

What is IB?

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (commonly known as “IB”) is an internationally-recognized, highly rigorous academic program in which students take six IB courses (with accompanying assessments, projects, presentations, and exams) as well as complete an EE, CAS Hours, and take a class called TOK—for the course of the student’s junior and senior years at Auburn High School.

What is required to receive an IB Diploma?

In order to get an IB Diploma, IB Diploma Candidates must take one course from each of the IB Subject Areas (see diagram). Three of these courses must be at the “Higher Level” or “HL.” Students are not allowed to take more than 4 HLs. The other courses are taken at a “Standard Level” or “SL.” Please note: “SL” does not mean “easy”; nor does it mean “substandard” or “subsidiary” or “supplemental.” “SL” means a few less texts and assessments than an HL class or an less extensive exam.

In addition, IB Diploma Candidates must also complete three unique requirements of the IB Program:

1. A passing score in a class called “Theory of Knowledge” or TOK taken junior year.
2. Completing “Creativity, Action, and Service” (or “CAS”) requirements. (Think: Service hours, though it’s more complicated than that).
3. A passing score on a 4000 word research paper on a topic of the candidate’s choice known as the Extended Essay.

How do Candidates get a Score in an IB Class or Course?

IB courses are different than AP courses primarily in the manner in which they are taught and assessed. Both AP and IB courses can get a student college credit, provided the student scores high enough in the course (or AP exam) and that score is “recognized” by the college in which the student is matriculating.

Whereas AP courses build up to one final three hour exam (usually one hour of multiple choice and two hours of short essay composition), IB courses have a final exam PLUS several other types of assignments that occur *throughout* the course.

These other assessments can be formal essays, oral presentations, group projects, oral commentaries, group presentations, recordings of conversation in a second language, etc. The scores students make on these in-process projects are added to the IB final exam score for that course to result in an overall grade of 1 – 7 (7 being the highest, and anything below 4 failing). (A 5 on an AP Exam is a 7 in an IB course). IB courses are typically 2-year experiences, so they do many, many things over that course of time to create the final score.