



More Washington students taking, passing Advanced Placement Exams

In 2010, more than 28 percent of Washington high school seniors had taken an Advanced Placement (AP) Exam during high school. This is more than double the percentage of all seniors who took one in 2001, when the program was first offered in the state. The 28 percent participation rate was very close to the national average of 28.3 percent for 2010.

These and other data are available in the latest annual College Board Report to the Nation. Among other metrics, the College Board reports on the number and performance of students taking AP Examinations across the United States. Specific state-by-state performance metrics also are reported.

The College Board is a non-profit organization composed of 5,700 schools, colleges, universities, and other educational organizations. The College Board's mission is to connect students to college success and opportunity. Each year, the College Board serves 7 million students and their parents, 23,000 high schools, and 3,800 colleges and universities.

How the AP Exam program works

The Advanced Placement program enables students to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. The program encompasses more than 35 college-level courses, each modeled on a comparable college course. Enrollment is limited to those courses offered at a particular high school. To take most AP courses, students must first have taken preparatory courses leading to the higher-level subject matter taught in the AP program.

College and university faculty, working under contract with the College Board, define curricular expectations of each course and review all AP teachers' syllabi. High school teachers must take an AP course for certification from the College Board. A student who earns a 3 or higher on the rigorous culminating AP Exam becomes eligible for college credit and/or advanced placement in that subject.

How Washington students performed

- The total number of all Washington seniors in 2010 was 65,271.
- Of these, 18,296 (28%) took an AP Exam during high school.
- The total number of AP tests taken by 2010 seniors was 50,012.
- 61 percent of seniors taking AP exams (11,182) scored a three or higher on at least one test.

The tests taken most frequently, and the percentage of students taking the tests scoring a three or higher are included in **Table 1** on the next page.

Table 1: AP tests taken most frequently by Washington's 2010 senior class during high school

<u>Subject</u>	<u># Taking Test</u>	<u>% Scoring 3+</u>
English Language and Composition	7,104	61%
U.S. History	6,627	52
English Literature & Composition	6,163	58
Calculus AB	5,085	60
US Government and Politics	3,661	63
Biology	2,753	45
World History	2,511	60
Statistics	2,452	56
Chemistry	1,808	49
European History	1,703	53
Physics B	1,430	61
Environmental Science	1,426	55
Psychology	1,350	68
Spanish Language	1080	63
Calculus BC	1,011	76

Table 2: Other test categories in Washington and number of participants

Comparative Gov. & Politics	(565)	Japanese Language & Culture	(105)
Studio Art 2D Design	(449)	Physics C : Elec. & Mag.	(95)
Macroeconomics	(414)	Spanish Literature	(80)
Physics C: Mechanics	(365)	Chinese Language & Culture	(79)
Human Geography	(360)	German Language	(46)
Microeconomics	(269)	Studio Art 3-D Design	(31)
French Language	(261)	Computer Science AB	(28)
Studio Art Drawing	(178)	Latin: Virgil	(27)
Computer Science A	(207)	Latin Literature	(8)
Art History	(141)	French Literature	(2)
Music Theory	(108)		

Table 3: Percentage of Washington seniors taking exams in key subject areas

- About 17.2 percent of all Washington seniors took an AP Examination in social science;
- 14.8 percent took one in English;
- 11.2 percent took one in math;
- 9.2 percent took one in science;
- 2.4 percent took one in foreign language; and
- 1.3 percent took one in art.

Table 4: Participation by ethnicity

The demographics of high school seniors have changed since 2001. White students in 2001 made up 79.3% of all seniors. In 2010, they represented 70.9%. During this period, the percentage of other ethnic groups increased slightly. Hispanic/Latino students, for example, went from being 6.3% of all high school seniors to 10.9%. When compared with population distribution overall, test participation and performance rates grew at a relatively even rate among all ethnic groups except whites, whose rates declined slightly.

Ethnic group	% of all seniors		% taking test		% scoring 3+	
	2001	2010	2001	2010	2001	2010
Black/African Am.	3.9%	4.8%	1.9%	2.6%	1.1%	1.5%
Hispanic/Latino	6.3%	10.9%	3.5%	7.6%	3.4%	5.9%
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	1.9%	2.2%	0.6%	1.1%	0.5%	0.8%
Asian/Asian American/ Pacific Islander	13.7%	14.8%	12.5%	14.6%	12.5%	14.6%
White	79.3%	70.9%	73.7%	66.3%	73.7%	66.3%

Washington universities receiving AP score reports

Sixty colleges in Washington received AP Examination scores in 2010. Three were among the top institutions nationally receiving the most AP scores. These included all scores, not just scores from graduating seniors.

Washington universities receiving AP score reports and national rankings

<u>Institutions</u>	<u>Exams</u>	<u>Students</u>	<u>National Rank</u>
University of Washington	9,615	4,627	26
Washington State University	3,086	1,879	115
Western Washington University	2,445	1,417	146

For more information on the College Board's AP Report to the Nation, visit their website www.collegeboard.com/apreport