

St. Mary's Academy-New AP Capstone Diploma Program

St. Mary's Academy is one of 2000 schools worldwide to offer an AP Capstone Diploma program focuses on college-level research and collaboration.

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ST. MARY'S ACADEMY-New AP Capstone Diploma™ Program

“The AP Capstone™ program will provide SMA students with the skill sets to become collaborators, critical thinkers, and consumers of information.”

*St. Mary's Academy Principal,
Mrs. Mary Rose Batungbacal*

The AP Capstone Diploma™ program focuses on college-level research, collaboration, and presentation skills crucial for college and career success.

St. Mary's Academy is one of approximately 2,000 schools worldwide to implement the AP Capstone Diploma™ program—an innovative program that encourages students to develop skills for college and career success,

including critical thinking, research, collaboration, and communication. The program consists of two yearlong courses taken in sequence: AP® Seminar and AP Research.

In AP Seminar, taken in 10th grade, students choose real-world topics and evaluate them from multiple perspectives. Students identify credibility and bias in sources and develop arguments in support of a recommendation. In the subsequent AP Research course, students design and execute a college-level research project on a topic of personal interest. Students receive firsthand experience in writing a research question, executing an appropriate method, analyzing data, presenting their results, and defending their findings.

Students who score a 3 or higher in AP Seminar and AP Research and on 4 additional AP Exams of their choosing earn the AP Capstone Diploma™. This Diploma signifies outstanding academic achievement and attainment of college-level academic and research skills. Both AP Capstone™ courses are project based, and students are required to deliver written arguments, collaborate in teams, and deliver professional multimedia presentations as part of their AP Exams.

SMA Students will also have a high level of academic and hand-on experiences developing AP Capstone™ projects in the School's new Innovation Lab. SMA's Innovation Lab is a collaborative space for all students to engage in Design Based thinking through hands-on experiences in a

combined classroom-laboratory setting. SMA believes that the AP Capstone™ and the resources available in the Innovation Lab will engage students in multiple ways of learning, complex problem solving, critical thinking, creative collaboration, and team building where everyone has something to contribute and become innovators.

Rushi Sheth, executive director of the AP Capstone Diploma™ program states “The AP Capstone™ courses enable students to explore real-world issues in great depth through research and collaboration,” Mr. Sheth also states the AP Capstone Diploma™ “provides terrific opportunities for students to write and present their work effectively, both individually and in teams—the very skills professors and employers are demanding.”

St. Mary’s Academy will start offering AP Seminar in the fall of 2022. “The AP Capstone™ program will prepare our diverse student body to become skilled collaborators, critical thinkers, and consumers of information. The Capstone courses will give students flexibility to explore the complex topics affecting their lives, and we are excited to see their research.” St. Mary’s Academy Principal, Mrs. Mary Rose Batungbacal.

In partnership with the higher education community, College Board developed AP Capstone™ so students can practice and master skills that serve them well in college and career.

“We’re excited more schools are offering the AP Capstone Diploma™ program,” said Kedra Ishop, vice president for enrollment management at the University of Southern California. “We believe the research, collaboration, and presentation skills taught in the two courses will be valuable to students throughout their academic and professional careers.”

About St. Mary’s Academy-Inglewood, CA

St. Mary’s Academy is a private Catholic all-girls college preparatory High School located in Inglewood, CA. For more than 130 years, SMA has provided strong academics in a nurturing environment where every young woman is visible, heard, and understood. SMA academic programs include a robust National Honor Society (NHS) and California Scholarship Federation (CSF) membership, and PSAT recognition. SMA students have also received scholarly achievements from the following highly competitive programs: Thrive Scholars, USC Bovards, Riordan Scholars, Posse Foundation, and Questbridge. SMA graduates are college bound and admitted to 4-year Universities in California and beyond. For more information on St. Mary’s Academy, visit www.smabelles.org

About College Board

College Board is a mission-driven not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Founded in 1900, College Board was created to expand access to higher education. Today, the membership association is made up of over 6,000 of the world’s leading educational institutions and is dedicated to promoting excellence and equity in education. Each year, College Board helps more than seven million students prepare for a successful transition to college through programs and services in college readiness and college

success—including the SAT®, the Advanced Placement® Program, and BigFuture™. The organization also serves the education community through research and advocacy on behalf of students, educators, and schools. For further information, visit collegeboard.org.

AP Equity and Access Policy

College Board strongly encourages educators to make equitable access a guiding principle for their AP® programs by giving all willing and academically prepared students the opportunity to participate in AP. We encourage the elimination of barriers that restrict access to AP for students from ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups that have been traditionally underrepresented. Schools should make every effort to ensure their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population. College Board also believes that all students should have access to academically challenging coursework before they enroll in AP classes, which can prepare them for AP success. It is only through a commitment to equitable preparation and access that true equity and excellence can be achieved.

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