

**“TOP 10” LIST:
AP CAPSTONE™ POLICIES AND PROCEDURES GUIDANCE
FOR AP® SEMINAR TEACHERS**

November 2015

The following “Top 10” outlines some of the key takeaways related to current AP Capstone™ policies and procedures. While this document is not meant to be a substitute for the [AP Capstone Implementation Guide](#), the [AP Seminar Course and Exam Description](#), or the [AP Capstone Policies webpage](#), it will provide several major points that you should keep in mind throughout the year.

1. Read all emails and guides from the AP Capstone program team, and reach out when you have questions.

The AP Capstone program team will keep you posted of important updates throughout the year. It is very important that you read all emails and documentation that are sent to you via email, as it is our main method of connecting you to valuable information that will help build a successful program at your school. We encourage you to archive all of our communications and reference them as needed.

As a teacher at a participating AP Capstone school, you should reach out directly to a member of the program team when you have questions or concerns. The general AP Capstone email address — apcapstone@collegeboard.org — serves mainly to attend to the needs of potential or applicant AP Capstone schools, rather than those of teachers at current schools.

2. Teach students to be fully cognizant of the AP Capstone Policy on Plagiarism and Falsification or Fabrication of Information.

Adherence to the policy below is critical to the success of students in AP Seminar:

Participating teachers shall inform students of the consequences of plagiarism and instruct students to ethically use and acknowledge the ideas and work of others throughout their course work. The student’s individual voice should be clearly evident, and the ideas of others must be acknowledged, attributed, and/or cited.

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 Assessment Task. In AP Seminar, a team of students who fails to properly acknowledge sources or authors on the Written Team Report 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 Assessment Task. In AP Seminar, a team of students who incorporates falsified or fabricated information in the Written Team Report will receive a group score of 0 for that component of the Team Project and Presentation.

3. Make sure students are aware of when they will be charged the full \$139 exam fee as well as what happens when they choose to withhold or cancel their AP Seminar scores.

Once a student submits any performance assessment task component as final in the AP Capstone Digital Portfolio or the AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam is started, the full exam fee of \$139 will be charged. That is, any student who submits as final any individual written work, or who attests to the submission of the Written Team Report as final, will be charged the full \$139 exam fee, regardless of whether he or she sits for the End-of-Course Exam.

Note: Students who do not intend to take the AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam should not be enrolled in the AP Capstone Digital Portfolio and should not be assigned to a team for the Team Project and Presentation.

If a student chooses to withhold or cancel his or her score for AP Seminar or AP Research, the entire AP Seminar or AP Research score, including the end-of-course exam and performance assessment tasks, will be withheld or canceled. If a student submits any of the performance assessment tasks in AP Seminar or AP Research or takes the AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam, that student will receive a score unless he or she cancels it.

4. Have students remove their names or any identifying information from final submissions to the AP Capstone Digital Portfolio.

In order to help maintain student anonymity at the AP Reading, you should have students remove their names from the performance assessment tasks that they submit to the digital portfolio.

5. Score student work in the AP Capstone Digital Portfolio throughout the spring semester.

Though you may prefer to score hard copies of student performance assessment tasks, student work should be uploaded to and scored through the digital portfolio on a rolling basis to avoid the rush of meeting the April 30 deadline. Reserving a period of time for uploading and scoring too close to the deadline increases the occurrence of submission and scoring issues.

Additionally, you should verify that a student submission matches both the component and task being scored. For example, if you are entering scores for a student's Individual Research and Reflection (IRR), be sure that the file being scored is indeed the IRR and that you are scoring the IRR as a component of the Team Project and Presentation performance assessment task.

6. Make sure students know and understand the exact directions for completing the performance assessment tasks and the end-of-course exam.

Be sure to review the directions for completing each component of the performance assessment tasks, as well as for all parts of the end-of-course exam. You are encouraged to pay specific attention to the following:

- (a) *Word Count.* The [AP Seminar Course and Exam Description](#) outlines word counts for three written components — approximately 2,000 words for the Individual Research and Reflection; approximately 3,000 words for the Written Team Report; and approximately 2,000 words for the Individual Written Argument. You should remind students to submit work that is within a reasonable window of these word counts.
- (b) *Presentation Time.* The [AP Seminar Course and Exam Description](#) specifies time limits for presentations. Exclusive of the oral defense questions, 8 to 10 minutes is specified for the Team Multimedia and Presentation; and 6 to 8 minutes is specified for the Individual Multimedia Presentation. In preparing students for these presentations, you should remind them that you will stop their presentations when the maximum amount of time has elapsed.
- (c) *Team Oral Defense Practices.* The [AP Seminar Course and Exam Description](#) states that “each team member should be prepared to answer questions about any part of the presentation.” In order to ensure that all team members have acquired a solid understanding of all research performed by the team, you should ask questions to specific students and not allow students to confer with each other before giving answers.
- (d) *Exam Question Spacing.* You are encouraged to make your students as familiar with the AP Seminar End-of-Course Exam as possible. As part of your efforts, please be sure to inform students that, though they can freely move between Section I, Part A and Section I, Part B, they should record their responses in the designated places in the response booklets provided.

7. Make sure students are aware of the extent to which the Individual Written Argument should incorporate and refer to one or more of the stimulus materials provided by the College Board.

In order to receive a high score for the relevant rows on the scoring rubric, the Individual Written Argument should identify a complex research question that is clearly articulated within the context of the stimulus materials provided by the College Board. The research question must connect directly to the stimulus materials at some point during the response, and the source must be cited properly to earn full points.

8. Know your role as students complete the performance assessment tasks.

As an AP Seminar teacher, you (1) must ensure students are aware of the task, time, components, and scoring criteria for each performance assessment task; (2) may explore issues, talk about stimulus materials, discuss topics and perspectives, and/or question students as necessary; (3) may create opportunities for peer review and editing; (4) should refer students to the rubrics for each component; and (5) may engage in whole-class teaching or reteaching if needed.

Please note that you may not (1) provide or generate research questions or articles for students; (2) write, revise, amend, or correct student work; or (3) reveal defense questions to students prior to their presentations.

9. Retain Performance Assessment Task presentation videos for all students and student groups.

AP Seminar teachers are required to keep video files of all performance assessment task presentations and oral defenses for a minimum of one academic year, since the College Board may request to review the scoring for these components to identify samples for scoring training and to ensure scoring quality. As you are scheduling student presentations throughout the spring, you should ensure that you incorporate time for setting up video equipment and any other technology tools necessary for student presentations and recording.

10. Know the options for a student who is absent for an extended period of time.

If a student experiences an unavoidable and extended absence and is unable to participate in any component of the performance assessment tasks, you should be as accommodating as possible, using technology or other means that allow the student to participate. If the student is unable to participate, the student can (1) continue in the course and have the AP[®] score reflect completed components; (2) continue in the course and then cancel his or her scores by the published deadline in mid-June; or (3) elect to drop the course and consider reenrolling the following academic year.

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