



AP[®]

Bulletin for
AP Students
and Parents

2014-15

California Supplement

 CollegeBoard

Introduction

Amendments to the California Education Code require the College Board, as a sponsor of standardized tests, to adopt certain procedures for students who take Advanced Placement Program® (AP®) Exams in California. A provision of this law is that students be provided with certain information concerning the purpose of the exams, procedures for releasing score reports, score interpretations, and the use of exam scores.

Much of this information — including registration and exam procedures, deadlines, fees, and reporting services — is provided in the *2014-15 Bulletin for AP Students and Parents*. This bulletin is given to students interested in taking AP Exams and is also available at www.collegeboard.org/apstudents.

Complete descriptions of the content and structure of each exam, along with sample exam questions, are provided in the AP Course Descriptions. These subject-specific booklets may be found in your school library or guidance office, obtained from your AP teacher, or downloaded from www.collegeboard.org/apcourses.

The Advanced Placement Program®

The College Board's Advanced Placement Program® enables students to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. Through 36 college-level courses, each culminating in a rigorous exam, AP provides willing and academically prepared students with the opportunity to earn college credit, advanced placement, or both.

The Purpose and Nature of the Exams

AP Exams are offered annually to enable secondary school students to demonstrate college-level achievement. In 2015, AP Exams will be offered based on the learning goals outlined in the following AP Course Descriptions: Art History, Biology, Calculus (AB, BC), Chemistry, Chinese Language and Culture, Computer Science A, Economics (Macroeconomics, Microeconomics), English (Language and Composition, Literature and Composition), Environmental Science, European History, French Language and Culture, German Language and Culture, Government and Politics (Comparative, United States), Human Geography, Italian Language and Culture, Japanese Language and Culture, Latin, Music Theory, Physics (Physics 1, Physics 2, Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism, Physics C: Mechanics), Psychology, Seminar, Spanish (Language and Culture, Literature and Culture), Statistics, Studio Art (Drawing, 2-D Design, 3-D Design), United States History, and World History. In place of an exam, AP Studio Art students submit portfolios containing samples or digital images of their artwork for evaluation.

AP Course Descriptions and the corresponding exams are prepared by AP Development Committees of seven educators appointed to overlapping terms by the College Board and aided by assessment specialists from ETS. Each committee normally has at least three members from colleges or universities and at least three members from secondary schools. In addition, the Chief AP Exam Reader serves as an ex officio member of the committee.

Exams vary in length from two to three hours and, with the exception of Seminar and Studio Art, contain both multiple-choice and free-response questions. Each school's order for AP Exams in French, German, Italian, and Spanish Language and Culture contains at least one master CD for Section I (listening), and a double CD set containing one master CD for the persuasive essay task and a separate master CD for speaking. Each school's order for Spanish Literature and Culture contains at least one master CD for Section I (listening). Each school's order for Music Theory contains at least one master CD for Section I (listening) and one master CD for Section II (sight-singing). These five exams also require student responses to be recorded. Exams in AP Chinese Language and Culture and AP Japanese Language and Culture are produced on CDs and administered through computers.

Overview of the Scoring Process

The tasks of reading and scoring AP Exams require procedures designed to produce equitable and consistent evaluations of performance.

The multiple-choice sections of the exams are scored by computer. The free-response sections are evaluated by experienced AP teachers and college professors, called Readers, who spend a week in June scoring answers at the AP Reading. Each subject's Chief Reader, a college professor in that subject, selects Readers from among applicants who provide information about their education, experience, and association with the AP Program.

In order to ensure that students' scores accurately reflect their achievement in the subject, the following procedures help ensure that scoring guidelines are applied fairly to all responses:

The Conscientious Development of Scoring Guidelines

The preparation of scoring guidelines for an exam may begin as early as two years before the AP Reading when the Development Committee prepares the exam. At the AP Reading itself, the guidelines are refined through a series of reviews by Reading leaders based on their experience with actual student answers.

Training and a Rigorous Review of the Scoring Guidelines by All AP® Readers

Three to seven hours of the total seven-day AP Reading period are devoted to reviewing the scoring guidelines and securing consistency in their application. The objective is to combine two essential components: (1) the guidelines developed by the Reading leadership and (2) each Reader's professional assessment of the response as seen through the lens of those guidelines.

The Use of Carefully Developed Scoring Scales

The scoring guidelines for each question have an associated scoring scale designed to allow Readers to make distinctions among answers. Many free-response questions are scored on a scale of 0 to 9 points. This scale avoids the problem of too few points, which allows only coarse distinctions, and the problem of too many points, which requires overly refined, often meaningless distinctions. Because the scoring guidelines and their accompanying scales are tailored to individual questions, they allow each answer to be appropriately scored.

Minimizing the Possibility of the "Halo Effect"

The "halo effect" (giving an answer a higher or lower score than it deserves because of good or poor impressions of other answers from the same student) is minimized by two practices: (1) having each question, or question set, read by a different Reader and (2) completely masking all scores given by other Readers. These practices enable each Reader to

evaluate the free-response answers without being influenced by the student's performance on other questions or scores assigned by other Readers.

The Close Monitoring of Scoring

Considerable effort is made throughout the Reading to maintain the consistent application of scoring guidelines. Working with small groups of Readers, the Reading leaders independently score exams that have been read previously and monitor Readers' scoring consistency regularly and thoroughly. If there is too great a disparity between the two sets of scores, the Reading leaders and the Reader resolve the differences. The scoring guidelines are developed and monitored to significantly reduce the chances that students would receive different scores had their answers been read by different Readers.

Development of Scores

While colleges and universities are responsible for setting their own credit and placement policies, AP scores signify how qualified students are to receive college credit or placement:

- 5 = extremely well qualified
- 4 = well qualified
- 3 = qualified
- 2 = possibly qualified
- 1 = no recommendation

Before these scores are determined, however, a number of intermediate steps are taken:

1. For all exams except Seminar and Studio Art, the multiple-choice section is scored by computer. Multiple-choice scores are based on the number of questions answered correctly. Points are not deducted for incorrect answers or unanswered questions.
2. Scores are assigned to individual essays or problems in the free-response section by Readers at the AP Reading. These scores are based on detailed scoring guidelines established by the Reading leaders.
3. A composite score is created from the combined scores on the multiple-choice and free-response sections. When an exam is newly developed or significantly revised, the committee determines the percentage each section should contribute to the composite score. Statistical analysis determines the weights to be used based on this percentage. For example, suppose that the multiple-choice section of the exam has a maximum possible score of 60, the free-response section of the same exam has a maximum possible score of 30, and the committee would like both sections to contribute equally to the total composite score. A weight of 2 would be assigned to the free-response scores, and a weight of 1 would be assigned to multiple-choice section scores. These weights would produce a maximum possible composite score of 120, with each section (free response and multiple choice) contributing equally to the maximum possible composite score.
4. The conversion from the composite scores to the reported AP scores is determined by establishing four score boundaries on the composite score scale. The score boundaries for each exam are based primarily on statistical equating to scores on a previous year's exam.

Technical Information About the 2014 AP® Exams

	Art History	Studio Art: Drawing Portfolio	Studio Art: 2-D Design Portfolio	Studio Art: 3-D Design Portfolio	Biology	Calculus AB	Calculus BC	Chemistry	Chinese Language & Culture*	Computer Science A	Economics: Micro	Economics: Macro
Maximum Composite Score	200	72	72	72	120	108	108	100	120	80	90	90
% Objective: % Free-Response in Composite	40:60	No Objective Section			50:50	50:50	50:50	50:50	50:50	50:50	67:33	67:33
Score Distributions (%)												
5	12.1	16.0	13.9	11.0	6.6	24.6	48.4	10.1	24.6	21.3	15.9	16.1
4	20.3	20.9	29.5	19.6	22.4	16.6	16.5	16.9	17.1	23.1	28.9	23.2
3	27.2	40.6	35.1	36.8	35.2	17.7	16.2	25.9	32.6	16.8	20.7	18.5
2	18.7	19.0	18.3	27.7	27.1	10.7	5.3	25.8	13.0	7.7	15.5	17.5
1	21.7	3.5	3.2	4.8	8.7	30.5	13.6	21.4	12.7	31.1	18.9	24.7

	English Language & Composition	English Literature & Composition	Environmental Science	European History	French Language & Culture*	German Language & Culture*	Government & Politics: U.S.	Government & Politics: Comparative	Human Geography	Italian Language & Culture*
Maximum Composite Score	150	150	150	180	130	130	120	120	120	130
% Objective: % Free-Response in Composite	45:55	45:55	60:40	50:50	50:50	50:50	50:50	50:50	50:50	50:50
Score Distributions (%)										
5	9.6	7.7	8.3	8.6	12.4	9.7	11.9	19.7	11.0	8.2
4	17.9	17.8	23.6	16.9	25.4	23.5	12.5	23.7	20.0	21.4
3	28.4	29.6	15.3	34.0	37.2	33.0	26.4	18.7	21.0	33.1
2	30.1	33.0	25.5	11.8	19.7	23.2	24.7	21.9	18.4	27.4
1	14.1	11.9	27.2	28.7	5.4	10.6	24.6	16.1	29.6	10.0

	Japanese Language & Culture*	Latin	Music Theory	Physics B	Physics C: Electricity & Magnetism	Physics C: Mechanics	Psychology	Spanish Language & Culture*	Spanish Literature & Culture	Statistics	U.S. History	World History
Maximum Composite Score	144	100	200	180	90	90	150	130	120	100	180	120
% Objective: % Free-Response in Composite	50:50	50:50	45:55	50:50	50:50	50:50	67:33	50:50	50:50	50:50	50:50	50:50
Score Distributions (%)												
5	17.2	13.2	19.8	15.8	33.5	32.4	18.7	18.5	9.9	14.3	11.0	6.6
4	11.5	22.4	17.5	18.5	25.1	25.6	26.9	33.2	25.5	20.9	21.3	16.0
3	30.2	30.2	25.4	26.5	12.2	18.7	19.9	32.9	39.1	24.5	20.1	31.9
2	11.4	24.0	24.2	17.0	17.6	12.7	13.5	12.6	19.5	17.8	28.0	27.8
1	29.6	10.1	13.1	22.3	11.6	10.6	20.9	2.8	6.0	22.6	19.6	17.7

* Score distributions (%) for Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish Language and Culture are based on the standard groups of examinees (i.e., students with no out-of-school experience in the language).

Distribution of Scores for the 2014 AP[®] Exams

The table on page 4 presents selected technical information about the 2014 AP Exams. For each exam, the maximum possible composite score and the relative contribution of the multiple-choice and free-response sections to the composite score are indicated. The table also presents the percentages of students who earned a score of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 on each of the 2014 AP Exams. These percentages may experience shifts each year. The shifts are based entirely on the ability level of each year's examinees.

AP Score Reports

AP score reports are cumulative and include scores for all the AP Exams a student has ever taken, unless the student has requested that one or more scores be canceled or withheld from a college. AP scores and any information furnished by students to the AP Program are treated as confidential (policies governing the use of scores and personal information can be found in the "Important Information for Exam Takers" section of the *2014-15 Bulletin for AP Students and Parents*).

Students must sign in to apscore.org to view their scores. AP score reports are available in July to designated colleges, students, high schools, and districts. They are released to a college only with the students' authorization, as designated on their answer sheets or on subsequent score report requests. Although most AP score reports are available in July, some reports take longer to process due to late testing or other special circumstances (e.g., late arrival of testing materials or extra time needed to match student records). **Note:** There may be other circumstances that could delay a student's score. If a student's AP score report is delayed, this will be indicated on his or her online score report. Students testing late may have their score reports delayed up to a month.

More information about score reporting and the withholding or cancellation of scores appears in the *2014-15 Bulletin for AP Students and Parents* at www.collegeboard.org/apstudents and in the AP Student Pack that students receive just before taking an AP Exam.

Use of AP Exam Scores

AP Exam scores are used by colleges in granting credit, advanced placement, or both for a course in a particular subject. Because preparation for AP Exams involves work equivalent to that for introductory college courses, the College Board recommends that colleges award credit to students who receive AP scores of 3, 4, or 5 and admit such students to appropriately advanced courses. Students seeking credit through their AP scores should note that each college or university, not the AP Program or the College Board, determines the nature and extent of its policies for awarding credit, advanced placement, or both. Because policies regarding AP scores vary, students should consult the AP policy of individual colleges and universities. They can find this information in a college's catalog or on its website, or by using the AP Credit Policy Info search at www.collegeboard.org/apcreditpolicy.

The College Board has prepared and widely distributed a statement titled *Guidelines for the Release of Data*, which can be downloaded from www.collegeboard.org/research. All users of College Board test services have been asked to read this statement and be guided by it.

Students with Disabilities

Students with documented disabilities may be eligible for accommodations on AP Exams. The College Board provides a wide range of accommodations, including but not limited to special formats (e.g., Braille, large print), extended time, extra breaks, modified setting, readers, scribes, use of a computer, etc. The school's College Board Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Coordinator submits the request for accommodations online on behalf of the student. Requests for accommodations should be submitted as early as possible and no later than **Feb. 20, 2015**. If a student has previously been approved for accommodations by the College Board for the PSAT/NMSQT[®], SAT[®], or AP, the student does not need to submit another request. With limited exceptions, approved accommodations remain in effect for as long as the student attends the school and the school confirms that the student continues to be eligible. If a student requires additional or different accommodations, the school's SSD Coordinator **must** submit an Accommodations Change Request Form with supporting documentation. **Only those students who have been preapproved by the College Board are eligible for extended time or other testing accommodations.** If a student wishes to submit a request for accommodations without the participation of the school, he or she should ask the school for a paper Student Eligibility Form or contact College Board Services for Students with Disabilities at 212-713-8333 (toll free in the United States and Canada) or 609-882-4118 (TTY) or via email at ssd@info.collegeboard.org. Students should contact their SSD Coordinator as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. More information about accommodation requests is available at www.collegeboard.org/ssd/student/index.html.

Additional Assistance

AP courses are made available by secondary schools to provide challenging educational experiences. Because of their knowledge of the AP Program, AP Coordinators and teachers can answer many questions directly. AP publications such as the *2014-15 Bulletin for AP Students and Parents* and websites such as www.collegeboard.org/apstudents also contain helpful information. If students have questions that cannot be answered by their school staff or by reading AP informational materials, they can contact AP Services for Students.

AP Services
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About the College Board

The College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, the College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of over 6,000 of the world's leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, the College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college success — including the SAT[®] and the Advanced Placement Program[®]. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators, and schools.

For further information, visit www.collegeboard.org.

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