AP Capstone and Independent Study & Mentorship
A Side-By-Side Comparison

	AP Capstone	ISM
LENGTH	2-Year Program (option to take 1st year only)	1-Year-Program (option to repeat 2nd year)
START	10th or 11th Grade	11th or 12th Grade
CREDIT HOURS	6.0 Grade Point Scale	5.5 Grade Point Scale
ENROLLMENT	Open	Application and Interview Process
	YEAR ONE: AP SEMINAR	**FIRST SEMESTER: ISM**
REAL-WORLD ANALYSIS	Analyze real-world issues from multiple perspectives	Analyze real-world careers with professional interviews and mentorship
RELEVANT RESEARCH	Topic-based research (strong emphasis on research & technical writing)	Career-based research (strong emphasis on interviewing skills and professionalism)
PROJECTS & PRESENTATIONS	Team & individual projects and presentations	Individual projects & progressively longer presentations
RIGOROUS ASSESSMENTS	Team and individual research papers and presentations, AP Exam components	FISD Business Symposium, FISD Research Showcase; Research assessments, original work project
GUIDANCE	Teacher-guided topics transition to student-selected topics	Student-selected careers and student-selected mentors
FINAL PROJECT	Major research essay, AP exam (3 components)	Field-specific, original work
LOCATION	Classroom-based learning	Classroom and off-campus interviews and mentor visits
	YEAR TWO: AP RESEARCH	**SECOND SEMESTER: ISM**
YEAR-LONG INVESTIGATION	Students design, plan and conduct research on student-selected topic or problem	Continue mentorship in student-selected career; Development of research portfolio
FINAL PRESENTATION	Final academic presentation & paneled oral defense	Final presentation of student-generated project; evaluated by professional mentor
FINAL PRODUCT	Academic thesis paper (~5,000 words) on student-selected topic	Professional field-specific final product & research portfolio on student-selected career
TEACHER	AP Teacher (specially trained by CollegeBoard®)	ISM Teacher and Medical/Professional Mentor
MENTOR	Optional	Required