

NORTH HUNTERDON-VOORHEES REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

BRIEFING PAPER – AP CAPSTONE

AP Seminar course (278) AP Research course (279)

CURRENT STATUS: The North Hunterdon-Voorhees district currently offers over 20 AP courses. The College Board began offering the AP Capstone program in the fall of 2014. With this program, students take two courses: AP Seminar and AP Research. “Rather than teaching subject-specific content, these courses develop students’ skills in research, analysis, evidence-based arguments, collaboration, writing, and presenting. Students who complete the two-year program can earn one of two different AP Capstone awards, which are valued by colleges across the United States and around the world.”

Over 1100 high schools around the world are now participating in the program, including the following New Jersey schools: Chatham, Hunterdon Central, Morris Hills, Mount Olive, and Roxbury.

North Hunterdon and Voorhees High Schools applied to participate in the program last year, and they were both notified on 11/15/17 that their applications were accepted and that they have the opportunity to implement the program. We received the notification too late to implement the program for the 2018-19 school year, so we are now preparing to offer it for the 2019-20 school year.

GOAL: To successfully implement the AP Capstone program.

PROPOSAL:

- Begin offering the AP Seminar course (278) for the 2019-20 school year as a course listed under the English department course offerings. AP Seminar will be open to students in grades 10-11.
- Begin offering the AP Research course (279) for the 2020-21 school year as a course listed under the English department course offerings. AP Research will be open to students in grades 11-12.
- Students who complete both courses and earn a 3 or above on both AP exams will earn the AP Seminar and Research Certificate (first available in July 2021).
- Students who complete both courses and earn a 3 or above on both AP exams and earn a 3 or above on four additional AP exams during their high school career will earn the AP Capstone Diploma (first available in July 2021).

ADVANTAGES:

- Students will gain valuable skills in research, analysis, evidence-based arguments, collaboration, writing, and presenting with a focus on real-world application.
- Students will have the ability to earn the AP Seminar and Research Certificate as well as the AP Capstone Diploma, which is included on the Common Application Counselor form.

DISADVANTAGES:

- Cost for resources for program
- The courses may take away from the number of students enrolling in the other AP courses.
- Students may struggle to fit this into their schedule if it doesn't fulfill any other requirements. (Hunterdon Central is allowing AP Research to fulfill the requirement for English 4.)

SPECIFIC ACTION REQUIRED:

- Approve the program and courses.
- Identify teachers at both schools who will teach the courses.
- Allocate of money to purchase resources for the courses, including professional development.
- Teachers complete required professional development:
 - Teachers must complete a five-day in-person workshop the summer before the first year of teaching the course.
 - During the school year, teachers must also complete online training modules on scoring student work.

EVALUATION: Success of the program will be evaluated by the number of students signing up for the courses and their success on the AP exams for the courses in the program. Success will also be measured by the number of students earning the AP Seminar and Research Certificate and the AP Capstone Diploma.

SUBMITTED BY:

- Rich Broan

DATE: September 5, 2018