

AP Classes - Why They Matter

6 Reasons to Take Advanced Placement Classes

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If you're planning to go to college and your high school offers AP classes, you should take advantage of the opportunity. The successful completion of Advanced Placement classes has benefits during both the college application process and undergraduate life. Below are six of the biggest perks to taking AP classes.

1. Impress College Admission Counselors

At nearly every college in the country, your academic record is the most important part of your college application. The folks in the admissions office want to see that you've taken the most challenging courses available to you. Success in difficult courses is the surest sign of your preparedness for college

2. Develop College-Level Academic Skills

AP classes require the type of high-level calculating and critical thinking that you'll encounter in your first year of college. If you can write essays and solve problems successfully for an AP class, you've mastered many of the skills that will lead to success in college.

3. Save Money

If you take enough Advanced Placement classes, you can potentially graduate from college a semester or even a year early. Early graduation isn't always a good idea, but for a student who isn't receiving financial aid, it can save tens of thousands of dollars.

4. Choose a Major Sooner

AP classes can help with your selection of a major in two ways. First, each course provides an in-depth introduction to a specific subject area. Second, a high score on an AP exam often fulfills one of a college's general education requirements. This means you'll have more room in your schedule to explore different academic fields early in your undergraduate career.

5. Take More Elective Classes in College

Not only do AP classes help you zero in on a major sooner, but they also free up your schedule so you can take more elective classes (college classes that are not required for graduation). For many students, a college's general education requirements and major requirements leave little room for fun and exploratory classes. If you want to take that interesting class on glass blowing or the occult, AP credits will make it much easier to fit the course in your schedule.

6. Add a Minor or Second Major More Easily

If you're particularly driven and have multiple interests, AP credits can make it more feasible to add a minor (or two) or even a second major to your undergraduate academic plan. With a standard work load and no AP credits, you might find it impossible to complete the requirements for two majors in four years.