

# Getting Started Guide

IOAPA

## Talk to your Administrators

### 01 Benefits of IOAPA courses

The Iowa Online AP® Academy framework works with students' high school curriculum so that students can take advanced classes that are challenging and of interest to them. As an online program, IOAPA offers flexibility that traditional courses may not in terms of scheduling, and allows students to be challenged in a supportive environment.



### 02 Why AP?

Iowa Online AP® Academy students who take the AP® exam generally perform just as well as students who participate in traditional AP® courses. Students who enroll in Iowa Online AP® Academy courses also tend to successfully complete them: During the 2018-2019 school year, the completion rate was 93.3%, and 92% of those students successfully passed their course.

While there are multiple options for completing post-secondary coursework during high school, AP® courses are generally higher quality, with rigor and quality of content more comparable to a four-year university. In addition, Advanced Placement® classes are nationally recognized as a quality way to earn college credit at many colleges and universities across the nation. Studies consistently show that students who earn a 3 or higher on an AP® exam:

1. Perform well in subsequent college courses in the discipline
2. Perform well overall in college
3. Are more likely to graduate in four years
4. Are more likely to major in their AP® subject or a related discipline
5. Are more likely to have better outcomes in college compared to students who take dual enrollment courses.

Source: The College Board. "Research Findings for the AP® Program"

## Talk to your Students

IOAPA does not set strict limits on the number of courses an individual student can take. However, we encourage students to carefully consider their time constraints and ability to work independently before committing to more than one or two courses at once. It is important for schools, students, and parents to make a commitment when a student is enrolled in an online course. As you enroll students, please:

- Consider student level of comfort with online work and particular learning style. Complete the Student Readiness Checklist (Appendix D in the Mentor Handbook) with each student.
- Consider student schedule limitations (each AP course requires class time and 10-15 hours of additional work weekly). The most frequent reason for dropping a course is over-commitment.

## Register your School

All schools must re-register online for each new school year.

Your school's principal, site coordinator and mentor should be confirmed as part of the registration process, before classes begin. Please contact the Belin-Blank Center if your school has changes in these roles after registering.

### 1. Register your school and assign a site coordinator and mentor at

[belinblank.org/ioapa](http://belinblank.org/ioapa). The Mentor Designation Form must be completed and returned to [ioapa@belinblank.org](mailto:ioapa@belinblank.org) in order to receive a stipend. For spring semester courses, schools may skip this step if they have already registered for the current academic year. Visit the registration link, and you will then be redirected to step 2 (student nomination).

### 2. Nominate the student(s) taking IOAPA course(s).

Completing the school registration page sends the principal an automated email with a link in it to nominate the student. The principal either needs to complete the nomination or forward the link to the site coordinator or mentor to complete.

### 3. Confirm that the student has self-enrolled in the course.

Once the student has been nominated, an email will be automatically sent to the student to enroll himself/herself in the actual course. Be sure to have students check their junk mail folders, as the automated emails sometimes get filtered there. Students should complete this step and be sure to click submit when they're done.

After completing the registration and enrollment processes, students and school personnel will receive log-in information for the course sites before the course begins. For assistance, please contact the Iowa Online AP® Academy secretary, Lori Hudson ([ioapa@belinblank.org](mailto:ioapa@belinblank.org)).

### • After registering, be sure to complete any College Board requirements for offering AP® courses:

1. Register your school with the College Board.
2. Complete the AP® Course Audit process for Online/Distance Learning courses by January 31 in order to be able to label courses as "AP" on students' transcripts.
3. Encourage high school students to take the AP® exam, and order AP® exams for courses that begin in fall 2019 by **November 15, 2019** and for courses that begin in the spring by **March 13, 2020**.

## AP® Exam Preparation

### 01 Resources

There are many great resources available for students to prepare for the AP exams! The College Board is now providing new and additional resources to better support students taking AP courses.

These resources include **personal progress checks**, which measure students' content and skills learned throughout each unit, **progress dashboard**, which helps teachers recognize student achievement or growth areas, and an **AP question bank** that includes over 15,000 questions based on real AP questions. You can also learn more about what to expect on exam day on their AP Students page.

Students should visit

[apstudent.collegeboard.org/takingtheexam](http://apstudent.collegeboard.org/takingtheexam) for information about AP exams, including dates, policies, and fees. Schools should visit [professionals.collegeboard.org/testing/ap](http://professionals.collegeboard.org/testing/ap) for information about ordering and administering AP exams.



### 02 Taking the AP® Exam

Taking the AP exam is a decision that should be made in collaboration with the student and their course mentor. However, we strongly recommend that students who complete AP courses take the AP exam! While there are many benefits to simply taking an AP course, a qualifying score on the AP exam (typically a 3 or higher) may earn college credit for the course, saving time and tuition money. In addition, AP exam scores tend to look favorable during the college admissions process, because it demonstrates mastery of the content and student initiative for seeking out higher level college-prep work.

