

AP, IB, CLEP, Other Credits: Planning for Pre-Health Students

Advance Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and College Level Examination Program (CLEP) Credits, Dual Credit Courses, & Community College Courses

While AP, IB, and CLEP credits are great preparation for college, professional schools may not consider these as adequate preparation for their programs. This is especially true at some medical and dental schools, but other health care programs do have concerns about these courses as well. Although you can receive Purdue credit for these courses, you may not want to use AP, IB, or CLEP credits to replace required courses for professional school. The following websites can help you determine the credits you will likely receive from using these methods of placing out of courses.

- Information on credits from testing: [Advanced Placement Credits at Purdue](https://www.admissions.purdue.edu/transfercredit/collegeboardap.php)
<https://www.admissions.purdue.edu/transfercredit/collegeboardap.php>
- Information on prerequisite courses for professional programs (Careers): Purdue [Pre-Professional Advising website](http://www.purdue.edu/preprofessional) at
<http://www.purdue.edu/preprofessional>

Professional School Perspective on AP-Type Courses

- Professional schools feel high school courses rarely provide the depth or breadth of college courses.
- Opting out of some of the required pre-professional courses in college may lead students to not take the heavy science load which professional programs need to see on the transcript. They need to know you can successfully balance 2 or 3 lab classes at the same time.
- AP, IB, and CLEP courses/exams are seen by professional schools as creating an opportunity to take more advanced courses in that area, not a method to get out of taking classes in college.
- Professional programs are more often open to these credits in math and English, but are generally reluctant about taking science credits.
- Professional programs have a limited number of required courses with which they can compare grades among applicants. If you have AP credit for these, you will not have these important grades on your transcript (only a credit). Professional programs want to see a grade for all prerequisite courses.

Making an Informed Decision

You need to be aware of professional school perspectives on AP, IB, CLEP credits so you can make a decision about the best options for your education.

Your Options

- Do not use your AP, IB, and/or CLEP credits in science and take those courses in college.
- Use these credits, but view this as an opportunity to take upper level courses in those areas. If your credits are in your major then this probably isn't a problem. If they aren't, then you should consider taking upper level courses in that area to "replace" the ones for which you received credit.

Things to Think About

- Do you feel prepared to move to the higher level course? Many students find they do not have a strong enough background to start in the higher level course.
- Do you feel the AP course prepared you for the aptitude test you will take for professional school typically at the end of your junior year of college? Will you remember this material when you take your aptitude test?
- Did the course prepare you for the rigors of professional school?

Dual credit courses

Professional schools view dual credit courses differently. Professional schools will accept these as long as you have a college transcript with a grade for the course.

Community College Courses

Some professional schools will not accept community college credits or are somewhat biased against these courses. When possible, it is better to take all required courses (especially science) at a 4-year bachelor's degree granting institution. When in doubt, discuss the competitiveness of this option with professional programs where you will apply before taking these courses.

Discuss all of these issues with a Pre-Professional Advisor if you have questions.