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Setting a Policy for AP[®] French

The purpose of this guide is to provide college faculty and administrators with research data, participation and performance data of AP[®] French students, curricular content, and sample exam questions to facilitate the establishment of appropriate credit and placement policies for AP French.

The Advanced Placement Program[®] (AP) provides motivated students with the opportunity to take college-level courses while still in high school. Students demonstrate their mastery of the curriculum by taking AP Exams—35 exams, including two in French, are available in 20 subject areas. In 2005, more than 1.2 million students took AP Exams worldwide. Of the 2.1 million AP Exams taken in 2005, about 23,000 were in French (21,000 for French Language, and about 2,000 for French Literature). More than 3,000 colleges and universities, including many international institutions, accept qualifying AP Exam scores for credit, placement, or both.

Throughout its 50-year history, the AP Program has maintained high standards of rigor in its courses and exams. Since its inception, AP has been a respected force in American education due to the critical involvement of college and university faculty members.

French Faculty Involvement in AP

College and university faculty members play a vital role in every stage of development and scoring of an AP course and exam, helping to ensure their high quality. Each AP discipline has its own Development Committee—composed of college and university professors and experienced AP teachers—that is responsible for creating the course guidelines and exam questions. College and university faculty members also serve as the Chief Readers, responsible for establishing the exam-scoring guidelines and overseeing the annual AP Reading of the free-response section for their academic discipline.

“For quite some time now, foreign language educators have been concerned with having their students acquire proficiency in aural comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing (as opposed to learning grammar for the purpose of translating). I am pleased that the AP Program is very supportive of this approach, and that the AP French Exam effectively addresses the four communication skills (with room for culture as well).”

—James Day, AP French Development Committee Chief Reader
University of South Carolina

How to Set an AP Policy

The College Board encourages higher education institutions to base their AP policy decisions on data and research, and recognizes that different institutions and departments will set different policies, based upon factors unique to their institutions, student bodies, and academic disciplines. The best way for colleges and universities to determine their AP credit and placement policies is to conduct their own research on the performance of AP and non-AP students at their own institution and in their own department.

Research on AP French Student Performance

Research studies show that students who do well on an AP Exam are academically prepared to place out of a corresponding college course and move on to the next higher-level course in the discipline. See Table 1 for data from a research study comparing AP and non-AP student performance in fourth- and fifth-level college French courses.

Table 1: Student Performance in Fourth- and Fifth-Level French Courses
AP French Language Students Versus Non-AP Students

	AP EXAM GRADE	FOURTH-LEVEL COURSES		FIFTH-LEVEL COURSES	
		GPA	PERCENT OF STUDENTS SCORING AN A OR B	GPA	PERCENT OF STUDENTS SCORING AN A OR B
AP Students Who Place Out of Intro. Course	AP 5	3.82	96	3.74	94
	AP 4	3.55	100	3.54	95
	AP 3	3.45	97	3.27	89
	AP 2	3.33	88	3.19	92
Students Who Complete Intro. Course	Non-AP	3.08	85	3.15	83

Taking the AP course and exam stimulates further interest in the subject area and encourages deeper disciplinary knowledge.

Research studies show that students who take the AP French Exams are significantly more likely to take further course work in French than students who do not take the AP Exam. See Tables 2 and 3 for data from this research study.

AP Credit Policy Info on the Web

Information about AP credit and placement policies at more than 1,000 colleges and universities is available on the College Board's Web site at www.collegeboard.com/ap/creditpolicy.

Table 2: Additional College French Course Work
AP French Language Students Versus Non-AP Students

	AP EXAM GRADE	PERCENT TAKING ADDITIONAL FRENCH COURSES	AVERAGE NUMBER OF COLLEGE FRENCH COURSES TAKEN
AP French Language Students	AP 5	66	2.1
	AP 4	55	1.6
	AP 3	53	1.6
	AP 2	57	1.6
	AP 1	62	1.6
Non-AP Students	Non-AP	17	0.4

Table 3: Additional College French Course Work
AP French Literature Students Versus Non-AP Students

	AP EXAM GRADE	PERCENT TAKING ADDITIONAL FRENCH COURSES	AVERAGE NUMBER OF COLLEGE FRENCH COURSES TAKEN
AP French Literature Students	AP 5	55	1.4
	AP 4	53	1.7
	AP 3	55	1.5
	AP 2	58	1.8
	AP 1	58	1.0
Non-AP Students	Non-AP	24	0.5

PDF copies of these and other research studies can be found at apcentral.collegeboard.com/colleges/research.

In addition to research studies on AP student performance, the College Board conducts college comparability studies to measure the degree to which the AP courses and exams are equivalent in content and difficulty to corresponding college courses. The AP Exam scoring rubric is established so that the lowest composite score that earns an AP grade of 5 is equivalent to the average score earned by college students who received grades of A in a comparable course. The lowest score that earns an AP grade of 4 is equivalent to the average B, and the lowest score that earns an AP grade of 3 is equivalent to the average C.

The research that the College Board conducts is intended to help institutions and academic departments as they establish appropriate AP policies. AP Central® (apcentral.collegeboard.com), the College Board's online home for AP professionals, contains other resources that may assist in this process, including the Course Description, released exam questions, and sample student responses at different levels of ability.

For more information go to:
apcentral.collegeboard.com/frenchlang/exam
apcentral.collegeboard.com/frenchlit/exam

AP French Students, Courses, and Exams

Participation and Performance Data for AP French Students in 2005

Total Number of Schools Offering AP French Language: 3,363
 Total Number of Schools Offering AP French Literature: 441

Table 4: AP French Language Exam Score Distribution, 2005

EXAM GRADE	NUMBER OF EXAMINEES	% AT
Score of 5	2,864	14.2%
Score of 4	3,738	18.5%
Score of 3	5,585	27.6%
Score of 2	4,033	19.9%
Score of 1	4,019	19.9%
	20,239	100.0%

Standard Group*

EXAM GRADE	NUMBER OF EXAMINEES	% AT
Score of 5	1,308	8.6%
Score of 4	2,550	16.7%
Score of 3	4,446	29.1%
Score of 2	3,444	22.6%
Score of 1	3,518	23.0%
	15,266	100.0%

* Standard students generally receive most of their foreign language training in U.S. schools. They did not indicate on their answer sheets that they regularly speak or hear the foreign language of the examination, or that they have lived for one month or more in a country where the language is spoken.

Table 5: AP French Literature Exam Score Distribution, 2005

EXAM GRADE	NUMBER OF EXAMINEES	% AT
Score of 5	474	25.8%
Score of 4	460	25.1%
Score of 3	401	21.9%
Score of 2	259	14.1%
Score of 1	241	13.1%
	1,835	100.0%

Figure 1: AP French Language Examinees by Gender, 2005

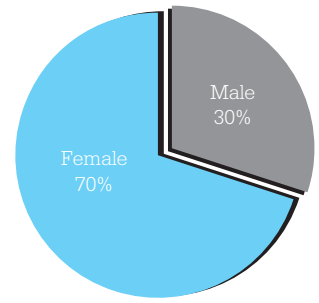


Figure 2: AP French Literature Examinees by Gender, 2005

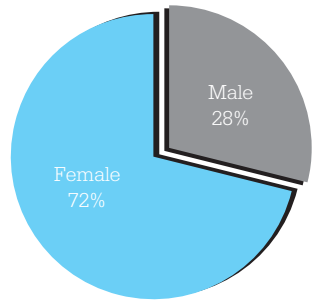


Figure 3: AP French Language Examinees by Race and Ethnicity, 2005

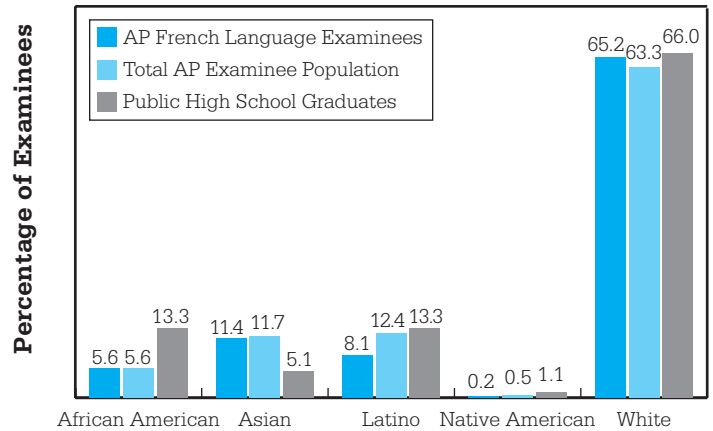
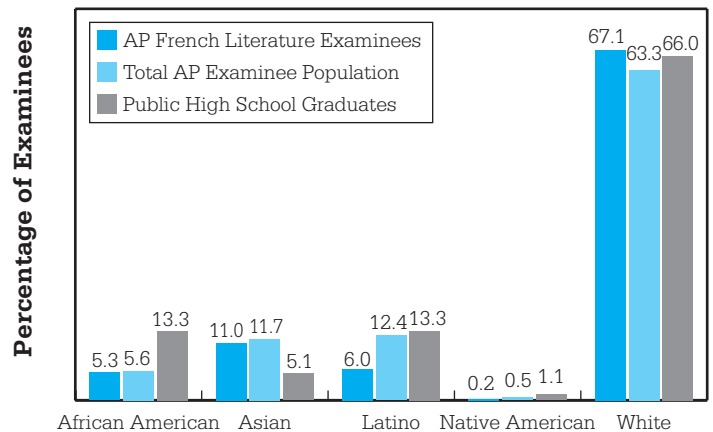


Figure 4: AP French Literature Examinees by Race and Ethnicity, 2005



The AP French Courses

The Development Committee creates the guidelines for both the AP French Language and the AP French Literature courses and designs the AP Exams. Periodically the Development Committee conducts curriculum surveys, sent to professors who teach the comparable college-level course, that help ensure that the AP French courses remain current with concepts and themes as taught in college and university classrooms.

AP French Language

The AP French Language course is designed to provide students with a learning experience equivalent to that of a college course in French Composition and Conversation at the third-year college level. The course builds upon the existing language skills of students in their command of French grammar and vocabulary and develops their competence in listening, reading, speaking, and writing in French in various activities and disciplines.

The AP French Language course emphasizes the use of language for active communication and helps students develop the following skills:

- A. the ability to understand spoken French in various contexts;
- B. a French vocabulary sufficiently ample for reading newspaper and magazine articles, literary texts, and other nontechnical writings without dependence on a dictionary; and
- C. the ability to express themselves coherently, resourcefully, and with reasonable fluency and accuracy in both written and spoken French.

AP French Literature

The AP French Literature course is designed to provide students with a learning experience equivalent to that of a college course in French Literature, also at the third-year college level. The course is designed to introduce students who have advanced language skills to the formal study of a representative body of literary texts in French. The course provides an introduction to representative works of prose, poetry, and drama from different periods, with an awareness of the cultural context of the works read. The course should provide students with the basic concepts and terminology of textual analysis.

The AP French Literature course helps students develop the following skills:

- A. gain proficiency in the fundamental language skills that enable them to
 1. read and understand prose and verse of moderate difficulty and mature content;
 2. formulate and express critical opinions and judgments in correct oral and written French;
- B. read and analyze critically and discuss perceptively representative works of French literature.

The required reading list for the 2006 and 2007 exams includes:

Novels

Camara Laye, *L'enfant noir*

Maupassant, *Pierre et Jean*

Voltaire, *Candide*

Plays

Giraudoux, *La Guerre de Troie n'aura pas lieu*

Molière, *L'école des femmes*

Poetry

Apollinaire: "Le pont Mirabeau," "Les colchiques," "Mai," "Automne"

Baudelaire: "Correspondances," "Hymne à la beauté," "L'invitation au voyage," "Chant d'automne," "Spleen" ("Quand le ciel. . ."), "Recueillement" (From *Les fleurs du mal*)

Du Bellay: "France, mère des arts, des armes, et des lois," "Heureux qui comme Ulysse a fait un beau voyage," "Si notre vie est moins qu'une journée," "Ces cheveux d'or sont les liens, Madame"

Hébert: "Baigneuse," "Une fois seulement," "Nos mains au jardin," "Les grandes fontaines," "Le piano"

Labé: Sonnets: "On voit mourir toute chose animée," "Je vis, je meurs: je me brule et me noye," "Oh si j'étois en ce beau sein ravie," "Las! que me sert, que si parfaitement"

La Fontaine: "Les animaux malades de la peste," "Le chêne et le roseau," "La mort et le bûcheron," "Le loup et l'agneau"

Beginning in fall 2006, AP French teachers and principals of schools where AP French Language and AP French Literature are taught must certify that their 2007-08 courses follow all the requirements stipulated by the Development Committee, including using college-level materials, in order to ensure that the AP course reflects college-level standards. By completing this AP Course Audit, high schools will receive individual licenses to label their French courses "AP." In fall 2007, colleges and universities will receive a list of all high schools authorized to use the "AP" designation for their French language and French literature courses.

The AP French Exams

Each AP French Exam consists of a multiple-choice and free-response section. The AP French Language Exam, lasting two-and-a-half hours, evaluates the student's level of performance in the use of the language, both in understanding written and spoken French and in responding in correct and idiomatic French. Listening and reading are tested in the multiple-choice section; writing and speaking are tested in the free-response section. The portion of the exam devoted to each skill counts for one-fourth of the final grade.

The AP French Literature Exam, lasting three hours, measures the student's ability to understand, analyze, and interpret literary texts and to write competent critical essays in French. The multiple-choice section counts for 40 percent of the final grade and consists of passages of prose, poetry, and drama chosen from the required reading list and additional works not on the list, followed by questions on their content, structure, and style. The questions require students to understand the meaning of the text (both stated and implied); notice and interpret patterns of imagery, diction, or syntax; recognize and understand figurative language; and identify tone. The free-response section consists of a textual analysis and an essay, both written in French.

AP French free-response questions from recent exam years are listed below.

French Language: Listening

Students are instructed to listen to the recorded dialogue, after which they listen to recorded questions, repeated twice, and select the most appropriate answer among those printed in their test booklet.

- (W) [Monsieur Durand, vous voici donc revenu! Comment s'est passé votre séjour à Paris? Après vingt ans d'absence, vous avez dû trouver du changement.
- (M) Ah, chère Madame, quelle déception. Je n'ai pas reconnu ma ville natale!
- (W) Oh vous exagérez sûrement. Il est vrai que moi je passe par Paris tous les ans à Noël en allant voir mes parents à Marseille, alors je ne me rends pas bien compte . . . les MacDonalds, la pollution et tout le reste, j'y suis habituée!
- (M) Ce n'est pas la mode du "fast food" qui me gêne, mais vous avez vu cette ridicule construction de verre qu'ils appellent "La Pyramide" dans la Cour du Louvre?
- (W) Oui, bien sûr, et ma foi, je la trouve splendide cette Pyramide! Elle reflète si bien le ciel de Paris et les vieilles pierres dorées du Louvre...
- (M) Ah je vous en prie, il n'y a pas de quoi faire de la poésie. C'est un scandale! On n'installe pas le vingtième siècle au coeur d'un passé prestigieux. Je déteste le mélange des styles. Paris n'est plus Paris. L'été prochain je resterai ici, à San Francisco.

- (W) Très bien, comme ça vous pourrez voir naître le nouveau projet.
- (M) Quel nouveau projet?
- (W) Il paraît qu'on va construire une réplique du palais de Versailles au coeur de San Francisco.]
1. [Où habitent les deux interlocuteurs?]
- (a) A Paris.
- (b) A Versailles.
- (c) A Marseille.
- (d) A San Francisco.
2. [Est-ce que Monsieur Durand va souvent en France?]
- (a) Il n'y va qu'une fois tous les dix ans.
- (b) Il n'y est pas allé depuis vingt ans.
- (c) Il y va parfois l'été.
- (d) Il y va tous les ans à Noël.
3. [Pourquoi Monsieur Durand a-t-il été déçu par Paris?]
- (a) Il y a trop de voitures et trop de bruit.
- (b) Il y a trop de restaurants "fast food".
- (c) Il n'a pas aimé les nouveaux gratte-ciel.
- (d) Il est contre le mélange du moderne et de l'ancien.
4. [Qu'est-ce que la femme et Monsieur Durand ont en commun?]
- (a) Ils aiment la Pyramide.
- (b) Ils ont suivi de près les transformations successives de Paris.
- (c) Ils sont tous les deux marseillais.
- (d) Ils vivent loin de leur pays natal.
5. [Qu'est-ce que la femme fait à la fin du dialogue?]
- (a) Elle annonce une drôle de nouvelle à M. Durand.
- (b) Elle se laisse convaincre par M. Durand.
- (c) Elle exprime sa sympathie pour M. Durand.
- (d) Elle conseille à M. Durand de quitter San Francisco.

French Language: Reading

- Né avec le siècle, Camille Chamoun, ancien président de la République et personnage central de la vie publique libanaise depuis cinquante ans, s'est éteint, la semaine dernière, à Beyrouth. Chef du Front libanais, organisme politique qui fédère, en principe, les organisations chrétiennes, Camille Chamoun était une figure: caustique, d'une vive intelligence, un regard pétillant derrière ses grosses lunettes d'écaille, grand amateur de chasse et client assidu de l'armurier parisien Gastinne Renette. Proche des Américains, auxquels il avait fait appel en 1958 pour juguler une insurrection pro-nassérienne, bien vu des Israéliens, Camille Chamoun avait passé le flambeau à son fils Dany. Avec sa disparition, c'est une page de l'histoire du Liban qui est tournée.
- Ligne 5
- 10
- 15

1. Le but principal de ce texte est
 - (a) d'annoncer la mort de Camille Chamoun
 - (b) de faire l'éloge du Front libanais
 - (c) de dire que Camille Chamoun n'est plus président
 - (d) d'expliquer pourquoi Camille Chamoun a quitté le Liban

2. Quelle caractéristique de Camille Chamoun est-ce que ce texte met en relief?
 - (a) Son amour pour la guerre
 - (b) Son fanatisme
 - (c) Son esprit de famille
 - (d) Sa vivacité d'esprit

3. Selon le passage, dans son temps libre Camille Chamoun aimait
 - (a) éteindre les incendies
 - (b) courir dans des courses de relais avec son fils Dany
 - (c) aller à la chasse
 - (d) étudier l'histoire du Liban

4. Dans ce contexte, "avait passé le flambeau à son fils" (ligne 13) veut dire que
 - (a) le fils de Camille Chamoun est flamboyant comme son père
 - (b) le fils de Camille Chamoun l'a aidé à disparaître
 - (c) Camille Chamoun a été remplacé par son fils
 - (d) Camille Chamoun avait critiqué son fils

French Language: Paragraph Completion

Students are instructed to fill in the blanks with one single French word (nonverb) that is correct both in meaning and form.

Fabienne, j'ai trouvé le livre (1) tu as besoin _____ 1
 à la librairie du coin. Cependant, tu devrais (2) _____ 2
 aller immédiatement car il ne leur (3) reste qu'une _____ 3
 dizaine d'exemplaires. La vendeuse, (4) est une de _____ 4
 mes amies, m'a dit qu'ils se vendaient comme des _____ 5
 petits pains! Vas-y vite, car demain il sera (5) tard!

French Language: Composition

Students are instructed to write a well-organized and coherent composition in French in response to the following question.

Dans notre société, les personnes célèbres (sportifs, acteurs, chanteurs et autres) exercent souvent une grande influence. A cause de cela, ont-elles des responsabilités particulières envers le public? Devraient-elles, selon vous, se comporter de façon exemplaire? Discutez en vous servant d'exemples précis.

French Language: Speaking

Students are instructed to study the picture and questions below for 1 minute and 30 seconds, after which they are given a minute to respond to each question by recording their answers on a cassette tape.



Quelles qualités est-ce que les deux jeunes devraient avoir pour réussir dans les carrières dont ils rêvent? (60 seconds)

Qu'est-ce qui va vous influencer le plus dans le choix de votre future carrière et pourquoi? (60 seconds)

French Literature: Reading

SPLEEN

Quand le ciel bas et lourd pèse comme un couvercle
Sur l'esprit gémissant en proie aux longs ennuis,
Et que de l'horizon embrassant tout le cercle
Il nous verse un jour noir plus triste que les nuits;

Vers

5

Quand la terre est changée en un cachot humide,
Où l'Espérance, comme une chauve-souris,
S'en va battant les murs de son aile timide
Et se cognant la tête à des plafonds pourris;

10

Quand la pluie, étalant ses immenses traînées
D'une vaste prison imite les barreaux,
Et qu'un peuple muet d'infâmes araignées
Vient tendre ses filets au fond de nos cerveaux,

15

Des cloches tout à coup sautent avec furie
Et lancent vers le ciel un affreux hurlement,
Ainsi que des esprits errants et sans patrie
Qui se mettent à geindre opiniâtement.

20

—Et de longs corbillards, sans tambours ni musique,
Défilent lentement dans mon âme; L'Espoir,
Vaincu, pleure, et l'Angoisse atroce, despotique,
Sur mon crâne incliné plante son drapeau noir.

(Baudelaire)

1. De quoi s'agit-il dans ce poème?
 - (a) Le récit d'une aventure
 - (b) La mise en scène d'un état d'âme
 - (c) La description d'un drame social
 - (d) L'élaboration d'un argument moral
2. Quel est le référent grammatical de "Il" (vers 4)?
 - (a) "ciel" (vers 1)
 - (b) "esprit" (vers 2)
 - (c) "horizon" (vers 3)
 - (d) "cercle" (vers 3)
3. Quel sens du mot "spleen" ce poème illustre-t-il?
 - (a) La haine
 - (b) La nostalgie
 - (c) La colère
 - (d) La dépression
4. La dernière strophe opère le passage du
 - (a) collectif au personnel
 - (b) rêve au cauchemar

- (c) métaphorique au littéral
(d) réalisme au fantastique
5. Quelle raison est-ce que le texte donne pour les sentiments exprimés par le poète?
(a) Des éléments de la nature
(b) Des créatures qui l’effraient
(c) Le fait qu’il est en prison
(d) Le drame de la condition humaine
6. Laquelle des images suivantes illustre la capitulation?
(a) Les “plafonds pourris” (vers 8)
(b) Les “infâmes araignées” (vers 11)
(c) Les “esprits errants” (vers 15)
(d) Le “crâne incliné” (vers 20)
7. Quelles associations reviennent dans chaque strophe?
(a) Le bruit et le silence
(b) La lumière et l’obscurité
(c) La victoire et la défaite
(d) Le physique et le psychologique
8. Qu’est-ce qui distingue la cinquième strophe des quatre autres strophes?
(a) L’absence de comparaisons explicites
(b) La présence de concepts abstraits
(c) L’expression de sentiments morbides
(d) L’absence de verbes de mouvement

French Literature: Textual Analysis

Students are instructed to read the text below and write a separate answer in French to each of the questions that follow it.

LE LOUP ET L’AGNEAU

La raison du plus fort est toujours la meilleure,
Nous l’allons montrer tout à l’heure.
Un agneau se désaltérait
Dans le courant d’une onde pure.
Vers
5 Un loup survient à jeun qui cherchait aventure,
Et que la faim en ces lieux attirait.
«Qui te rend si hardi de troubler mon breuvage?
Dit cet animal plein de rage:
Tu seras châtié de ta témérité.
10 — Sire, répond l’agneau, que Votre Majesté
Ne se mette pas en colère;
Mais plutôt qu’elle considère
Que je me vas désaltérant
Dans le courant,
15 Plus de vingt pas au-dessous d’elle,
Et que par conséquent en aucune façon
Je ne puis troubler sa boisson.
— Tu la troubles, reprit cette bête cruelle,
Et je sais que de moi tu médis l’an passé.
20 — Comment l’aurais-je fait, si je n’étais pas né?
Reprit l’agneau, je tette encor ma mère.
— Si ce n’est toi, c’est donc ton frère.
— Je n’en ai point. — C’est donc quelqu’un des tiens:
Car vous ne m’épargnez guère,

How to Get Involved

There are many ways college and university faculty members can help maintain the high standards of the AP Program:

- Participate in a college comparability study
- Be an AP Reader
- Contribute multiple-choice test items for the AP Exam
- Become an AP Faculty Consultant

For more information, please go to: apcentral.collegeboard.com/highered/getinvolved

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The College Board: Connecting Students to College Success

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