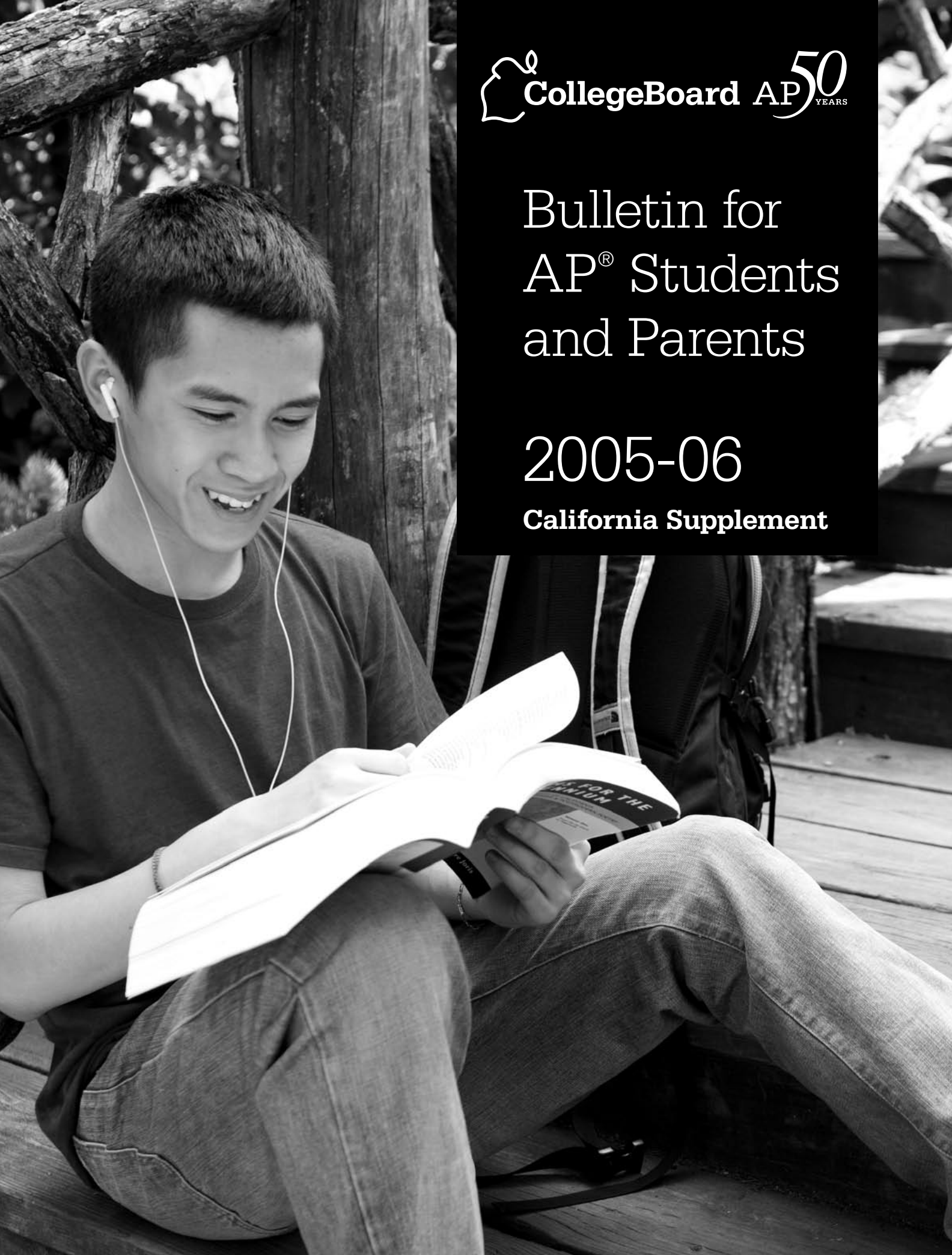




Bulletin for
AP[®] Students
and Parents

2005-06

California Supplement



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 grade reports, grade interpretations, and the use of exam grades.

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

The Advanced Placement Program®

The College Board's Advanced Placement Program is a collaborative effort among motivated students, dedicated teachers, and committed high schools, colleges, and universities. The Program is based on the belief that high school students can successfully complete college-level studies and receive college credit, advanced placement, or both for qualifying AP Exam grades.

The Purpose and Nature of the Exams

AP Exams are offered annually to enable secondary school students to demonstrate college-level achievement. In 2006, AP Exams will be offered based on the learning goals outlined in the following AP Course Descriptions: Art History, Biology, Calculus (AB, BC), Chemistry, Computer Science (A, AB), Economics (Macro, Micro), English (Language and Composition, Literature and Composition), Environmental Science, European History, French (Language, Literature), German Language, Government and Politics (Comparative, United States), Human Geography, Italian Language and Culture, Latin (Latin Literature, Vergil), Music Theory, Physics

(Physics B, Physics C: Mechanics, Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism), Psychology, Spanish (Language, Literature), Statistics, Studio Art (Drawing, 2-D Design, 3-D Design), United States History, and World History. Instead of taking an exam, Studio Art students submit portfolios containing samples or slides of their artwork for evaluation.

AP Course Descriptions and the corresponding exams are prepared by Development Committees of five or more educators appointed to overlapping terms by the College Board and aided by Assessment Specialists from ETS. Each Committee normally has three members from colleges or universities and two or more members from secondary schools.

Exams vary in length from two to three hours, and, with the exception of Studio Art, contain both multiple-choice and free-response questions. The exams in French, German, and Spanish Language; Italian Language and Culture; and Music Theory, include compact discs for the master listening, speaking, and sight-singing sections. These five exams also require student responses to be recorded. The AP Art History Exam includes questions based on images from projected slides.

Overview of the Grading 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' grades accurately reflect their achievement in the subject, the following procedures help assure 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.

The rigorous review of the scoring guidelines and their understanding by all AP Readers. Three to seven hours of the

total seven-day Reading period are devoted to reviewing the scoring guidelines and securing consistency in their application. The objective is to combine two essential components: (1) each Reader's professional assessment of the answers; and (2) the guidelines developed by the entire Reading group.

The use of carefully developed scoring scales. The scoring guideline for each question has 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 the individual questions, they allow each answer to be appropriately ranked.

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. Each Reader can then evaluate the free-response answers without being prejudiced by knowledge about the student.

The close monitoring of scoring guidelines. Considerable effort is made throughout the Reading to maintain consistent 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 if their answers had been read by different Readers.

Development of Grades

Grades for the AP Exams are reported based on the following 5-point scale:

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

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

1. For all exams except Studio Art, the multiple-choice answer sheet is scored by computer. This step incorporates the usual "correction for guessing"—a fraction of the number of wrong answers is subtracted from the number of right answers—to produce the score. This fraction is $1/4$ for five-choice questions and $1/3$ for four-choice questions, so that the expected score from random guessing will be zero. If the correction produces a score less than zero, the score is raised to zero. Students receive no credit, nor are they penalized, for questions they do not answer. Suppose, for example, on a 60-question exam with five-choice questions, a student answered 41 questions correctly, answered 8 questions incorrectly, and omitted 11 questions. That student's score on the multiple-choice section would be 39 (i.e., $41 - [1/4 \times 8]$) out of a possible 60 points.
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 (see pages 2 and 3).
3. A composite score is created from the combined scores on the multiple-choice and free-response sections. Prior to the Reading, each Development Committee determines the scoring weights to be used in computing the composite score from the section scores. 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 grades is determined by establishing four grade boundaries on the composite score scale. The setting of these grade boundaries for each exam is determined by the Chief Reader in consultation with ETS Assessment Specialists and College Board professional staff and is based, in part, on statistical equating to scores on a previous year's exam.

Technical Information About the 2005 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 | Computer Science A | Computer Science AB | Economics: Micro | Economics: Macro |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------|-------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Maximum Composite Score | 200 | 72 | 72 | 72 | 150 | 108 | 108 | 160 | 80 | 100 | 90 | 90 |
| % Objective: % Essay in Composite | 40:60 | No Objective Section | | | 60:40 | 50:50 | 50:50 | 45:55 | 50:50 | 50:50 | 67:33 | 67:33 |
| Reliability of Classification | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4/5 boundary | 94 | 96 | 95 | 96 | 94 | 95 | 93 | 95 | 95 | 91 | 94 | 94 |
| 3/4 boundary | 91 | 92 | 91 | 93 | 92 | 93 | 93 | 93 | 92 | 91 | 92 | 92 |
| 2/3 boundary | 93 | 91 | 90 | 90 | 92 | 93 | 95 | 93 | 93 | 93 | 92 | 92 |
| 1/2 boundary | 96 | 97 | 96 | 95 | 95 | 95 | 97 | 95 | 94 | 94 | 94 | 94 |

| | English Language & Composition | English Literature & Composition | Environmental Science | European History | French Language* | French Literature | German Language* | Government & Politics: U.S. | Government & Politics: Comparative | Human Geography |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Maximum Composite Score | 150 | 150 | 150 | 180 | 160 | 150 | 200 | 120 | 120 | 120 |
| % Objective: % Essay in Composite | 45:55 | 45:55 | 60:40 | 50:50 | 50:50 | 40:60 | 45:55 | 50:50 | 50:50 | 50:50 |
| Reliability of Classification | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4/5 boundary | 95 | 94 | 95 | 94 | 96 | 90 | 96 | 95 | 93 | 93 |
| 3/4 boundary | 90 | 89 | 92 | 89 | 94 | 88 | 92 | 91 | 91 | 90 |
| 2/3 boundary | 89 | 90 | 92 | 90 | 93 | 91 | 92 | 90 | 91 | 89 |
| 1/2 boundary | 95 | 96 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 95 | 95 | 95 | 95 | 91 |

| | Latin: Vergil | Latin Literature | Music Theory | Physics B | Physics C: Mechanics | Physics C: Electricity & Magnetism | Psychology | Spanish Language* | Spanish Literature | Statistics | U.S. History | World History |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------|-----------|----------------------|------------------------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| Maximum Composite Score | 120 | 120 | 200 | 180 | 90 | 90 | 150 | 180 | 150 | 100 | 180 | 120 |
| % Objective: % Essay in Composite | 40:60 | 40:60 | 45:55 | 50:50 | 50:50 | 50:50 | 67:33 | 50:50 | 40:60 | 50:50 | 50:50 | 50:50 |
| Reliability of Classification | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4/5 boundary | 92 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 93 | 91 | 93 | 96 | 92 | 94 | 96 | 94 |
| 3/4 boundary | 90 | 92 | 92 | 93 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 93 | 88 | 91 | 92 | 91 |
| 2/3 boundary | 92 | 92 | 92 | 92 | 90 | 90 | 92 | 91 | 89 | 91 | 91 | 90 |
| 1/2 boundary | 95 | 94 | 96 | 94 | 92 | 94 | 94 | 93 | 93 | 93 | 93 | 93 |

*Reliabilities of classification for French Language, German Language, and Spanish Language are based on the standard groups (i.e., students with no out-of-school experience in the language) for whom the exams were designed.

Reliability of Classification for the 2005 AP[®] Exams

The table on page 4 presents selected technical information about the 2005 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 estimates of the reliability of classification with respect to each AP grade boundary for the total group of students taking each exam.

The reliability estimates presented are indices of classification accuracy. They can be interpreted as estimates of the percentage of students who are “correctly classified” as being above or below a particular grade boundary. The term “correctly classified” means that the decision reached about a student (with respect to a particular grade boundary) on the basis of his or her score on the 2005 form of the AP Exam is the same as the decision that would be made about that student on the basis of an “all-forms-average” score.

The all-forms-average score is the score that would be obtained by an individual if he or she were administered some very large number of alternate forms of the same exam (i.e., forms containing different questions than those on the 2005 form, but covering the same subject matter at approximately the same level of difficulty). For example, the AP United States History Exam has a reliability of classification estimate of 0.96 at the 4/5-grade boundary. This number indicates that 96 percent of the students fall into one of two groups: (1) students who would receive a 5 on the basis of their score on the 2005 form and their all-forms-average score, and (2) students who would receive a grade of 4 or lower on the basis of their score on the 2005 form and their all-forms-average score.

Because AP grades are reported on a 5-point scale, there are four grade boundaries. These are the boundaries between grades 4 and 5, between grades 3 and 4, between grades 2 and 3, and between grades 1 and 2. Classification accuracy can be determined with respect to each of these grade boundaries. Consequently, the table on page 4 presents the classification accuracy estimates at each of the four grade boundaries.

AP Grade Reports

AP Grade Reports are cumulative and include all AP grades on exams taken previously as well as in the current year. AP grades and any information furnished by students to the AP Program are treated as confidential.

AP Grade Reports are first sent to designated colleges in July. They are released to a college only with the students' authorization, as designated on their answer sheets or on subsequent grade report requests. AP grades are then sent to students and their secondary schools. Most AP grades are released by mid-July. An additional week should be anticipated for the actual delivery to reach the colleges, the student, and the school. Some grades take longer to report for three main reasons: (1) inconsistent student identification information; (2) late return of exam materials to the AP Program; and (3) some students test late using an alternate form of the exam. In the first two cases, grades should be reported to the designated colleges, students, and schools by the end of July. If the AP Grade Report is delayed, students' grade reports will include a “grade delayed” message. Students testing late may have their grade reports delayed up to a month.

Further information about grade reporting and the withholding or cancellation of grades appears in the *Bulletin for AP Students and Parents*, on www.collegeboard.com/apstudents, and in the AP Student Pack that students receive just before taking an AP Exam. Students may obtain their grades by phone for a fee of \$8 per call. This service is available 24 hours a day by TouchTone phone for six weeks beginning July 1, 2006. Students may call toll free at 888 308-0013.

Use of AP Exam Grades

AP Exam grades 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 grades of 3, 4, or 5 and admit such students to appropriately advanced courses. Students seeking credit through their AP grades 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 advanced placement, credit, or both. Because policies regarding AP grades vary, students should consult the AP policy of individual colleges and universities. Students can find this information in a college's catalog or on its Web site, or by using the AP Credit Policy Info search at www.collegeboard.com/ap/creditpolicy.

The College Board has prepared and widely distributed a statement titled *Guidelines for the Release of Data*. 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. To request accommodations, students must submit a College Board Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Student Eligibility Form. Only one form needs to be completed; it will cover the College Board testing programs PSAT/NMSQT®, SAT®, and AP for as long as the student remains in the school. If a student needs different accommodations, the school's SSD Coordinator must submit an Accommodations Change Form. **Only those students who have been preapproved by the College Board are eligible for extended time and other testing accommodations.** Copies of the Student Eligibility Form have been sent to all schools in the College Board Services for Students with Disabilities brochure packet. Students should contact the school's SSD or AP Coordinator for a copy of these materials, or ask them to contact College Board Services for Students with Disabilities at 609 771-7137 (voice), 609 882-4418 (TTY), or via e-mail at ssd@info.collegeboard.org. Students should contact their SSD Coordinator as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements.

Additional Assistance

AP courses are made available by secondary schools to provide challenging educational experiences. Because of their knowledge of the AP Program, AP teachers and AP Coordinators can answer many questions directly. AP publications such as the *Bulletin for AP Students and Parents*, and Web sites such as www.collegeboard.com/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:

AP Services
P.O. Box 6671
Princeton, NJ 08541-6671
609 771-7300
or toll free 888 225-5427
Fax: 609 530-0482
TTY: 609 882-4118
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