



"Committed to Excellence and Success in ALL We Do"

**AP Capstone: Research
Richmond Hill High School
Student Syllabus**

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Course Description

AP Research allows students to deeply explore an academic topic, problem, or issue of individual interest. Through this exploration, students design, plan, and conduct a year-long research-based investigation to address a research question. In the AP Research course, students further skills acquired in the AP Seminar course by understanding research methodology, employing ethical research practices, and accessing, analyzing, and synthesizing information as they address a research question. Students explore their skill development, document their processes, and curate the artifacts of the development of their scholarly work in a portfolio. The course culminates in an Academic Paper (AP) of approximately 4000–5000 words (accompanied by a performance or exhibition of product where applicable) and a Presentation with an Oral Defense (POD).

Goals

Although 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)
- Employ appropriate disciplinary research methods to develop, manage, and conduct an in-depth study or investigation in an area of student's own interest, culminating in a 4000–5000 word paper (accompanied by an additional piece of scholarly work — where applicable—to be performed or exhibited).
- Present (using appropriate media) and defend the research design, approach, and findings to a panel.
- Document their processes and curate the artifacts of the development of their scholarly work in a portfolio.

AP Equity and Access Policy

The College Board strongly encourages educators to make equitable access a guiding principle for AP programs by providing all willing and academically-prepared students the opportunity to participate in AP courses. We encourage the elimination of barriers that restrict access to AP courses for students from ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups that have traditionally been underserved. Schools should make every effort to ensure their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population. The College Board also believes all students should have access to academically-challenging coursework before they enroll in AP courses, 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.

Course Expectations

Attendance/Tardiness/Discipline: School policies will be followed and enforced.

Preparation & Supplies: Students are expected to have all materials needed for this course. Students are expected to complete homework and/or readings for effective class discussion and use for developing the skills needed in this course and successful completion of AP exam requirements.

Participation: Students are expected to actively participate in discussions, peer critiques, group work, and other activities and/or assessments. Students are responsible for keeping handouts, taking notes and keeping materials organized for quick reference throughout the year, especially when working on elements of the actual AP Exam.

Dress Code: Students are expected to adhere to the school district dress code standards as published in the Student Handbook. For team or individual multimedia presentations, students will be expected to dress in professional business attire.

Grading Policies: While a significant amount of time is spent on the development of portfolio requirements for the AP score, students will still have formative and summative assignments and grades. Grades will be calculated per district policy.

Formative and Summative Assessments

The AP Research course continues building upon AP Seminar skills to form new understandings of a topic selected by the student and approved by the AP Research teacher through an Inquiry Proposal process. Students are assessed on a variety of assignments, both in class and homework, as well as the Academic Paper and the Presentation and Oral Defense of approximately 15-20 minutes. Graded assignments, based on **Process and Reflection Portfolio (PREP)**, group work, individual assignments, time management, etc.

- Academic Paper (AP) 75% of score (*see below*)
- Presentation and Oral Defense (POD) 25% of score

The Academic Paper (AP) is an original 4,000-5,000 word academic paper that includes the following components:

1. Introduction
2. Method, Process, or Approach
3. Results, Product, or Findings
4. Discussion, Analysis, and/or Evaluation
5. Conclusion and Final Directions
6. Bibliography

While the AP Research teacher and/or an expert advisor will provide guidance in the development of this paper, it is the student's own work. **Plagiarism will NOT be tolerated; any sources used by the student through direct quotations and/or paraphrasing, must be properly cited. Failure to do so will result in a ZERO grade for that component of the course (See "Academic Dishonesty" below).**

The research process in AP Research is not simply about collecting evidence or facts and then piecing them together. The research process is about *inquiry*—asking questions and coming to solutions and conclusions through serious and critical thinking, discussion, and reflection. The student researcher will seek relevant information in articles, books, and other sources and develop an informed perspective built upon, but not merely derivative of, the ideas in the examined material. As a result, the research process is *recursive*, meaning students will continuously revisit ideas, seek new

information when necessary, and reconsider and refine their research question(s), topic, and/or approach.

To keep track of this process of inquiry, students are required to keep a digital **Process and Reflection Portfolio (PREP)**, a formative assessment tool shared with the AP Research Teacher (*See Appendix A for details*). The PREP will allow students to document their experiences in the course. Students will continually use the PREP to chart their engagement with the QUEST ideas, with special attention paid to:

- Their choice of a research question and what prompted their interest in the topic
- Their research process, including important sources (documents, people, media)
- Analysis of evidence as it becomes available
- Changes in the direction of the project and/or initial assumptions
- Ways in which the students have worked on their own or as part of a larger intellectual community
- Challenges encountered and solutions attempted

To demonstrate these experiences, the PREP may include annotated bibliographic entries of important sources, conversations with the Teacher and/or Consultant, personal reflections, commentary about course assignments and class notes, coursework assigned by the Teacher, and any other insights that contribute to a rich description of the development of the student in the course. As students will be required to have one-on-one appointments with the AP Research Teacher throughout the course to discuss their work, it is hoped the student will be able to manage his/her time effectively and use these meetings to continue developing and revising their work throughout the year. In-class assignments may also be collected digitally through the PREP. Upon completion of the Academic Paper (AP), students will be required to plan and deliver a final summative assessment in the form of a Presentation of their work and an Oral Defense (POD). The presentation is expected to utilize various media to support and enhance the student's report of key findings, description of the chosen approach and any challenges, and a defense of the findings by answering questions posed by a panel comprised of the AP Research Teacher and two others. Prior to engaging in research, students will submit to the AP Research Teacher an Inquiry Proposal Form, which clearly identifies the topic of study, research question(s), preliminary research, and methodological and ethical considerations. Only once approval has been granted will the student be allowed to begin the research process in earnest. If the proposed inquiry requires a more extensive consideration of ethics and potential harm (for example, involvement of human subjects), approval will not be granted until the Proposal has passed review by an Institutional Review Board (IRB).

AP Research students will be held to high standards of academic honesty and ethics. Preparing fairly and effectively for the completion of the paper and presentation tasks requires advanced planning and time management; many difficulties with plagiarism arrive when students leave work to the last minute. Keep track of all sources used so you do not misattribute information. *AP Research work will be submitted to **Turnitin.com**.*

Academic Dishonesty & Plagiarism Policy

AP Research students will be instructed in ethical research practices and academic honesty and integrity in accordance with school policy as well as the AP Capstone Policy regarding plagiarism.

AP Capstone™ Policy on Plagiarism and Falsification or Fabrication of Information

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 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.

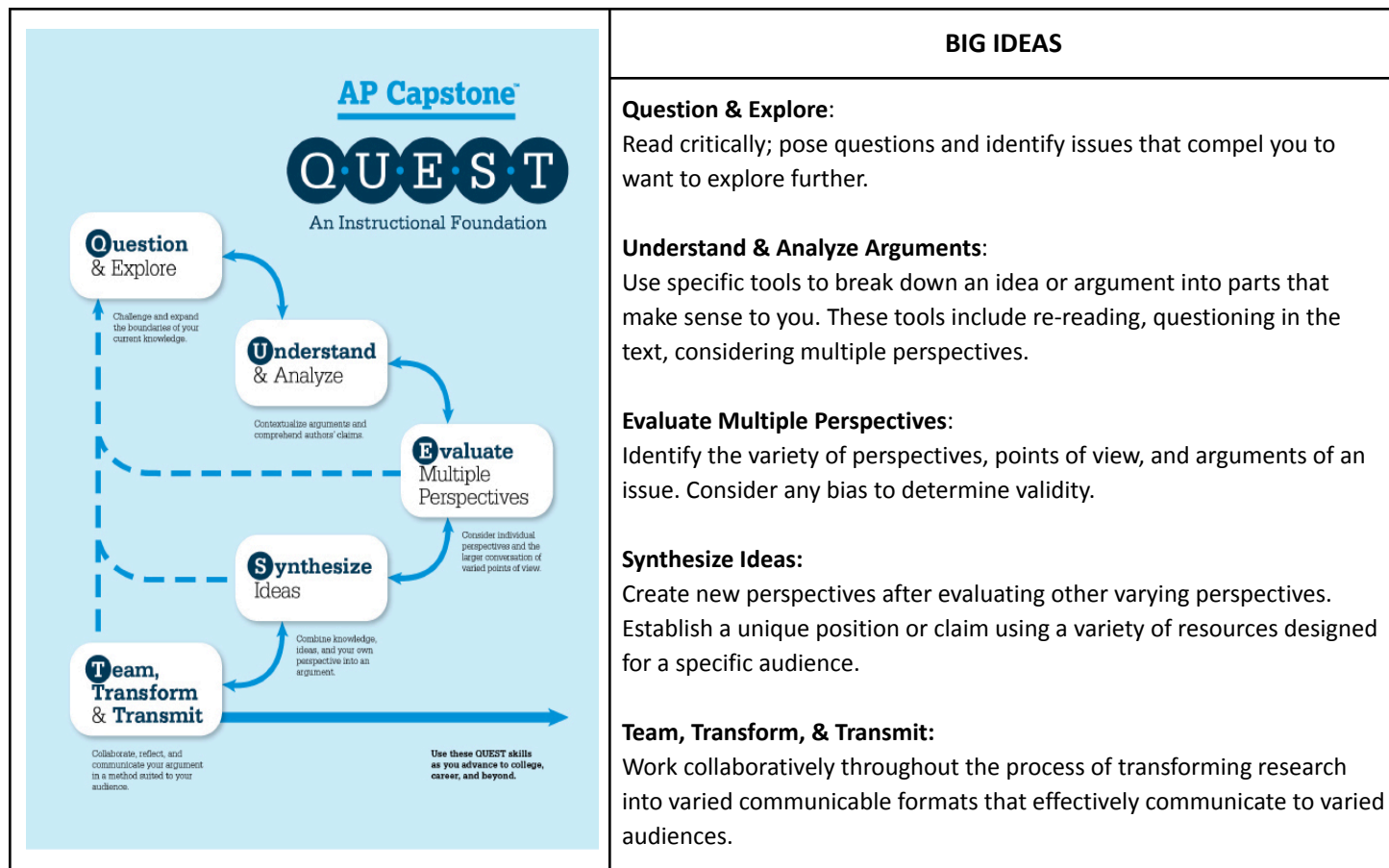
A student who incorporates falsified or fabricated information (e.g. evidence, data, sources, and/or authors) will receive a score of 0 on that particular component of the AP Seminar or AP Research performance task. In AP Seminar, a team of students that incorporates falsified or fabricated information in the Team Multimedia Presentation will receive a group score of 0 for that component of the Team Project and Presentation.

Course Texts and Resources

- Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2013). *Practical research: Planning and design (10th ed.)*. New York, NY: Pearson.
- AP Capstone Research Course and Exam Description. (2020). New York: College Board.
- AP Research Workshop Handbook and Resources (2020). New York: College Board.
- Various articles and academic resources for specific lessons
- Released AP exam samples (used with permission) for exemplars and discussion pieces

AP Research Curriculum Framework

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 distinct skills identified in the Learning Objects (LO’s) (“What students will demonstrate...”) of the Enduring Understandings (EU’s) (“What students will remember in the long-term...”) within the following five Big Ideas, represented by the acronym **QUEST** (p. 9, Course and Exam Description).



Overview of Reasoning Processes (p. 7, Course and Exam Description)

The AP Capstone program encourages students to develop and practice reasoning processes that help them make intentional, strategic decisions. These reasoning processes are embedded within the following learning objectives:

- Situating—being aware of the context of one’s own as well as others’ perspectives, realizing individual bias can lead to unfounded assumptions
- Choosing—making intentional and purposeful choices, realizing choices have both intended and unintended consequences
- Defending—being able to explain and justify personal choices, logic, line or reasoning, and conclusions
- Connecting—seeing similarities within and across disciplines, concepts, and cultures that may at first seem disparate

Employing Research and Inquiry Methods (p. 9, Course and Exam Description)

In the classroom and independently (as well as possible consulting with a mentor or expert), students learn and utilize 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:

1. Introduction
2. Method, Process, or Approach
3. Results, Product, or Findings
4. Discussion, Analysis, and/or Evaluation
5. Conclusion and Future Directions
6. Bibliography

General Timeline: 2024-2025

August	<p>Create and share digital PREP portfolio with AP Research Teacher; discuss course expectations and the Performance Tasks using sample papers; choose a topic/issue; carry out preliminary research; begin to develop an annotated bibliography; and finalize research question(s) and begin proposals. Work in PREP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sign up for AP Classroom. ● First Draft of Research Question due August 23
September	<p>Present a preliminary inquiry proposal; work on proposals and reflect on feedback; continue with preliminary research, continue working on annotated bibliography; work in PREP; engage in one-on-one meetings with AP Research teacher and peer review activities; Work on Inquiry Proposal Form.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Methods Exploration Assignment Due Sept 13 ● 50 Source Assignment due Sept 20
October	<p>Finalize the choice and design of their inquiry method, as well as research question(s), with careful consideration of ethical issues that may arise; engage in one-on-one meetings with AP Research teacher and peer review activities; work in PREP, finish annotated bibliography. Develop information from Annotated Bibliography into a Review of the Literature. Work on research methods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Methods Outline Due Oct 2nd. ● IRB Application due October 10th.
November	<p>Conduct research (interviews, surveys, additional projects, products, performances) needed to support paper; start analyzing findings; work in PREP; begin your study; engage in one-on-one meetings with AP Research teacher and peer review activities; finish introduction and literature review.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Bibliography Rough Draft Due Nov 22th</i> ● <i>Introduction and literature review Rough Draft due December 3rd.</i>
December	<p>Continue collecting data; work in PREP; work on literature review to ensure synthesis of what has already been done.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Methods Section Rough Draft due Dec 12th</i>
January	<p>Finish Collecting Data if needed. Continue analyzing findings; work in PREP; engage in one-on-one meetings with AP Research teacher and peer review activities; work on the Discussion section. Obtain feedback on paper and revise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Revised Lit Review and Methods Section Due January 17th.</i> ● <i>Rough draft Discussion, Analysis, and/or Evaluation section due February 5th.</i>
February	<p>Work in PREP; engage in one-on-one meetings with AP Research teacher and peer review activities; continue working on paper and reflecting on feedback.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Revised Results and Discussion Due by February 14th.</i>
March	<p>Finalize paper. Work in PREP; engage in one-on-one meetings with AP Research teacher and peer review activities; plan Presentation and Oral Defense.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Academic Paper Whole rough Draft due March 5th.</i> ● <i>POD Rough draft presentation due March 19 (practice dates will begin March 21, 25 and 27.</i>
April	<p>Work on presentation; engage in one-on-one meetings with AP Research teacher and peer review activities; work in PREP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Presentation and Oral Defenses March 26 28th - (Dates are subject to change).</i> ● <i>All Academic Papers, Presentations and Oral Defenses will be scored and results uploaded by the AP Research Teacher to the College Board by 11:59 pm April 30th (non-negotiable!)</i>
May	Exit Survey

***All dates are tentative and may be adjust to suit the needs of the class**

*Summative Test assignments and Formative Quiz/Homework Assignments will be Outlined by the teacher on Googleclassroom and in Powerschool.