

What are the advantages of enrolling in the IB program?

There are numerous advantages. First, the IB curriculum is designed to insure a cohesive, comprehensive education for students, no matter where they live in the world. Students who complete this program are preparing, not only for success in university, but also for success in life. They gain a broader world view; follow in-depth approaches to the academic disciplines; and develop time management, problem solving, research, and organizational skills that will remain with them long after the IB experience is over. An additional benefit is that student work is assessed over a two-year period using internationally accepted performance standards.

Students who succeed in the IB Program do better than any other group of students in university level work. As a group, IB students earn higher average SAT scores and maintain higher grade point averages at universities than students who have not attended IB schools. Furthermore, most university admissions officials expect students, particularly scholarship applicants, to take the most challenging courses of which they are capable in high school. Also, students who take IB courses learn to see the world from a variety of perspectives, to examine different points of view, and to see themselves as part of the world community.

The International Baccalaureate is quite simply the most exciting high school academic program offered today. It challenges students to move out of their comfort zone - to undertake projects and areas of study that are new to them. It challenges them to think in sophisticated ways about the connections between ideas in different areas of study and puts learning in an international context.

Do IB students have a life?

Whereas academic achievement, and therefore studying, is a priority, IB students enjoy a very rich extracurricular high school experience. IB students have successfully participated in ALL interscholastic sports, consistently shown that they are school leaders on IB Student Council, Student Government, Honor Societies, and the like, and belong to a many school clubs. The CAS requirement (explained later) guarantees a very respectable level of non-academic activities. Having fun, unwinding, and working off the stresses of the day are important! Participation in CAS encourages students to share their energy and talents with other people as well as developing awareness, concern, and the ability to work with others. CAS is a challenge and allows students to develop new skills, and come into contact and work with groups of people they may not have had much contact with before.

Do IB students give up many of their long-time friendships?

One of the great things about being in a large comprehensive high school like Myers Park is that there are numerous school activities that can be shared among friends. In addition, IB students are part of a learning community. As such, they develop bonds of friendship with classmates, united in a program, which will grow tremendously strong. Students from varied backgrounds become united in many wonderful academic and extracurricular pursuits. IB offers a broad balanced curriculum with an emphasis on skills and processes, which enable students to transfer and adapt to new situations. The school aims to develop values in students, which are appropriate to a multi-cultural and rapidly changing world, in particular, respect and understanding for other people's ideas, language and beliefs.

Is IB really all it's made out to be?

IB has some very clear goals for excellence. The program also has some very definite outcomes that it wants to reach. Does it meet all its ideals? No. It still is an imperfect program with inherent human and systemic weaknesses. However, Myers Park's IB program is one that is responsive to change and constantly introspective. Since we began in 1992, goals have been met, ongoing feedback solicited, and, program modifications adopted. We are proud of our results and what we stand for. Make no mistake about it: IB is the most impressive, results-oriented, humanistic, college preparatory program available. Is it for everyone? No.

Why study the IB Diploma at Myers Park?

Myers Park is home to the first public International Baccalaureate (IB) program (grades 11-12) in North Carolina and the first Middle Years Program (aka Pre-IB grades 9-10) program in North America. The Myers Park IB program is the largest in North Carolina. Myers Park IB is the strongest academic program in Mecklenburg County, public or private.

What scores must a student earn in order to earn the diploma?

Diploma candidates must earn a total of 24 points on their six IB examinations. Bonus points may be awarded for excellent extended essays, and for excellent Theory of Knowledge work. A score of 4 is considered to be a passing score on an IB examination. Though every university has its own criteria, most universities which award credit for IB courses require a score of 5 or better on higher level exams.

How do IB courses compare to other high school courses?

IB courses are more challenging. They are aimed at highly motivated students who seek extra challenge and involvement in their education beyond the classroom.

What is the profile of a successful IB student?

We encourage all students who want to challenge themselves academically to seriously consider entering our International Baccalaureate Diploma program or Concentrate Studies Certificate program if the full diploma route is unrealistic. In order to help each student (and his/her parents) make a realistic decision about pursuing the IB Diploma program, we provide a profile of a successful IB diploma student:

- Student demonstrates a strong commitment to learning, is self-motivated and has a desire to excel
- Student makes connections across academic areas, is intellectually curious and an independent/critical thinker
- Student has interests in foreign language, technology, international issues and cultures, and in community service
- Student is at or above grade level in reading and math and is willing to work on assigned projects and research in addition to regular homework assignments

What is the difference between AP and IB?

The Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs are the two most widely known models for college-bound students. Both AP and IB are examination-based programs, designed for well-prepared and motivated students. Both certify a student's level of knowledge with a score on an end-of-course assessment that is recognized and valued nationally and internationally. Whether to take all or some AP courses, be an IB diploma student, or take a mixture of AP and IB courses (IB Concentrated Studies) should be a matter of student preference, interest, and learning style.

How should a student choose between AP and IB?

If a student is attracted to a broad range of subjects and wishes to study them in depth over two years, the IB program may be the best choice. If a student wishes to specialize in just a few subjects, the AP program may be more appropriate.

Students in the IB Concentrated Studies Program take a combination of AP and IB courses and benefit from both models. Also, IB students may also sit for most AP exams whereas AP students can't sit for IB exams.

Is the IB program only for top students?

The answer is a **definite no!!** Any student with the appropriate academic background and motivation is an appropriate diploma candidate. Almost all college bound students would benefit from participating in either the IB Diploma or IB Concentrated Studies Program. At its inception, the IB Diploma Program was generally found in private, international schools that tended to serve privileged families. Nevertheless, the IBO has always been committed to making an IB education available to students from all types of backgrounds. This is particularly true in North America, where a majority of schools offering the IB are public (state-funded) schools. These are schools of all types – urban, suburban, magnet, comprehensive, and mixed socio-economic populations – and their IB programs serve all types of students.

What is the difference between an IB Diploma and an IB Concentrated Studies?

The following are minimal standards to enter and continue in either program.

Students in grades 9 – 10 must pass at least 3 IBMYP courses and complete all community service hours. 10th graders must also complete the Personal Project.

In order to enter the IB Diploma Program in grade 11, a student must meet the following prerequisites: English 9; English 10; Geometry; Algebra II or Algebra II/Trig; Biology; Chemistry and/or Physics; World History; Civics and Economics; and Level III of French, German, Japanese, Latin, or Spanish.

Students in grades 11 - 12 must complete a minimum of three IB courses and all required community service hours. Students earning the IB Diploma must successfully complete

examinations in six (6) courses as well as Theory of Knowledge, the Extended Essay, and 150 hours of Creativity, Action and Service.

Rising 9th graders who wish to compete for the IB diploma must have completed Algebra I and either French, German, or Spanish I prior to beginning 9th grade. The foreign language requirement will be waived for those students who participate in the accelerated Spanish block or enroll in Latin I.

Note: Students who do not complete these requirements MAY NOT REMAIN in the IB Program and MUST choose another program/school for the following school year.

What are the requirements for taking the full diploma?

Diploma Program (DP) students must select one subject from each of the six groups listed below. At least three, and not more than four, are taken at higher level (HL), the others at standard level (SL). HL courses represent at least two years of study, SL courses at least one year.

Required areas of study include:

Group 1- Language A1 (best language)

Group 2- Language B (foreign or classical language)

Group 3- Individuals and Society

Group 4- Experimental Sciences

Group 5- Mathematics

Group 6- The Arts (or, a second choice from Group 2, 3, or 4)

Other requirements of the Diploma

There are three other requirements of the diploma that make the IB program unique: Theory of Knowledge (TOK), Creativity, Action and Service (CAS), and the Extended Essay.

Theory of Knowledge (TOK)

This is an interdisciplinary course which encourages students to critically reflect on knowledge gained inside and outside the classroom. Students must submit essays and give an oral presentation.

Creativity Action and Service CAS

CAS provides a balance to the academic demands of the diploma by requiring students to be involved in activities outside the classroom. Students are required to do at least 50 hours each of Creativity, Action and Service (150 total). These activities are recorded by the student and monitored by the CAS Coordinator.

Extended Essay

This requires student to do some original research and write a 4000 word essay. The topic is of the student's choice but be a subject in the Extended Essay Guide.

What is the Middle Years Program?

The IB Middle Years Program (MYP) courses follow the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and Grade Level Competencies. In addition, objectives are prescribed for all MYP subjects in the official MYP curriculum guides. The MYP educational approach embraces yet transcends traditional school subjects. While requiring a thorough study of the various disciplines, the accent is on how the eight subjects are interrelated. The eight academic subjects include: mathematics, arts, language A (English), language B (foreign language), social studies, technology, physical education, and sciences.

The MYP presents subject learning through five unique lenses known as the Areas of Interaction. These are Approaches to Learning, Community and Service, Health and Social Education, Environment, and *Homo faber* ("Man the Maker"). Students are responsible for a personal project which culminates their years in the Middle Years Program.

Students who plan to continue to the IB diploma program in 11th grade should enroll in at least six MYP courses in both grades 9 & 10. Students must meet the final objectives in all eight subject groups. The arts and technology are imbedded in all 10th grade MYP courses.

What do colleges and universities think about the IB?

Universities around the world recognize the IB as a rigorous and well-balanced program that prepares students well for university study. This does not mean that they all recognize an IB diploma in the same way. Some foreign universities require an IB diploma for admission. Other universities around the world, and especially in North America, do not require the IB diploma, but they do value it. A large number of North American colleges and universities give credit for classes where certain scores are achieved on IB exams. Some universities give credit for higher level exams only, some for both higher and standard level exams with the IB diploma, and some for standard level exams without the diploma. To gain more information about possible IB credit in college, contact the college/university individually.

IB students sit for many AP exams and get credit for either their IB or AP exams or both.

How is the IB assessed?

At both Higher (HL) and Standard Levels (SL), each examined subject is graded on a scale of 1 (minimum) to 7 (maximum). The award of diploma requires a minimum of 24 points with satisfactory completion of the Theory of Knowledge course, the Extended Essay, and CAS. There are a number of failing conditions that can negate a diploma even if 24 points have been earned, such as a 2 in a HL subject.

The IB program provides a liberal education that emphasizes a philosophy of learning. Consequently, a range of assessment procedures is used in which external examinations are complemented by internal assessment.

External Assessment: These components are sent to over 5,000 examiners around the world. The examiners then send their results to the IB assessment center.

- written examinations
- essays, research notebooks
- the Extended Essay

Internal Assessment: These assessments are marked by the teacher, and subject to external moderation. Samples are sent to examiners to ensure that the teacher's standards are correct.

- a variety of types (oral, written, field work, laboratory experiments)

Classroom teachers and IB examiners work in partnership to ensure that students have ample opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned. Grades reflect attainment of knowledge and skills relative to set standards, which are applied equally to all schools. Top grades are not, for example, awarded to a certain percentage of students.

What amount of homework should students expect?

IB courses are aimed at highly motivated students who seek extra challenge and involvement in their education beyond the classroom. Therefore, students may be asked to do more homework. The challenge, however, is not always in the amount of homework assigned; rather it is in the quality of the assignments and the extent to which students engage those assignments. The added benefit is that students take greater responsibility for their own learning while they learn the valuable skills of time management and organization.

Diploma and Concentrated Studies students do not have to forego other important parts of high school life. They may still remain involved in sports, student government, clubs, theater, music, community events, and other extra-curricular activities. Such activities are incorporated into the both programs through the "CAS" (Creativity, Action and Service).

Normally, 9th and 10th graders are assigned an average of about two hours each day. However, the amounts of time students spend depend on their academic background, study skills, maturity, and organization.

Normally, 11th and 12th graders can expect at least 2 to 3 hours of homework per day; however, at exam times, or when things pile up, more time will be necessary.