

MAKING WAVES AT DCS



What is the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme and is it right for my student?

Part one of a two-part series about the IB Programme.

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme launched at Dexter High School in 2011, with the first class graduating in 2014. As of 2019, there are 3,421 schools offering the Diploma Programme in 157 different countries worldwide (over 900 in the U.S.), and the vast majority of U.S. universities recognize the IB Diploma with official admissions policies (ibo.org).



The IB Diploma Programme is an academically rigorous two-year course for students ages 16-19 years designed to address the intellectual, social, emotional and physical well-being of students. The program explores the depth of knowledge and helps students develop competency skills through the curriculum, which includes:

- **6 courses** (usually 3 HL and 3 SL) from the major disciplines of language/literature, language acquisition, individuals and societies, sciences, mathematics and the arts;
- **A 4,000-word extended essay**, which gives students the opportunity to engage in independent research and practice writing a full-length research paper (great preparation for college);
- **Theory of Knowledge course**, a class where students are encouraged to think about how they know what they know, as well as recognizing other perspectives;
- **Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS) project**, which gives students hands-on experience planning and executing service programs that integrate what they've learned in their IB studies.

To graduate with the IB Diploma, students take written examinations at the end of their courses which are graded by external IB examiners. A portion of the final IB exam is based on course classwork, so students must be enrolled in the course to take the exam. IB exams are called “papers” instead of exams and ask open-ended, analytic questions; a very few exceptions (i.e. science labs) are multiple choice. Each exam is scored from 1-7, and students must score at least 24 out of a maximum of 45 points on these exams to receive the IB Diploma.

As of 2021, 105 Dexter students have graduated with the IB Diploma, with over 82% of those who attempt the diploma completing the program.

Can my student take individual IB Classes without being part of the Diploma Programme?

Absolutely! DHS currently offers 19 IB courses, which are categorized as either Standard Level (SL) or Higher Level (HL). SL and HL are not indicators of course difficulty, merely how many

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hours are required: SL requires 150 hours of in-class time and HL requires 240. All HL classes are taught over the course of two years, but SL classes may be taken over one or two years.

All IB courses are weighted courses, which allows for students to take higher-rigor classes with less stress and risk to their GPA. IB courses are weighted 1 grade point; if a student receives a 'C' in an IB class, it is counted as a 'B' on their transcript and figured as such into their GPA.

What does "Most Demanding" curriculum mean for college admissions?

The Common Application asks guidance counselors if a student's academic program is "Most Demanding," "Very Demanding," "Somewhat Demanding," etc. when compared with what else is offered at the school. Students who complete the full IB Diploma Programme (or take a

Name of Institution	Acceptance Rate	IB Diploma Acceptance Rate
MIT Mass, Institute of Technology	7.2%	23.1%
Stanford	4.65%	17%
Harvard University	5.1%	12.2%
University of Chicago	7.9%	60.3%
University of Michigan	28.6%	70.8%

combination of 6 IB (HL) and AP courses, plus a 4th year of world language) will earn the distinction of "Most Demanding." It is important to note that students within the "Most Demanding" category often receive serious consideration at the most competitive colleges, such as the "Ivy League" schools.

Some colleges award college credit for IB (HL) courses and IB (SL) courses. Some colleges give credit only for IB exam scores of 7 (the top), while others give credit for lower scores; it depends on the individual college. DHS counselors can assist students with retrieving that information from the college webpages.

As more and more high schools are adding an IB program, some colleges (most out-of-state) are offering significant scholarship money to students who complete the full IB Diploma. In 2020, a DHS student received a full-ride scholarship to the University of Alabama for completing the full IB diploma program.

How are IB courses different from AP courses?

IB courses focus on the depth of knowledge, rather than the breadth of knowledge. Courses are student-centered and inquiry-based, meaning students dive deeper into topics to explore all angles rather than learn facts and figures easily found online. The IB Programme is based on learning skills through content, to then be applied on the end-of-year exam which consists of open-ended, analytic questions.

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AP courses are created by The College Board for testing students via an end-of-year exam. Classes focus on learning a wide array of content, then proving students know that content on a multiple-choice exam.

How does “Dread Scholar” relate to IB or AP classes?

If you have a middle or high school student at Dexter Schools, you may have heard the term “Dread Scholar” used in various presentations or communications. Dread Scholar is used to encapsulate the highest-level academic options at DHS, including the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program and stand-alone Advanced Placement (AP) & IB classes. Dread scholar vision: *To teach our students to be knowledgeable and reflective thinkers who are balanced and caring. We will create a community that fosters open-mindedness and critical inquiry, developing principled individuals who are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.*

Look for Part 2 of the IB Program series which will feature current DHS student commentary about the IB Diploma program.