



Advanced Placement Courses at Spring-Ford

What, and how difficult are they?

Background

- ✦ 10-12 Center- 20 AP courses
- ✦ 9th Grade Center- First AP course (Human Geography) offered next year
- ✦ College Board provides schools with 34 AP courses to choose from
- ✦ The purpose is to take a course that mimics a college level class
- ✦ The courses conclude with a test that is graded on a 1-5 scale
- ✦ Most colleges, with a few exceptions, will take a student's AP score(s) into account and offer them exemptions for the equivalent course during their freshman year at college

Course Details

- ✦ Listed under all of the prerequisites for these courses at our school are requirements such as a 90%-95% of above in the previous respective subject class, a teacher recommendation, and most importantly an interest in the material
- ✦ All courses demand an enormous amount of time both from the teacher's and student's perspective
- ✦ Some courses are designed to cover two semesters worth of college material
- ✦ Teachers who choose to teach these courses must attend conferences and workshops on their own time so that they can be well-equipped for the long journey to May the following school year
- ✦ The most obvious issues in all of the AP classes are time constraints, money for materials, and the required interest of everyone involved to work hard all year

Other Details

- ✦ There is a 1.07 weight multiplier for AP classes when calculating GPA
- ✦ In my opinion, the school does an excellent job of having the teachers teach these classes to the level of a freshman college course
- ✦ In last May, the number of students taking AP exams was the highest ever in Spring-Ford's history (504 Students)
- ✦ Example:
 - Cost for a single AP test in 2014 is \$89.00
 - Suppose a student is taking four classes to supplement four freshman level requirements at Montgomery County Community College. $4 \times \$89.00 = \356.00
 - Cost of books for freshman level courses at Montgomery County Community College is ~ \$1,300.00
 - $\$1,300.00 - \$356.00 = \$944.00$ saved by taking the AP tests for these courses while still in high school
 - Obviously the student needed to get a certain score on each respective test for the college to count it, but the fact is that these courses can save people a lot of money and time in college

My *Personal* Experience

- ✦ **This year:** AP Biology, AP Language and Composition, AP Calculus AB, and AP U.S. Government and Politics
- ✦ **Next year:** AP Physics, AP Chemistry, AP Calculus BC, AP French, and AP Literature and Composition
 - ~ 3-5 hours of homework each night
 - ~ 2 tests a week
 - ~ 4-5 quizzes a week
 - ~ 2-3 long term assignments a month
 - ~ 1-3 essays a month for English
 - Along with just the normal homework load, I have to continually review things from earlier in the year
- ✦ The AP test is cumulative so every student must be accountable from things learned from the first day of school until their test in May

My Recommendations

- ✦ Continue to add AP classes
- ✦ Encourage every student to take advantage of open enrollment if they are passionate about an AP class
- ✦ Keep sending teachers to workshops
- ✦ Urge every student to take at least one AP class in their most interested subject

Thank you for your time!

