

First-ever AP African American studies class to be offered in some high schools this fall

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Some high school students across the country can take a new Advanced

Placement course this fall.

AP African American Studies will be a class option for some students, on top of traditional AP subjects such as calculus, art history and computer science.

The College Board, the organization that oversees the [college](#)-level courses offered in many high schools, announced the pilot earlier this year.

The actual classes are beginning this fall at 60 high schools across the United States, the College Board confirmed to U.S. TODAY. The curriculum is set to cover [political science](#), literature, the arts and more.

The program is expected to add schools next year and be available for all high schools interested in offering the course for the 2024-2025 school year.

Trevor Packer, senior vice president of AP and instruction at the College Board, said the course "will introduce a new generation of students to the amazingly rich cultural, artistic, and political contributions of African Americans. We hope it will broaden the invitation to Advanced Placement and inspire students with a fuller appreciation of the American story."

"Nothing is more dramatic than having the College Board launch an AP course in a field—that signifies ultimate acceptance and ultimate academic legitimacy," Dr. Henry Louis Gates, professor and director of the Hutchins Center for African & African American Research at Harvard University, said in a statement.

"AP African American Studies is not CRT. It's not the 1619 Project. It is a mainstream, rigorously vetted, academic approach to a vibrant field

of study."

The course comes as some schools in the U.S. have seen discord over how race is addressed in the classroom. Critical race theory, an academic framework that examines how systems and policies perpetuate racism, has been targeted, including by Republican lawmakers on the local and national levels.

Students in AP courses are expected to analyze a variety of perspectives, according to the College Board. The AP African American Studies course framework will be available online in spring 2024, before the class is expected to be available to all high schools.

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