

## ■ The French Baccalauréat

The French Baccalauréat is a national diploma, which is the culmination of a pre-university-level program taken in secondary school.

It was created in 1808 and is administered and managed by the French Ministry of Education. The Ministry defines the programs (curricula) and develops and administers the exam. The students' exams are evaluated by teachers accredited by the Ministry of National Education, which thereby guarantees the reliability of the results achieved by the candidates.

The program ensures both a broad general cultural knowledge by the number and the variety of required subjects, and a specialization in a particular subject.

In France, the Baccalauréat is considered the first diploma in higher education and, therefore, it grants its holder the right to enter any French university. Elsewhere, particularly in the United States, the exam can be used as a tool to assess the preparation of candidates because of its rigor and grading system. The academic schedule of secondary school students is

very full: between eight and 12 courses are taken per year, i.e., 32 to 40 hours of class per week.

The Baccalauréat encourages the development and demonstration of critical reasoning, both in writing and orally. All of the parts of the exam (which generally last 3-4 hours each) require an essay that allows the candidate to demonstrate his or her in-depth knowledge of the subject matter, and also his or her skills in analysis, synthesis and extrapolation.

In 2009, 535,200 students passed the Baccalauréat in France. In the network of French schools throughout the world, more than 10,000 students took the French Baccalauréat. It is widely recognized throughout the world, including numerous universities in North America.

In France, the Baccalauréat is considered the first diploma in higher education.



Students who want to take the BFA have to be enrolled in an accredited French high school in the United States.



## ■ The French-American Baccalauréat/Baccalauréat Franco-Américain (BFA)

The French-American Baccalauréat is the synthesis of the best that U.S. secondary education has to offer: the AP Program, and the best the French school system has to offer: the Baccalauréat.

The College Board, the U.S.-based organization recognized for its programs, including the Advanced Placement Program (AP), and the Ministry of National Education decided to collaborate on this project.

The idea is the following: students who want to participate in the BFA must be enrolled in an accredited French high school in the United States. In première (11th grade) and terminale (12th grade), these students take three AP courses and Exams instead of the three corresponding French classes for the Baccalauréat.

AP courses are taken in the participating French high schools, after approval of the syllabi by the College Board.

Students take the AP Exams in May of the 11th or 12th grade, depending on the AP course, and take the French Baccalauréat exams according to the normal calendar for the Baccalauréat.

# French-American BACCALAURÉAT

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## ■ The Advantages of the French–American Baccalauréat/ Baccalauréat Franco–Américain (BFA)

For students, successfully completing the BFA means:

- Having the guarantee of a general education of recognized excellence that is provided by the French Baccalauréat.
- Earning the French Baccalauréat, thereby gaining access to universities, in France and in Europe, as well as the possibility of applying for the selective French courses of study (such as the preparatory classes for *grandes écoles*). N.B.: The International Baccalaureate (IB) does not offer this possibility.
- Experiencing instruction methods anchored to North American higher education since AP courses are college level (offered in high schools), and thus being better prepared for North American universities should that be the candidate's choice.
- Achieving mastery of the French language and culture as well as the English language and U.S. culture and, at the same time, demonstrating true bicultural skills, which are extremely important in an increasingly open world.
- Having the possibility of accruing academic course credit at many universities.

For universities, accepting a student with a BFA means:

- Being assured that the student was educated in schools that satisfy double requirements each year: those of both the U.S. educational system and the French Ministry of National Education.
- Relying on proven academic results, guaranteed by the French educational authorities and the AP Program.
- Being certain that the student has a mastery of the English language and familiarity with U.S. culture and that she or he is ready to be competitive in college.
- Recruiting a student who has proven to be highly prepared and motivated academically because she or he will already have made the significant effort demanded by the two academic programs.
- Choosing a student educated in the requirement of writing essays and problem solving, who will have already proven his or her skills in analysis, synthesis and extrapolation; these skills are essential in the academic environment.
- Diversifying the profiles of students at your campus by accepting a student with an international and multicultural background.

## ■ The Advanced Placement Program® (AP®)

The Advanced Placement Program® is a rigorous academic program designed to offer college-level courses to highly motivated secondary school students.

Created in 1995, the AP Program is the result of cooperation between secondary schools and universities.

Each year, secondary schools request authorization to offer AP courses in particular subjects to their students: The College Board, through the AP Course Audit process, ensures that the courses meet college-level standards before approving the syllabus for each course.

AP courses are academically challenging and, at the end of each academic year in May, students take corresponding rigorous examinations.

The scores that students achieve on the AP Exams (evaluated on a 1–5 scale, with 5 being the highest possible score) reflect their degree of mastery of the subjects studied.

The AP is recognized as a criterion of excellence and, in 2009, nearly 1.7 million high school students from more than

17,000 secondary schools took 2.9 million AP Examinations in 33 academic subjects.

Most North American universities will grant a student college credit and/or placement in advanced course in consideration of his or her qualifying score on the relevant AP Exam.

In addition, AP courses and exam scores are recognized by admissions officers in approximately 600 universities in 59 countries.

For more information about AP policies at colleges and universities, please visit: <http://collegeboard.com/ap/creditpolicy> (U.S. universities) <http://collegeboard.com/apintl> (universities outside of the U.S.)

The preparation for the BFA takes place during the last two years of secondary education (that is, the *première* and the *terminale* in French terminology, or 11th and 12th grades in the U.S. system).

Interested students have the possibility of taking one of the three following courses of

study (Literature: L, Economics: ES or Science: S), based on the selection available in their respective schools. They have to take exams at the end of each of these two academic years.

NB - Most of the exams are in the form of essays or problem-solving questions.

## ■ BFA Exams S (Science)

EXAMS DURING THE <i>PREMIÈRE</i> (11th grade)			
	Weight	Tests	Test Duration
French Literature	2 + 2	written and oral	4 h + 20 min
Research and Application Tutorial	2	oral	30 min
AP History (European or U.S. or World)	3	written	3 h

EXAMS DURING THE <i>TERMINALE</i> (12th grade)			
	Weight	Tests	Test Duration
Mathematics or AP Calculus	7 or 9 7	written written	4 h 3 h 15
Science or AP Biology	6 or 8 6	written and lab written	3 h 30 and 1 h 3 h
Physics and Chemistry	6 or 8	written and lab	3 h 30 and 1 h
AP English Literature and Composition	5	written	3 h
Foreign Language (other than English or French)	2	written	2 h
Philosophy	3	written	4 h
Physical Education	2		

The students may take electives : Latin, Drama, Cinema, Arts.

The AP Program offers college-level courses and exams that prepare students for university.



For further information:  
 – <http://eduscol.education.fr/cid46205/baccalaureat-general-tech-nologique.html> About French baccalauréat  
 – <http://frenchschoolsnorthamerica.org>  
 Click on the tab "exams offered in North America"  
 – <http://www.collegeboard.com/apstudents>



## ■ BFA Exam ES (Economics)

EXAMS DURING THE <i>PREMIÈRE</i> (11th grade)			
	Weight	Tests	Test Duration
French Literature	2 + 2	written and oral	4 h + 20 min
Science	2	written	1 h 30
Research and Application Tutorial	2	oral	30 min
AP History (European or U.S. or World)	5	written	3 h

EXAMS DURING THE <i>TERMINALE</i> (12th grade)			
	Weight	Tests	Test Duration
Economics and Social Sciences or AP Micro and AP Macroeconomics	7 9	written written	4 h or 5 h 4 h 30
Mathematics or AP Statistics	5 or 7 7	written written	3 h 3 h
AP English Literature and Composition	5	written	3 h
Foreign Language (other than English or French)	3 or 3 + 2	oral	20 or 30 min
Philosophy	4	written	4 h
Physical Education	2		

The students may take electives : Latin, Drama, Cinema, Arts.

## ■ BFA Exam L (Literature)

EXAMS DURING THE <i>PREMIÈRE</i> (11th grade)			
	Weight	Tests	Test Duration
French Literature	3 + 2	written and oral	4 h + 20 min
Science	2	written	1 h 30
Mathematics	2	written	1 h 30
Research and Application Tutorial	2	oral	30 min
AP English Language and Composition	4	written	3 h 15

EXAMS DURING THE <i>TERMINALE</i> (12th grade)			
	Weight	Tests	Test Duration
AP English Literature and Composition	5	written	3 h
AP History (European or U.S. or World)	5	written	3 h
Philosophy	7	written	4 h
Foreign Language (other than English or French)	4	written	3 h
Physical Education	2		

The students may take electives : Latin, Drama, Cinema, Arts.