

## The Advanced Placement Program

St. Maurice School currently offers three advanced placement courses for eligible students in Senior 4:

- *Calculus 42S*
- *English Literature 42S*
- *Computer Science 42S*

### **The following information is provided by the Advanced Placement Program:**

Advanced Placement (AP) is a program of college-level courses and exams that gives bright, motivated students the opportunity to get ahead by earning advanced placement and/or credit for college while they are still in high school. There are many benefits for students who take AP courses...studying interesting and challenging things, discovering new interests, and getting a head start on their future.

### **The Value of AP**

*"I'm not sure how well I would do in an AP course or exam. Even if I did get a good grade, I'm not sure that I would use it. So why should I get involved with AP?"*

This is a concern of many high school students who are considering which courses to take in their upcoming academic years. Remember that you risk nothing by taking the AP Exam. Since you determine which, if any, colleges will receive your grade. But, more importantly, there are many advantages to getting involved with AP:

### **You will study a subject in greater depth and find out what you can really do.**

If you are interested in a particular subject and want to learn more about it, your best course of action is to take an AP course with other students who have similar interests. If you don't challenge yourself, you'll never know what you're capable of achieving. Prove to yourself that you can master college-level material, and discover the satisfaction of reaching your goals and knowing you have been successful.

### **You will be taking the first step toward academic success**

AP courses and exams represent the beginning of the journey through college-level academic challenges. Once you're used to being challenged, you're more likely to continue with advanced studies. AP students are twice as likely to go into Ph.D. programs such as medicine or law. AP is not just a test; it's an experience. AP courses motivate you to work hard, and you can improve the quality of all your courses based on the skills you gain in one AP course. Students who were unsure about their future plans say AP helped steer them toward college or advanced studies.

### **AP prepares you for college work**

The work you do in an AP course will help you develop skills and study habits that will be vital in college. For example, you will learn how to analyze problems effectively, improve your writing skills, and prepare for exams. Students who take AP courses and exams are more knowledgeable about the demands of college work, and they understand what is needed to succeed at the college level. Your learning experiences are likely to be positive ones from the start.

### **You will improve your chances of getting into a competitive college**

Colleges and universities recognize that applicants with AP experience are much better prepared for the demands of college courses. AP students are viewed as:

- "Motivated self-starters who are willing to work to get ahead."
- "Better prepared academically: they perform better on all college admission measures of ability and achievement."
- "Less likely to drop out, and more likely to go on into advanced study programs."

Admissions officers are well aware of the difficulty of AP courses and exams, and sending AP Exam grades can only be a positive step toward potential admission into competitive colleges.

### **You will be prepared for the unexpected**

You never know what the future holds. Plans change, career choices change, family circumstances change, usually when you least expect it. Once you have taken an AP Exam, your grade is a permanent part of your transcript. The vast majority of colleges and universities in the

United States, and many outside the United States, grant either academic credit, advanced placement, or both to incoming students with AP grades.

### **You will be making an investment and getting good value for your money**

By taking an AP Exam, you will be investing in yourself and your future. If you receive a qualifying grade on an AP Exam, your \$74 exam fee investment can translate into major savings. The cost of an AP Exam is a concern for some students. But put this into perspective how much do you spend on the latest fashion trend, a new video game, or a couple of CDs? You work hard in and out of school isn't it time you put something into yourself and your future?

### **You are getting a head start**

Every year, hundreds of students achieve sophomore standing by earning qualifying AP grades: more than 1,400 institutions in the United States alone grant a full year's credit to students who present satisfactory grades on enough AP Exams. Write to the colleges you are interested in attending to get the most up-to-date information about their AP policies. Just think how much money you can save by completing college one year early.

### **You will increase your options and get the most out of your college experience**

Earning AP credit has allowed thousands of students to take a double major in college, move into upper-level courses in their field of interest, or complete their undergraduate and graduate degrees in four years. Gaining credit or advanced standing in college can give you time for other interests that you might not have otherwise been able to pursue time abroad, extra classes, independent studies. This is the fun stuff that most college students just don't have the time or money to do.

### **You may be eligible for a Scholar Award**

The AP Program offers a number of awards to AP students who have demonstrated outstanding achievement. These awards appear on the student's AP grade reports. Scholar Award recipients not only gain recognition from colleges, but also win the admiration of their peers, families, and communities.

## **The payoff**

When you ask yourself "Is it worth it?" consider the potential payoff. The AP experience is rich and rewarding. You will work hard but you will get back much in return. Most colleges view any AP experience as a plus and AP will give you tools that will serve you well throughout your college career.

## **Earning College Credit or Advanced Placement: The Most Commonly Asked Questions**

### ***What AP grades do I need to get college credit?***

Each college decides which AP Exam grades it will accept in return for credit and/or advanced placement. Many institutions accept grades of 3 and above, which is in keeping with recommendations made by the American Council on Education (ACE). ACE also recommends that colleges consider granting provisional credit to students with AP grades of 2; the credit is then made permanent if you satisfy other criteria, such as successfully completing the next course in the discipline.

<b>AP GRADE</b>	<b>APPROXIMATE UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE EQUIVALENT</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>B</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>C</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>E</b>

### ***Which colleges grant credit for AP work and how do I find out if a college participates?***

Almost all the colleges and universities in the United States and Canada, and many in Europe, take part in the AP Program. The vast majority of the 2,900 U.S. colleges and universities that receive AP grades grant credit and/or advanced placement. Even colleges that receive only a few AP candidates and may not have specific AP policies are often willing to accommodate AP students who inquire about advanced placement work.

To find out about a specific college's policy for the AP Exam (s) you plan to take, write to its Director of Admissions. You should receive a written reply telling you how much credit and/or

advanced placement you will receive for a given grade on an AP Exam, including any courses from which you will be exempted or any higher-level courses you will be allowed to enter.

***When do I find out about my AP credit?***

During the summer, the colleges that have received notification of your grade(s) may confirm what placement, credit, and exemption you have earned through AP, though some may wait until you inquire or are on campus. You can always request confirmation by writing to the Director of Admissions.

***I won't know my AP grades until July but I have to register for college in June. What do I do?***

Most colleges and universities have considerable experience with this problem since about 20 percent of freshmen present AP grades. Inform the admissions office, and your registration advisor that your AP grades will arrive in July. Individual colleges differ, but most will either:

- substitute a course from the sophomore year or the second semester pending approval of AP credit
- register you in the same course with the understanding that you can drop the course and add a different one in the fall if AP credit is approved, or
- leave the decision to you. If the decision is left to you, you should probably register for a different course unless it is a prerequisite for your major, or part of a sequence in your major.

***Where can I find out more about college AP policies?***

The best source of specific and up-to-date information about an individual institution's policy is its catalog.