

Tips to Students:

1. The most important thing to ensure success on the Advanced Placement economics examination is to know the material. There is no substitute for being competent. Use a good text (like Colander).
2. Be familiar with the A.P. curriculum. You can get this information from your own teacher or go directly to the College Board website at www.collegeboard.com

Be sure to look carefully at the "Course Description" booklet. This covers both the microeconomics and macroeconomics course outlines. This document also lists the approximate percentage breakdown for the multiple-choice part of the examination.

3. Practice taking A.P.-style tests. Your instructor probably has copies of previous A.P. examinations that you can use for practice. Every 5 years the College Board and Educational Testing Service release for instructional purposes the complete 60 question multiple-choice exams in both microeconomics and macroeconomics. This can be useful to see the way that questions are asked. As of this date, the 1990, 1995, and 2000 multiple-choice exams have been released. Every year the Free Response questions are released, along with the rubrics by which they are graded.
4. Higher order thinking and NOT memorizing are emphasized on the A.P. examinations. It is essential to be able to explain how you arrived at your answers, especially on the free response portion of the exam. Simple assertions are seldom worth many points. It is always the explanations that are worth most of the points.

In macroeconomics, for example, if a question asks for a possible fiscal policy solution to a recession, it is not enough to simply answer decrease taxes or increase government spending. A successful answer would explain the process by which a tax cut or a spending increase would affect the economy. This is referred to as the fiscal policy transmission mechanism. Increasing spending would increase aggregate demand, as government spending is part of aggregate demand. Decreasing taxes would increase disposable income, which would in turn increase consumption. Increasing consumption would increase aggregate demand, as consumption is part of aggregate demand. These increases in aggregate demand would in turn increase the equilibrium level of real gross domestic product.

Graphing skills are a must. Students are frequently asked to illustrate their answers as well as explain them. Many questions now are mandatory graphing questions. Practice drawing and manipulating graphs.