The background features a light gray top-left corner, a large blue grid-patterned area on the right, and a solid orange triangle on the bottom-left. The text is positioned in the gray area.

# **ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES**

**Information Evening:**

**PRACTICAL TIPS**

## **OUTLINE**

**(A) THE BASICS - OVERVIEW OF AP COURSES AND EXAMS**

**(B) THE INSIDE SCOOP - PRACTICAL TIPS, QUESTIONS, AND PERSPECTIVE**

**(C) NORTHERN AP COURSES AND AP EXAM INFORMATION**

**(D) SOME NORTHERN STUDENT ALUMNI PERSPECTIVES ON AP COURSES**

**(E) QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

## **(A) THE BASICS – OVERVIEW OF AP COURSES AND EXAMS**

### **What are “AP” courses?**

- AP = Advanced Placement
- AP Courses:
  - take university level curriculum with Ontario Ministry high school curriculum, while in high school, and / or
- AP Exams:
  - may take AP Exam after completion of AP Course or after self-study
- AP courses and AP exams are certified by the AP Board

## **(A) THE BASICS – OVERVIEW OF AP COURSES AND EXAMS**

- When? Where?
  - take AP curriculum throughout grade 12 course, while being taught Ontario Ministry grade 12 curriculum in the same subject
  - all AP exams are on the same dates, worldwide, in early May
  - Northern offers AP courses and AP exams

## **(A) THE BASICS – OVERVIEW OF AP COURSES AND EXAMS**

- **AP courses and their teachers at Northern this year:**

Calculus ('FUNCLAP') – Mary-Louise Jones

English – Dara Siegel

French – Lori-Ann Moulton, Benedicte Wiggett

US History – Timothy Dingwall

European ('World') History – Fiona Leishman

Computer Science – Stefan Banjevic

Psychology – Jen Marr

Human Geography – Merilyn McKelvey

## **(A) THE BASICS – OVERVIEW OF AP COURSES AND EXAMS**

- **What AP exams can be taken at Northern?**
  - There are AP exams for each AP course offered at Northern
  - Plus - any AP exams for any AP courses that are offered by the AP Board = LOTS!!!  
(note early registration and payment deadlines)
  
- **Can I take an AP course without writing the AP exam? – Yes**
  
- **Can I write an AP exam without taking an AP course? – Yes**  
(but you'll need to study independently)

## **(A) THE BASICS – OVERVIEW OF AP COURSES AND EXAMS**

- **How are AP exams graded?**

Levels 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

- Levels 3\*,4,5 = Pass
- Level 4 or 5 is typically needed to obtain a university credit \*\*

\* Many / most universities won't grant credit for AP level 3 achievement (none grant credit for level 1 or 2 achievement)

\*\* Check every course with every university – requirements vary.

Every university has different recognition and acceptance standards for each AP course. You must specifically check for each university you're interested in, to see if they'll grant credit for each AP course, and what level of achievement is required to obtain credit at that university.

## **(B) THE INSIDE SCOOP - PRACTICAL TIPS, QUESTIONS, AND PERSPECTIVE**

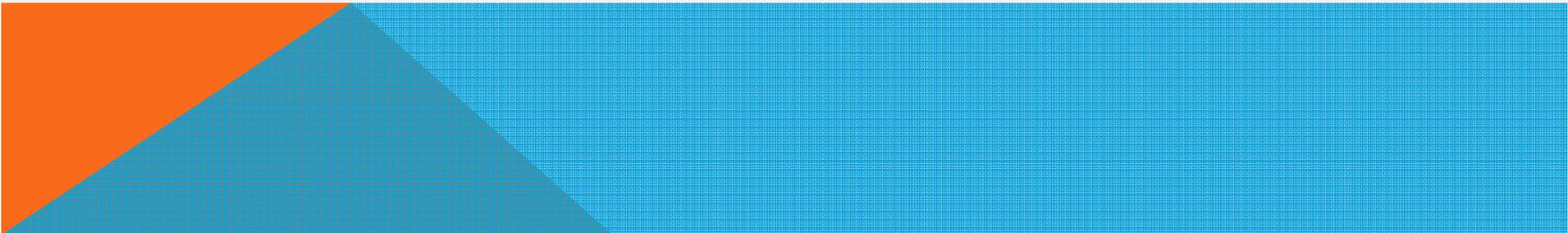
### **(i) What are some Benefits of taking an AP EXAM?**

- ***Some benefits of taking an AP Exam:***
  - if you obtain a level (3\*), 4, or 5 on your exam, you **might** obtain a first year university credit in that course at your university\*
  - If you obtain a first year university credit in that subject, then you can:
    - save money, because you don't have to pay tuition for that course
    - take one less course in first year
    - have space to take an additional first year course of interest
    - have a lighter course load so that you have more time for studying other courses and / or for a part time job during your school year

## **(B) THE INSIDE SCOOP - PRACTICAL TIPS, QUESTIONS, AND PERSPECTIVE**

### **(ii) What are some Benefits of taking an AP COURSE?**

#### ***Some benefits of taking an AP COURSE:***

- more learning: more challenge, more breadth, more depth in subject matter
  - advanced preparation for a first year university course in high school may make that first year course easier and less work when you're in university
  - if you're really interested in a subject area, it can feel great to dive in to more advanced and in depth material earlier
  - many students in a FEW rigorous university programs may have already taken AP level content in high school, so absence of AP preparation may be a disadvantage
  - a limited number of world class 'name' (prestigious) universities may require AP courses and exams as a common basis for comparing students from diverse or often unknown high schools / countries
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## **(B) THE INSIDE SCOOP - PRACTICAL TIPS, QUESTIONS, AND PERSPECTIVE**

### **(ii) continued - some Benefits of taking an AP Course:**

- AP courses qualify as “Gifted” level courses at Northern and contribute to gifted students’ Gifted Certificate at graduation. (Minimum of 2 gifted level courses are necessary in each of grade 11 and 12.)
- many AP course teachers at Northern have great knowledge, breadth, depth, interest, and enthusiasm for the AP courses they teach
- some (more competitive) post-secondary schools view AP course or AP exam completion as a positive distinguishing factor
- obtaining a university credit in high school creates space in your university schedule to take extra electives, spend more time on other courses, or have extra time for part-time employment in university

## **(B) THE INSIDE SCOOP - PRACTICAL TIPS, QUESTIONS, AND PERSPECTIVE**

### **(iii) What are some Disadvantages of taking an AP course?**

- o AP courses have greater depth, breadth, complexity, and / or workload because you're taking university level material in high school – the extra workload or expectations may negatively impact on your time available for your other grade 12 courses and marks.
  - Don't underestimate this factor – it can be very significant.
  - Have an honest assessment about your strengths, weaknesses, level of commitment, and goals, and decide what is a good fit for YOU!

## **(B) THE INSIDE SCOOP - PRACTICAL TIPS, QUESTIONS, AND PERSPECTIVE**

### **(iv) Evaluating fit ...**

- What kind of students are more or less likely to benefit from taking **AP courses**?
- What kind of students are more or less likely to benefit from taking **AP exams**?
  - what kind of student are you ... are AP courses or AP exams a good fit for you?

### **(v) Some practical tips for better handling of AP courses and AP exams:**

- start to cover the material before the course begins (i.e. read English texts during the summer before grade 12)
- stay current in your AP subject and all your other courses, before heavy workload sneaks up on you and overwhelms you
- allocate your time among all your courses and stick to your plan (so that achievement in your AP course doesn't negatively impact on achievement in your other courses)

**(vi) MORE QUESTIONS YOU MAY WISH TO ASK**  
**IF YOU'RE TAKING AP COURSES OR EXAMS ...**

**\* Note that different universities and different programs may have different answers ... always check specifics at the post-secondary schools that you're interested in.**

- Do you have to use or report all your AP courses and AP exams?
- How do universities use AP course and AP exam information in making admission decisions?

## **(vi) CONTINUED ... MORE QUESTIONS YOU MAY WISH TO ASK ...**

- **Generally, how is an AP level course different from a grade 12 Academic level course?**
- **Also, how is an AP level course different from a grade 12 Gifted level course? i.e.:**
  - how much more work – 1.5x? 2x? 3x? more work?
  - how many more hours / week more work?
  - what about level of complexity, analysis, expectations, etc.?
- **What impact will taking the AP level course in grade 12 have on my high school mark**
  - in that AP course?
  - in my other courses?

## **(vi) CONTINUED ... MORE QUESTIONS YOU MAY WISH TO ASK ...**

- **What percentage of grade 12 students take AP courses at Northern?**
- **How many grade 12 Northern students take how many AP courses at Northern?**
  - most students only take 1 AP level course, but a few may take 2 or 3.
  - try to find and talk to students who have taken courses that you're considering.
- **What percentage of grade 12 students take AP exams at Northern?**
- **How many grade 12 Northern students take how many AP exams at Northern?**
- **How many AP exams are written each year in Canada? In the US?**

## **(C) NORTHERN AP COURSES AND AP EXAM INFORMATION**

See next presentation with summaries of 8 AP courses currently offered at Northern:

- overview of course content
- marks allocation for grade 12 content (grade 12 exam and assignments)
- marks allocation for university level AP exam

## **(D) SOME NORTHERN STUDENT ALUMNI PERSPECTIVES ON AP COURSES**

- some sample comments ...
- ask other current AP students and recent grads ... benefits? recommendations?
- assess what's right for you

## **(E) QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

