

AP Career Kickstart™

Make the Case: The Data Behind AP Career Kickstart

*Labor Market Relevance, Salary and Growth Data,
and Skills Gained by Course*



The next time a parent, an administrator, or a school board member asks why these courses matter, here is what to point to: published wages, projected growth, and the specific skills each course builds. Ready to use in the moment, no notes needed.

AP® Business with Personal Finance

Labor market relevance

Business is the most popular college major in the U.S. (NCES, Digest of Education Statistics 2023), and the skills this course builds—entrepreneurship, marketing, finance, and personal money management—apply across many industries, not just business roles.

Salary and growth

- **Market Research Analyst and Marketing Specialist:** median annual wage \$78,760, projected to grow 7% through 2035, about 82,000 openings projected each year nationally (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).
- **Financial and Investment Analyst:** median annual wage \$102,740, projected to grow 7% through 2035, about 29,500 openings projected each year nationally (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics).

Skills gained

- Developing a business idea, from market research through financial planning
- Reading and using financial statements and basic accounting principles
- Personal budgeting, saving, credit, and investing decisions
- Marketing and consumer behavior fundamentals
- Ethical decision making in a business context

AP Cybersecurity

Labor market relevance

CyberSeek counted more than 500,000 U.S. cybersecurity job postings in the 12 months ending April 2025, across many job titles and experience levels.

Salary and growth

- **Information Security Analyst:** median annual wage \$129,180, projected to grow 21% through 2035, about 14,100 openings projected each year nationally (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). It's one of the faster-growing occupations BLS tracks.

Skills gained

- Identifying threats, vulnerabilities, and risk to people, organizations, and systems
- Designing layered defenses and configuring security controls
- Recognizing indicators of compromise and documenting a response
- Physical security, device security, and data protection fundamentals
- Applied cryptography and secure application design basics



AP Networking

Labor market relevance

CompTIA projects that tech occupations will grow about twice as fast as overall U.S. employment over the next decade and forecasts about 9.8 million U.S. tech workers in 2026 (CompTIA, State of the Tech Workforce 2026). Networking skills connect to many of these roles, including network support, systems analysis, and information security.

Salary and growth

- **Computer Systems Analyst:** median annual wage \$105,850, projected to grow 8% through 2035, about 32,900 openings projected each year nationally (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). Growth outlooks vary by specific title, so it is worth looking up a specific title.

Skills gained

- Connecting, configuring, and troubleshooting personal devices and small networks
- Designing, routing, and securing larger managed networks
- Understanding internet infrastructure and global connectivity
- Systematic troubleshooting methodology
- Collaborating on shared technical systems and documentation

A Note on These Numbers

These are national figures for the full occupation or industry, not entry-level, first-job-out-of-high-school numbers. What they show is labor market direction and scale, not a guarantee for any individual student.

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, May 2025 data. CompTIA, State of the Tech Workforce 2026. National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics 2023, Table 322.10 (2021–22 data). Skills gained reflect each course's official College Board framework and unit structure.



Invite students to visit cb.org/explore-AP to tell us they're interested.