



THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM AT GEORGE SCHOOL 2009-2010

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Program is a rigorous pre-university course of study, leading to examinations that meet the needs of the highly motivated and academically talented secondary school student. Designed as a comprehensive curriculum that allows its graduates to fulfill requirements of the various national systems of education, the IB Program is based on the pattern of no single country. Established in 1965 in Geneva, the IB Program has grown to include 746,000 students attending 2,717 schools in 138 countries. Of the 1,540 IB schools in North America, only a few are independent schools, and George School is one of only four boarding schools. The IB Program was started at George School in 1985, and it has grown from an initial class of three to the current group of 31 seniors and 55 junior IB diploma candidates. The success rate of our candidates in earning the IB Diploma has been 90 percent over the past 21 years, significantly higher than the international average of 85 percent.

In addition to our IB Diploma candidates, many George School students take IB courses and sit for IB certificates in individual subjects of their choosing.

IBO MISSION STATEMENT

- *The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.*
- *To this end the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.*
- *These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.*

THE IB DIPLOMA - All IB Diploma candidates are required to take courses during the last two years of high school that lead to examinations in six subject areas.

IB SUBJECT AREA

Language A
Language B
Individuals & Societies
Experimental Sciences
Mathematics
Art

GEORGE SCHOOL IB SUBJECTS

English
French, Spanish, Latin; Chinese (A2 or B)
History, Economics
Biology, Physics, Environmental Systems
Precalculus, Calculus, Higher Level Mathematics
Art Design (visual arts), Music, Drama, Dance

Diploma candidates must take courses in three subject areas for higher level credit and three subject areas for standard level credit. Students can choose for themselves which combination they prefer. IB examinations are external and universal and are taken on prescribed days in the first two weeks of May. The higher level examination is taken following a two-year course of study. The standard level examination is less rigorous and in some subjects can be taken at the end of a one-year course.

To earn the IB Diploma, a candidate must earn at least 24 points. Points are awarded in each subject on a 1 (poor) to 7 (excellent) scale, and a candidate can earn up to three bonus points based on the quality of work in Theory of Knowledge and on the extended essay. In each subject, students undergo internal assessment by the classroom teacher as well as external assessment by IB examiners. External assessment includes but is not limited to the formal examinations in May.

ENGLISH – Students take a two-year world literature program leading to either the higher or the standard level examination in the senior year. Students read a wide selection of American and world literature from several genres and periods; a few works are chosen for detailed study. External assessment is based on two papers, a formal oral examination administered by the department, and a formal written examination.

HISTORY/ECONOMICS – Students prepare for the higher level examination by taking U.S. History in the junior year and IB Twentieth Century World History in the senior year. External assessment is based on a guided coursework assignment (term paper and oral report) and the formal written examination. Alternatively, students may take standard level History or Economics.

FRENCH/SPANISH/LATIN – Students take the standard level examination at the end of their fourth year of French, Spanish, or Latin. We also offer the option of Chinese A2 and B examinations. Native speakers of other languages may take the examination in that language after self-study to fulfill the IB requirement. A few students take one or more additional years of the language to prepare for the higher level examination. Internal assessment is based on class work. External assessment is based on an examination, and on an oral presentation done in class and sent to international examiners.

BIOLOGY/PHYSICS/ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS – Students may take the standard level examination in Biology or Environmental Systems after one year of study. Two years of study, one of which may be done in sophomore year, are required for the standard level Physics examination and the higher level Biology examination. Internal assessment is based on laboratory work. External assessment is based on a written examination.

PRECALCULUS/CALCULUS – Students take the standard level Math Studies examination after they have completed their course in precalculus. Internal assessment is based on the Math Studies project. External assessment is based on a written examination. Students may opt to take the standard level or higher level Mathematics exam after completing a calculus-based course.

ART DESIGN/MUSIC/DRAMA/DANCE – Students prepare for the higher or standard level art examination by taking at least two years of the arts discipline. Art Design assessment is based on the research workbook/journal (kept over the two years) and the presentation of their work to a visiting examiner. Students in the performing arts are assessed internally by the department based on performance, portfolio, and individual study. External assessment is based on critical reviews, an essay, a research project, and an oral presentation/discussion.

ADDITIONAL DIPLOMA REQUIREMENTS – In addition to the six courses and examinations, IB Diploma candidates must

- take the Theory of Knowledge course;
- write a 4,000-word extended essay; and
- participate in CAS (Creativity, Action, Service) activities.

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE provides IB candidates with opportunities to reflect upon their experiences as knowers and learners in the light of selected philosophical issues. The course aims to help students

- develop greater understanding of the methods, achievements, and connectedness of subjects studied in school;
- develop greater ability to pursue analyses that illuminate issues in constructive and compassionate ways; and
- develop greater ability to articulate experiences, concepts, and values, both orally and in writing.

George School's Theory of Knowledge course is a three-term class taken in either the junior year or the senior year. Assessment is based on one externally graded essay (1,000-1,500 words), and an internally graded presentation.

THE EXTENDED ESSAY is an original and extended piece of research and writing by the student on a topic from one of the six IB subjects. The essay is supervised by a George School teacher and the IB coordinator and must be completed by January of the senior year. Assessment is by an external examiner.

CAS (Creativity, Action, Service) activities are required in roughly equal parts. Students who fulfill George School's own arts, athletic, and service requirements easily meet the CAS requirements.

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS – IB Diploma candidates may also take AP courses if they desire and are given departmental permission. Students not undertaking the full IB Diploma may take IB courses in individual subjects and sit for higher level or standard level certificates in those subjects.

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