



What Are The Most Difficult AP Courses?

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[Advanced Placement \(AP\)](#) courses are overseen by the College Board, intended to give high school students an opportunity to take more challenging college level classes. They may also help boost transcripts when applying to colleges. AP courses are weighted at five points rather than four points on your GPA!

The difficulty of an AP course is determined by a few factors; the amount of material and the end of the year exam. Sometimes, a course at one school may be substantially harder than at another school because of the way the teacher presents the material.

United States History, Calculus BC, Physics C, Chemistry, Biology and English Literature are deemed the hardest AP courses due to their curriculums and lengthy tests. Nonetheless, some of these courses may be easier for you due to proficiency in the subject.

Below, Success Pathway has given you a preview into some of the more challenging AP courses. However, each school offers different courses, so make sure you check in with your guidance counselor when you are planning to add an AP class to your schedule. It is important to note our rankings are based on exam passing rates and student feedback.

[AP Human Geography](#)

This course mainly covers the impact of humans on our planet, and analyzes aerial photos, maps, and models. It holds a passing rate of 48.9%. It is recommended for students who want to pursue a career in archaeology, history, socialists, and other similar professions.

When choosing this course, you should have a good understanding of geographic terms and tools, above-average reading comprehension and the ability to analyze graphs. You should be prepared for a lot of writing. This class incorporates many subjects, ranging from world geography to mathematics. The course relies heavily on college-level texts and requires a lot of challenging vocabulary.

The AP exam runs for about 2 hours and 15 minutes (60 minutes for the multiple choice section and 75 minutes for the written responses). Before taking the exam, you should be confident in all the subject specific vocabulary, and the ability to apply what you learned to specific scenarios. Your written response section will consist of three questions, so you should take about 25 minutes to respond to each question.

[AP United States History](#)

Typically known as APUSH, AP United States History AP class has a passing rate of 50.9%. This class will cover 9 historical periods, starting from 1491, and look into major events and technological and social developments. The main topics include migration, geography, culture, government and America's relevance in the world.

If you want to be a historian, a history teacher, archivist, or a related career, you may want to take this course! It will teach you how to analyze primary and secondary sources, and be able to write about them, create arguments and defend your opinions. It is also important to be confident in your reading comprehension and writing. This class will challenge your ability to memorize and analyze learning material.



The exam will last about 3 hours and 15 minutes; 55 minutes for 55 multiple choice questions, 40 minutes for three short answer questions, an hour for the document based question (DBQ) and 40 minutes for the final long essay.

[AP Physics 1](#)

This class has the lowest passing rate at 41.9%. Students will be taught about kinematics, circular motion, energy, rotational motion and other more in depth physics than a mainstream course.

This course is recommended for students interested in forensics, environmental science, math, conservation science, and related subjects. AP Physics 1 focuses on typical college level physics topics and will require a lot of laboratory work and lab reports. There will be a lot of mathematics involved and the methods of "error analysis."

The AP exam will take 3 hours to complete and has two main sections; multiple choice and written responses. It challenges students' math skills, recalling information to explain scenarios, analyzing models and understanding procedures for different experiments.

[AP Literature and Composition](#)

With a passing rate of 52.6%, AP Literature and Composition's curriculum involves an immense amount of writing at the college level. Students will write essays, learn about the structure and style of writing and read essays, novels and books that require analyzation of literature.

The course is ideal for students interested in becoming editors, English teachers and writers.

You should be prepared to read a lot of older texts dating back to the 16th century. The course may also involve collaborative writing, journals, and essays.

The exam is about 3 hours long; 1 hour of which is dedicated to 55 multiple choice questions, and the other 2 hours are test your knowledge on specific skills such as an interpretation of a poem.

AP Environmental Science



With a passing rate of 49.4%, AP Environmental Science covers the exploration of natural resources, water usage, energy consumption, etc. The class challenges students to find probable solutions for environmental issues.

Students wanting to pursue food science, environmental engineering, geoscientist and it's related majors should consider taking this course.

This class requires a lot of laboratory work and knowledge of math. AP

Environmental Science will challenge its students to design experiments and analyze results. This course involves a lot of Geology, Chemistry and Biology.

This exam lasts 3 hours; 1 hour and 30 minutes is dedicated to 100 multiple choice questions and 1 hour and 30 minutes consists of four written responses.

AP United States Government and Politics

AP United States Government and Politics focuses on the U.S. government, politics, laws, civil rights, etc. It has a passing rate of 49.3%.

This class is recommended for students who display interest in economics, government, sociology and related topics.

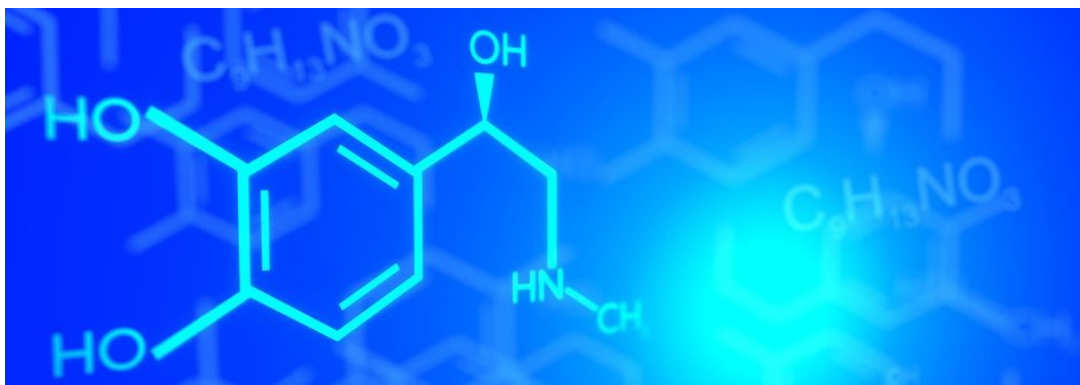
It is expected that students will interpret political patterns, compare and contrast theories and analyze concepts.

The exam takes a total of 85 minutes; 45 minutes for multiple choice questions and 40 minutes for a written response. There are 60 multiple choice questions and four written responses. Each should be targeted to take about 10 minutes to complete.

AP Chemistry

AP Chemistry's material involves several topics such as chemical interaction, thermodynamics, and molecular force. It has a passing rate of 49.4%.

The class targets students interested in becoming chemical engineers, biomedical engineers, biochemists, etc.



It will challenge you to learn context specific vocabulary, use mathematical skills, and also involves an immense amount of laboratory work. The class will rely heavily on math, specifically Algebra.

The AP exam lasts for 3 hours and 15 minutes. There are 60 multiple choice questions that should be completed in 1 hour and 30 minutes and 7 written responses to be completed in the other 1 hour and 45 minutes. They will cover topics such as atomic views and lab data.

In conclusion, you should select an AP class that interests you and will allow insight into your future profession. Success Pathway consultants are here to help you choose the course that is best for you based on your educational background.

Reference:

The College Board (n.d) Retrieved from <https://apstudents.collegeboard.org/about-ap-scores/score-distributions>.