

WHY TAKE AP COURSES?

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There is no doubt about it. Advanced Placement courses are hard. So why put yourself or your child through it? In fact, there are two very good reasons why.

First, AP courses can earn you college credit. We design AP courses to help a student pass the AP exam given in May. Most colleges award credit based on a score of 3 out of 5 (check your college catalog—some award credit only for a 4). A score of 3 generally gets you three semester hours of credit. A score of 4 or 5 will often get you five or six credit hours. MTSU's current undergraduate catalog lists tuition expenses as \$137 per semester hour; Lipscomb's catalog lists tuition as \$475 per semester hour. This means that a student making a 3 on an AP exam could save from \$411 to \$1425 in college costs. Making a 4 or 5 could save you from \$685 to \$2850. Last year we had a senior who took three AP courses, earning seventeen semester hours and starting this year at college as a second semester freshman.

But college credit is not the only reason to take an AP course. According to a recent study conducted by the makers of the ACT,

students who take rigorous courses beyond the recommended minimum number of core courses are even more likely to be ready for college. And students whose beyond-core coursework includes courses in advanced mathematics beyond Algebra II (such as Trigonometry), as well as Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, are *likeliest of all* to be college ready. And this is true of students at all levels of achievement, not just the high achievers. (*Crisis at the Core, Executive Summary. ACT: Information for Life's Transitions. 2004. 27 October 2004* <<http://www.act.org/path/policy/index.html>>.)

In other words, you don't even have to pass the AP exam to benefit from the rigor of the course.

But what about my GPA? Won't taking a harder course wreck it? It doesn't have to—MTCS follows the example of most schools and adds points to AP grades so that AP students are not penalized for taking harder courses.

So it looks like you're out of reasons *not* to take an AP course. If you make pretty good grades and are willing to work hard, you could greatly improve your chances of being highly successful in college. Right now we offer the following AP courses:

AP American History (11th grade)

AP Biology (12th grade)

AP English (12th grade)

AP European History (12th grade) (if interest allows)

Contact Debbie Mankin (debbiemankin@mtcscougars.org) if you have questions about the AP Exam or about registering for a class.