

AP Seminar

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Welcome to AP Seminar! First and foremost, I'm so happy to have you in my class this year. I look forward to getting to know you and watching you grow as a student and individual.

Course Overview:

The AP Seminar course aims to cultivate students' critical thinking, research, and communication skills through an in-depth exploration of complex, real-world issues. By engaging in interdisciplinary inquiry, collaborative investigations, and evidence-based arguments, students will develop the ability to analyze diverse perspectives, construct coherent arguments, and present findings effectively. Through this course, students will enhance their capacity to conduct independent research, evaluate sources, and engage in meaningful discourse, thereby preparing them for advanced academic work and informed citizenship.

In this class, you will be challenged to think critically and creatively as we encounter important issues relevant to our lives. We will also study academic and literary works in order to guide students as they develop ethical, aesthetic, and cultural awareness. I will do all I can to help you learn and develop as individuals; however, this can only be achieved if you take a proactive role in your education. The standards are high, but you can reach them through dedication, a positive attitude, and practice.

Materials:

- Chromebook Device
 - Please note that your teacher does not have extra chromebook chargers, and that not having a charged chromebook is neither a valid excuse for not having completed assignments, nor is it an acceptable excuse for not participating in class.
- Post-it notes
- Pens & Highlighters
- A Notebook specifically designated for AP Seminar

Appreciated Donated Materials:

If you are interested in donating materials at any point during the school year, the following materials are greatly appreciated:

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|-------------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| ● Tissue Boxes | ● 3x5 Notecards | ● Disinfecting Wipes |
| ● Plain, White 8.5x11 Printer Paper | ● Expo Markers (all colors appreciated) | ● Transparent Tape |
| ● Post-it Notes | ● Hand Sanitizer | ● Staples |

Grade Breakdown:

Grades in AP Seminar are determined through rubrics, writing assignments, and projects that assess/measure the understanding and implementation of skills and knowledge. **You will not receive a**

grade on any assignment that is scored through College Board, but you will receive grades throughout the process based on your completion of project/assignment check points.

Assessments/Projects– 35%

Classwork– 20%

Writing – 35%

Homework – 10%

Grading Scale:

The teacher of this course reserves the right to adjust the grading scale as necessary in order to facilitate fair and equitable grading. The baseline percentage for specific letter grades will never go up, but may decrease slightly to allow for grade rounding of those students on the cusp of the next letter grade. This determination will not be made based on the needs of individual students, but on the basis of the overall class need. All students will either benefit from, or not benefit from, grade rounding equally. While I understand that all students want to excel in their classes, please do not ask the teacher to round your grade at the end of the semester.

A+: 100 %

A: 90 - 99 %

B: 80 – 89 %

C: 70 – 79 %

D: 60 – 69 %

F: 59 % or Below

MLA Format: All essays and formal writing assignments must be typed in MLA Format and submitted to Google Classroom, where they will be checked for plagiarism and AI. All assignments submitted to College Board **MUST** be formatted in MLA. We will designate time in class towards the beginning of the school year to learn how to properly format and cite in MLA, but below is a basic guideline to MLA citations:

Paper Size and Margins

- Use standard 8.5 x 11-inch paper.
- Set margins to 1 inch on all sides.

Font and Spacing

- Times New Roman, size 12.
- Double-space the entire paper, and Works Cited page.

Header and Pagination

- Create a header in the upper right corner of each page with your last name and page number (e.g., Smith 1).
- Do not use a title page unless specifically requested by your instructor.

Title and Formatting

- Center the title of your paper (e.g., “Exploring the Impacts of Climate Change”).
- Do not underline, italicize, or place the title in quotation marks. Use standard capitalization.

In-Text Citations

- **Basic Format:** Include the author’s last name and page number in parentheses after the quote or paraphrase (e.g., (Smith 23)).
- **Multiple Authors:** For two authors, use both last names (e.g., (Smith and Jones 45)). For three or more, use the first author’s last name followed by “et al.” (e.g., (Smith et al. 78)).

Works Cited Page

- **Placement:** Start the Works Cited page on a new page at the end of your paper.
- **Title:** Center the title “Works Cited” at the top of the page.
- **Entries:** List entries alphabetically by the author’s last name. Use a hanging indent, where the first line is flush left and subsequent lines are indented 0.5 inches.
- **Format:** Each entry should include specific details depending on the type of source (e.g., books, articles, websites). For example, a book citation typically includes the author’s name, title of the book in italics, publisher, and year of publication.

The AP Seminar Exam - 3 Parts, 2 Projects, 1 Score

Students of AP Seminar are assessed by the College Board, with two through-course performance tasks and one end-of-course exam. The process-to-product oriented assessments will begin sometime in November and will be completed in a carefully managed sequence and then submitted through the AP Digital Portfolio by mid-April. These through-course assessments will require in- and out-of-class research, writing, and revising. Students will spend significant amounts of this time working cooperatively and independently and will be expected to use all available class-time to prepare and produce the AP Seminar performance assessments as well as complete any group or class-wide assignments.

All three assessments are summative and will be used to calculate a final AP score (using the 1–5 scale) for AP Seminar. More information will be provided for each assessment later, but it is important to acknowledge that a significant portion of these assessments are completed as coursework for the Seminar class and will be the major responsibility for students during the second semester. The breakdown is as follows:

Performance Task 1: Team Project and Presentation—20% of AP Seminar Score			
Component	Description	Scoring Method	Weight
Individual research report (1,200 words)	1200 word written report examining the lens of the chosen team topic or issue.	College Board scored	50% of 20%
Team multimedia presentation and defense (8–10 minutes, plus defense questions)	8-10 Minute team presentation that conveys a convincing argument for the proposed solution or recommendation. Each student answers one oral defense question upon completion.	Teacher scored (group score)	50% of 20%

Performance Task 2: Individual Research-Based Essay and Presentation—35% of AP Seminar Score			
Component	Description	Scoring Method	Weight
Individual written argument (2,000 words)	Read and analyze stimulus material. Develop a research question connected to TWO pieces of stimulus material. Conduct scholarly research and develop a 2000-word written argument incorporating at least ONE of the stimulus pieces.	College Board scored	70% of 35%
Individual multimedia presentation (6–8 minutes)	6-8 minute presentation of argument, research, and conclusions. Answer two oral defense questions.	Teacher scored	20% of 35%
Oral defense (2 questions from the teacher)		Teacher scored	10% of 35%
End-of-Course Exam (2 Hours)—45% of AP Seminar Score			
Component	Description	Scoring Method	Weight
Understanding and analyzing an argument (3 short-answer questions); suggested time: 30 minutes	Part A 30 minutes to read an article and to write THREE short answer questions dealing with understanding arguments.	College Board scored	30% of 45%
Evidence-Based argument essay (1 long essay); suggested time: 90 minutes	Part B 90 minutes to read FOUR sources and to write an evidence based (long)argument essay incorporating a thematic connection between the two of the sources.	College Board scored	70% of 45%

Quest:

In the AP Capstone program, specifically in AP Seminar, QUEST is a framework that guides students through the research and inquiry process. QUEST stands for:

- Question and Explore
- Understand and Analyze
- Evaluate Multiple Perspectives
- Synthesize Ideas
- Team, Transform, and Transmit

In the first semester of AP Seminar, students will be introduced to and guided through each component of the QUEST framework. Through targeted lessons and structured activities, you will learn how to formulate research questions, gather and assess information, synthesize evidence, and effectively communicate your findings. The QUEST process will be heavily scaffolded in the first two units, however, beginning in the third unit, the scaffolding will be slowly removed so that by the end of the third

unit, students will be able to individually and in teams move through the QUEST process without teacher support. By the second semester, students will transition to applying these skills independently. At this stage, you will be expected to conduct research projects without teacher scaffolding, utilizing the QUEST components to navigate the research process autonomously and develop your own well-reasoned arguments and presentations. This shift aims to build your confidence and independence in handling complex research tasks and preparing for the AP Capstone assessments.

Here's a breakdown of each component:

- Question and Explore: Challenge and expand the boundaries of your own current knowledge.
- Understand and Analyze: Contextualize arguments and comprehend author's claims.
- Evaluate Multiple Perspectives: Consider individual perspectives and the larger conversation of varied viewpoints.
- Synthesize Ideas: Combine knowledge, ideas, and your own perspective into the argument.
- Team, Transform, and Transmit: Collaborate, collect, and communicate your argument in a method suited to your audience. In their QUEST, students:
 - Present and offer solutions to academic problems and questions,
 - Investigate concepts and issues from other AP courses,
 - Critically global and international topics, local and/or civic issues,
 - Study and inquire within fields or topics/issues of personal interest

The QUEST framework helps students structure their research process, ensuring they engage in thorough inquiry, critical evaluation, and effective communication of their findings. It is a central component of the AP Seminar course, guiding students through the essential stages of research and analysis.

Overview of Course Calendar:

Semester 1: Course Welcome, Team Building, Core Skills, Introduction to Performance Tasks

This semester will focus on skill building, focused on the QUEST framework for recursive learning. Students are guided, with progressively less input from the instructor, through the QUEST process as applied to various topics. The overarching goal of this unit is to introduce students to the skills and aptitudes necessary to prepare them for the scored performance tasks and end-of-year AP exam.

- Unit 1 – Course Intro, Team Building, Cores Skills
 - Theme: The Cultural Significance of Artificial Intelligence
 - *QUEST Focus: Question and Explore, Understand and Analyze*
 - August-September
 - QUEST and Inquiry: Developing and Researching Questions
 - EOC Skills: thesis, claims, line of reasoning, evidence, argument, validity
 - Practice IRR/M / Short Presentations

- Unit 2 – Writing and Presentation
 - Theme: The Evolution of American Political Divisiveness
 - *QUEST Focus: Evaluate Multiple Perspectives; Synthesize Ideas; Team, Transform, and Transmit*
 - September-October
 - Team Building, Inquiry and Research Skills, Debate, Academic Writing
 - MLA Citation and Annotated Bibliography
 - Mock Individual Research Report, and mock Team Multimedia Presentation and defense
- Unit 3 – Group Research Project
 - Theme: Released Stimulus From Previous Years
 - *QUEST Focus: Question and Explore, Understand and Analyze, Evaluate Multiple Perspectives; Synthesize Ideas; Team, Transform, and Transmit*
 - November-December
 - Analysis of Stimulus, Individual Research, Writing and Presentation Practice
 - Individual Research Argument
 - Individual multi-media presentation and defense

Semester 2: AP Performance Tasks and End of Year Exam

The work during this semester is devoted almost entirely to the preparation and performance of the 3 graded components of the AP exam, 2 performance tasks, as well as an end of year exam. The schedule will largely consist of benchmarks and completion markers for evaluation and tracking grades for Performance Tasks 1 and 2 respectively.

- Unit 4: Performance Task 1
 - Theme:
 - *Focus: Individual Research Report (IRR); Team Multimedia Presentations and Defense (TMP)*
 - December-February
 - Team Formation, Topic Exploration, APA citations, literature matrix, databases
 - Individual Research Report; submitted to AP digital portfolio
 - Formal Team Presentation for teacher Scoring; submitted to AP digital portfolio
- Unit 5: Performance Task 2
 - Theme: College Board Stimulus
 - Focus: Performance Task 2 – Individual Research Essay and Presentation
 - March-April
 - Stimulus materials (provided by College Board), Individual research module / on-going and self-directed)
 - Mid-April: Individual Presentations for teacher Scoring
 - By End April: All through-course [Perf. Tasks 1 and 2] is completed and uploaded to AP Digital Portfolio

- Unit 6: End of Course Exam, Review, and Final Inquiry Cycle
 - Theme: TBD
 - *Focus: End-of-Course Exam*
 - April-May
 - Argument, Analysis, Line of Reasoning, Debate
 - Practice Exam Modules | Part A and B
 - Socratic Seminar and Research topic on a student voted theme.

AP Seminar Exam date: Monday, May 12, 2022

Classroom Behavior: Attendance is important for your success in this class. Prioritize school attendance, and come to class with a positive attitude and prepared with proper materials. Be ready to learn in assigned seats when the bell rings and remain there until teacher dismissal. Ask permission before leaving your seat, and do your best not to interrupt instruction.

Respect: The most important and foundational expectation in my class is that all students are treated with and treat others with respect. I will do my best to assume the best intentions in all students, and I will encourage students to do the same; however, language and behavior that is mean-spirited and disrespectful has no place in our classroom. Our class is a community that is dependent on the respect, participation, and enthusiasm of each member. Inappropriate language and writing is disrespectful, and is not acceptable for a classroom environment.

Responsibility & Effort: Take responsibility for your work and your actions. Be on time to class and ready to work, with all required materials. This class requires you to work both inside and outside of class to complete assignments. Accept assignments without complaints and do your best on all work. In this class, you will get out what you put in. Commit to challenging yourself and presenting your best work, not the minimum.

Restroom & Food Policy: Please use passing periods to take care of restroom and water fountain needs. In the case of an emergency, students must ask permission to use the restroom and take the appropriate pass. No food or drinks are allowed in the classroom unless I give express permission (water is the exception). Stay hydrated with your own sealed water bottles in class.

Cell Phone & Technology Policy: Keep cell phones and other personal electronic devices silent and out of sight unless given explicit permission by the teacher for class purposes. If cell phone use becomes an issue, the phone will be confiscated and turned in to the school office in accordance with school policy. NO VIDEO RECORDING OR PHOTOS of anyone in the classroom, student or teacher, unless you have been given explicit permission from myself and all those being recorded/photographed. Recording or photographing someone without their permission, regardless of intent, is an egregious violation of privacy and will be treated as bullying.

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

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 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.

AP Capstone Policy on Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI):

Generative AI tools must be used ethically, responsibly, and intentionally to support student learning, not to bypass it. Accordingly, all performance tasks submitted in AP Seminar and AP Research must be the student's own work. While students are permitted to use generative AI tools consistent with this policy, their use is optional and not mandatory.

Students can use generative AI tools as optional aids for exploration of potential topics of inquiry, initial searches for sources of information, confirming their understanding of a complex text, or checking their writing for grammar and tone. However, students must read primary and secondary sources directly, perform their own analysis and synthesis of evidence, and make their own choices on how to communicate effectively both in their writing and presentations. It remains the student's responsibility to engage deeply with credible, valid sources and integrate diverse perspectives when working on the performance tasks. Students must complete interim "checkpoints" with their teacher to demonstrate genuine engagement with the tasks.

Required Checkpoints and Attestations:

To ensure students are not using generative AI to bypass work, students must complete interim checkpoints with their teacher to demonstrate genuine engagement with the tasks. AP Seminar and AP Research students will need to complete the relevant checkpoints successfully to receive a score for their performance tasks. Teachers must attest, to the best of their knowledge, that students completed the checkpoints authentically. Failure to complete the checkpoints will result in a score of 0 on the associated task.

In AP Seminar, teachers assess the authenticity of student work based on checkpoints that take the form of short conversations with students during which students make their thinking and decision-making visible (similar to an oral defense). These checkpoints should occur during the sources and research phase (IRR and IWA), and argument outline phase (IWA only). A final validation checkpoint (IRR and IWA) requires teachers to confirm the student's final submission is, to the best of their knowledge, authentic student work.

College Board reserves the right to investigate submissions where there is evidence of the inappropriate use of generative AI as an academic integrity violation and request from students copies of their interim work for review.

AP Program Use of Turnitin

College Board uses Turnitin to evaluate all final submissions in the digital portfolio. This measure is taken to identify instances of plagiarism and the improper use of generative AI. In cases where evidence of plagiarism and/or inappropriate generative AI usage is found, College Board reserves the right to conduct further investigations. Students may be asked to provide copies of their interim work for comprehensive review as part of the academic integrity verification process.

In keeping with the AP Capstone policies on plagiarism and generative AI usage, AP Capstone teachers and students will use Turnitin to evaluate the originality of student work and ensure that appropriate citations are included. Access to Turnitin is provided to participating AP Capstone schools (for their AP Seminar and/or AP Research classes only). Turnitin is a valuable tool for teaching students about citation, but it's not a plagiarism detector. Feedback from Turnitin should be considered in context and not simply taken at face value. Visit help.turnitin.com for more information on accessing and interpreting originality reports.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

For AP Seminar and AP Research, students with documented disabilities may be eligible for accommodations for through-course assessments (performance tasks) and the end-of-course exam for AP Seminar. For information about requesting an accommodations approval, go to collegeboard.org/apssd or contact College Board Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 844-255-7728 or 212-713-8333.

Consequences: Students who choose to hinder their own education and that of others by not following classroom expectations and policies will incur the following consequences:

- Warning
- Loss of points
- Conference with parents
- Referral to counselor/administrator

Please sign this syllabus, have a parent/guardian sign, and return to me for homework credit.

Student Signature: _____ Printed Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Printed Name: _____