Board.**
* **Various articles and academic resources for specific lessons.**

# Technology Availability

While not absolutely necessary to carry out quality research, access to computing resources will greatly facilitate the process. It is assumed that students have (at a minimum) access to school and library computers as well as access to databases and other online resources. Students will be provided with free access to EBSCOhost online research databases. A personal laptop is helpful, but not required.

**Ethical Research**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources outlines in the Belmont Report specific regulations for the protection of human and animal subjects involved in the research process. All students’ research proposals will be vetted for potential harm to human subjects to determine the need for an institutional review board approval. Students will receive instruction on ethical research practices during Unit 1 of the course. **[CR2a]**

**AP Equity and Access Policy**

The College Board strongly encourages educators to make equitable access a guiding principle for their AP programs by giving all willing and academically prepared students the opportunity to participate in AP. We encourage the elimination of barriers that restrict access to AP for students from ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups that have been traditionally underserved. Schools should make every effort to ensure their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population. The College Board also believes that all students should have access to academically challenging coursework before they enroll in AP classes, which can prepare them for AP success. It is only through a commitment to equitable preparation and access that true equity and excellence can be achieved.

**Plagiarism Policy Overview**

**AP Capstone™ Policy on Plagiarism and Falsification or Fabrication of Information (pg. 60, Course and Exam Description)**

A student who fails to acknowledge the source or author of any and all information or evidence taken from the work of someone else through citation, attribution or reference in the body of the work, or through a bibliographic entry, will receive a score of 0 on that particular component of the AP Seminar and/or AP Research Performance Task. In AP Seminar, a team of students that fails to properly acknowledge sources or authors on the Team Multimedia Presentation will receive a group score of 0 for that component of the Team Project and Presentation. A student who incorporates falsified or fabricated information (e.g. evidence, data, sources, and/or authors) will receive a score of 0 on that particular component of the AP Seminar and/or AP Research Performance Task. In AP Seminar, a team of students that incorporates falsified or fabricated information in the Team Multimedia Presentation will receive a group score of 0 for that component of the Team Project and Presentation.

**[CR2a] [CR2b]**

## **Student Assessments and Class Grade Distribution**

## **The College Board Score Breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Element** | **Percentage** |
| Academic Paper | 75% of score |
| Presentation and Oral Defense | 25% of score |

**Advanced Placement Performance Task**   
While the topic of each research study will vary, the course requires students to plan and conduct a study or investigation. The course provides opportunities (activities/assignments) for students to understand principles of discipline-specific research methods (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, mixed) to develop, manage, and conduct an in-depth study or investigation in an area of student’s own interest in order to fill a gap in the current field of knowledge. The final output of these efforts includes:

* **A 4,000 – 5,000-word Academic Paper [75 percent of the grade] that includes several components as follows:** 
  + **Introduction**: This section introduces and contextualizes the research question and initial student assumptions and/or hypotheses. Additionally, it reviews the previous work in the field to synthesize information and a range of perspectives related to the research question (e.g., literature review) to allow for the student to identify the gap in the current field of knowledge to be addressed.
  + **Method, Process, or Approach**: This section explains and provides justification for the chosen method, process, or approach.
  + **Results, Products, or Findings**: This section presents the findings, evidence, results, or product from the student’s work.
  + **Discussion, Analysis, and/or Evaluation**: This section interprets the significance of the findings, results, or product and explores connections to the original research question while discussing the implications and limitations of the research or creative work.
  + **Conclusion and Future Directions**: This section reflects on the process and how this project could impact the field while discussing the possible next steps and/or future directions.
  + **Bibliography**: This section provides a complete list of sources cited and consulted in the appropriate disciplinary style.
* **A 15-20-minute Presentation and Oral Defense [25 percent of the grade]:** This presentation may be accomplished in a variety of formats, so long as it reflects the depth of their research. Prior to this performance, the students whose academic paper was accompanied by an additional piece of scholarly work (e.g., performance, exhibit, etc.) will arrange for the teacher and panelists to view the scholarly work. The defense will include up to four questions from a panel consisting of the AP Research teacher and two additional members (chosen at the AP Research teacher’s discretion).

**Classroom Grade Breakdown**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Element** | **Percentage** |
| PREP Portfolio (Formative) | **50%** |
| Professionalism and Participation | **10%** |
| Projects and Assessments (Summative) | **40%** |

**PREP Portfolio: 50% of Class Grade**

Using a Process and Reflection Portfolio (PREP), students document their inquiry, communication with their teachers and expert adviser and store reflections on their thought processes. They have scheduled conferences with their teacher for review and approval of their scholarly work as evidenced by the portfolio. **[CR4a]**

This portfolio will be routinely used for the following:

* Weekly Reflections to guide in topic/question development
* Source collection and organization to develop research question method
* Building academic paper in segments
* Building and storing oral presentation preparation
* Annotations from regular teacher conferences

**Professionalism and Participation: 10% of Class Grade**

There is a single rule governing conduct in this class. Be respectful to your classmates and to your instructor. A

productive and respectful classroom atmosphere is essential for learning. Individual behavior can support or

undermine the learning environment for everyone. You are an important part of your class and have a stake in its

success. The key to your individual success is developing good work habits and a solid work ethic. If problems

emerge like underperformance, excessive absences/tardiness, chronic inattentiveness/sleepiness, or disruptive

behavior, I will petition to have you removed from the course.

You can get the most from this course by doing the following:

* Come into class each day with the intent to improve and master the concepts and ideas in this course. That

will not happen without your active participation each day.

* Prior to class, think about what your questions are and then ask them. Due to the pace of this course, if you

fall behind, you will have a difficult time getting caught up, so you must proactively raise your

questions/concerns as they occur.

* Expect that there will be things you do not get immediately—this is an AP course! Its college-level

expectations and material are by definition more difficult than that in a regular high school classes. Learn

to be persistent in your thinking and problem solving, and you will overcome.

* Do not get in a cycle of falling behind and catching up or wondering what is due next. If you simply do

what you are supposed to do, to the best of your ability, your grade and your AP score will take care of

itself.

* Even the best students will have a bad day occasionally, but that will average itself out over time. If you

come to class unprepared, you are letting yourself and your classmates down, and you are failing yourself.

* A mark in the grade book just makes that more visible.

**Projects and Assessments: 40% of Class Grade**

* Professional Discourse Paper: Your final research question will be more informed and more focused than your initial question(s). Research is not linear. This major assignment will lead you from your initial research questions to a more refined one. It will ultimately guide you to your proposal, which is due in November. **[CR1c]**

This major assignment will lead you from your initial research questions to a more refined one. It will ultimately guide you to your proposal, which is due in November. Components of the paper include contextual information, your guiding question, the professional conversation surrounding your topic, common methods in the field, potential gaps in the understanding, initial thoughts on your research design, and a complete bibliography.

* Institutional Review Board and Inquiry Proposal Form: Completed to ensure that students are prepared to conduct ethical feasible research with the backing of Pace High School. **[CR2a] [CR3]**
* Elevator Pitches, Outlines, and Peer Revisions: Students will be given multiple opportunities to express their ideas and goals in the classroom through elevator pitches (short, mini-presentations) and more formal Poster Presentations. Students will also be required to catalog the development of their academic paper through various assignments. These opportunities will allow students to receive feedback from peers and other faculty within the school regarding research elements.

## **Pacing Guide**

**Unit One: An Introduction to Academic Writing and Advanced Placement Research**

**August**: Develop research ideas and identify three topics of interest; begin cursory exploration of the research process with an introduction to the course.

* Formative: Problem Statement and Topic Ideas; start PREP

**August–September**: Choose a topic/issue; carry out preliminary research; begin developing an annotated bibliography; finalize research questions and proposals.

Summative and Formative Assessments: **[CR1a] [CR1b]**

* Summative: Annotated Bibliography #1 where students will identify the research question, variables, measurements, and limitations within published quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods research studies. Students will differentiate between the purpose and components of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies; describe procedures used for analysis in sufficient detail to permit understanding of how the data were analyzed and the processes and assumptions underlying specific techniques; and evaluate the fit between the purpose of the proposal, its research design, and its data collection strategy as it pertains to their inquiry (at least two sources) by August 31. **[CR1c]**
* Formative: Identify and refine research question prior to September 15.
* Summative: Annotated Bibliography #2 where students will identify the research question, variables, measurements, and limitations within published quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods research studies. Students will differentiate between the purpose and components of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies; describe procedures used for analysis in sufficient detail to permit understanding of how the data were analyzed and the processes and assumptions underlying specific techniques; and evaluate the fit between the purpose of the proposal, its research design, and its data collection strategy as it pertains to their inquiry (at least four additional sources) by September 15. **[CR1c]**

**UNIT TWO: From Topic to Proposal - An Integrated Plan**

**October–November**: Present preliminary inquiry proposal via a single PowerPoint slide for peer review; identify the type of expert advisor needed and begin seeking assistance; finalize and submit proposals; reflect on feedback provided; complete the background component of inquiry through annotated bibliographies; finalize the choice and design of the inquiry method, as well as the research question; (if necessary) submit a revised version of proposal and give formal poster presentation and elevator speech. **Approval for all inquiry proposals is November 30.**

Summative and Formative Assessments:

* Formative: Draft of inquiry proposal by October 11
* Summative: Formal poster presentation and elevator speech (#2) starting October 26 **[CR1d] [CR1g]**
* Formative: Peer review of poster proposal with discussion starting October 26 **[CR1e]**
* Summative: Final version of inquiry proposal by November 30
* Professional Discourse Paper by November 30 **[CR1c]**
* Formative: PREP Monday check-ins **[CR4b]**

**UNIT THREE: Implementing the Inquiry Plan – Methods, Mentors, and the Literature Review** **November–December**: Implement the inquiry plan while engaging in PREP conversations with the AP Research Teacher and/or expert advisor (summaries of conversations, ongoing concerns, insights, research commentary and artifacts should be included in the PREP); complete draft of literature review; identify and implement discipline specific documentation style that matches the planned inquiry. **[CR1e]**

Summative and Formative Assessments:

* Formative: PREP Monday check-ins, review **[CR4a]**
* Summative: Literature review draft by December 18 **[CR1c]** **[CR1d]**

**UNIT FOUR: Preparing the Academic Paper – Drafting Components, Presentation Preparation, and Utilizing Peer Reviews**

**January–February**: Complete drafts of the methods (in so doing, students should understand the methods they did not choose—and why—and how they will use their selected methods to support their inquiry); complete any original work (interviews, surveys, additional products, products, or performances) required to support the paper; complete remaining portions of their paper with peer review; engage in peer reviews of student work.

Summative and Formative Assessments:

* Formative: Peer review of literature reviews discussion (using rubric) starting January 7 **[CR1e]**
* Summative: Methods drafts by January 13
* Formative: Peer review of methods Harkness discussion (using rubric) starting January 14 **[CR1e]**
* Summative: Results, products, or findings draft by February 20
* Formative: Peer review of results, products, or findings draft Harkness discussion (using rubric) starting January 26 **[CR1e]**
* Summative: Analysis and/or evaluations draft by February 20
* Formative: Peer review of analysis and/or evaluations draft starting February 21 **[CR1e]**
* Summative: Conclusions and future directions draft by February 28
* Formative: Peer review of conclusions and future directions draft starting February 28 **[CR1e]**

**UNIT FIVE: Wrapping Up the Deliverables – Academic Paper, Presentation, and Oral Defense**

**March**: Write, proof, peer review, and submit academic papers ensuring all components are present and meet

rubric criteria; utilize TurnItIn.com to ensure against misattribution and/or plagiarized work; submit additional

scholarly work used to support the paper (e.g., project, product, or performance). **[CR2a]**

Summative and Formative Assessments:

* Summative: Bibliography draft by March 10
* Formative: Peer review of bibliography draft Harkness discussion starting March 11 **[CR1e]**
* Summative: Academic paper draft due by March 23
* Formative: Peer review of academic paper draft Harkness discussion starting March 23 **[CR1e]**
* Final Summative: Final academic paper due by March 28

**April**: Presentations and oral defense peer review and delivery. **The AP Research teacher finalizes scores and uploads the results to the College Board prior to April 30.**

Summative and Formative Assessments: **[CR5]**

* Summative: Oral defense questions due by April 1
* Formative: Presentation peer review Harkness discussion starting April 13 **[CR1e]**
* Formative: Oral defense practice in groups of four starting April 14
* Final Summative: Oral presentations and defense given on April 21 and 22

**UNIT SIX: Moving Beyond the Advanced Placement Research Course [CR1f]**

**May**: Deliver final, curated copy of the PREP which articulates moments of insight, challenge, and change

experienced in the course as well as implications for further research or study; create commercials and discuss the

AP Research course with current AP Seminar students; present poster at Community Night to justify their choices and to stimulate additional discussion about their topics and about AP Capstone

Summative and Formative Assessments:

* Summative: PREP due by May 9 **[CR1f]**
* Summative: AP Research presentations to current sophomores (AP Seminar Class) and on Community Night
* Summative: AP Research commercials

**Curricular Requirements**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| CR1a | Students develop and apply discrete skills identified in the learning objectives within the Big Idea 1: Question and Explore. |
| CR1b | Students develop and apply discrete skills identified in the learning objectives within the Big Idea 2: Understand and Analyze. |
| CR1c | Students develop and apply discrete skills identified in the learning objectives within the Big Idea 3: Evaluate Multiple Perspectives. |
| CR1d | Students develop and apply discrete skills identified in the learning objectives within the Big Idea 4: Synthesize Ideas. |
| CR1e | Students develop and apply collaboration skills identified in the learning objectives within the Big Idea 5: Team, Transform, and Transmit. |
| CR1f | Students develop and apply reflection skills identified in the learning objectives within the Big Idea 5: Team, Transform, and Transmit. |
| CR1g | Students develop and apply written and oral communication skills identified in the learning objectives within the Big Idea 5: Team, Transform, and Transmit. |
| CR2a | Students develop an understanding of ethical research practices. |
| CR2b | Students develop an understanding of the AP Capstone ™ Policy on Plagiarism and Falsification or Fabrication of Information. |
| CR3 | In the classroom and independently (while possibly consulting any expert advisors), students learn and employ research and inquiry methods to develop, manage, and conduct an in-depth investigation of an area of personal interest, culminating in an academic paper of 4,000-5,000 words that includes the following elements: Introduction, Method, Process, or Approach, Results, Product, or Findings, Discussion, Analysis, and/or Evaluation, Conclusion and Future Directions, Bibliography |
| CR4a | Students document their inquiry processes, communicate with their teachers and any expert advisors, and reflect on their thought processes. |
| CR4b | Students have regular work-in-progress interviews with their teachers to review their progress and to receive feedback on their scholarly work as evidenced by the PREP. |
| CR5 | Students develop and deliver a presentation (using an appropriate medium) and an oral defense to a panel on their research processes, method, and findings. |