

What is the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program?

The IB curriculum provides a cohesive and comprehensive liberal arts and sciences program of study for highly motivated juniors and seniors of differing educational backgrounds, abilities, and interests. It is not just a set of examinations, but a rigorous pre-university program, which will provide the basis for life-long education. IB aims to provide a balanced program, which stimulates thought and creativity and enhances the international perspective of students. Students who satisfy the demands of the program demonstrate a strong commitment to learning, both in terms of mastery of content and the development of skills. The purpose of the IB curriculum is to:

- educate young people to act intelligently and responsibly in a complex society;
- ensure knowledge of traditional academic disciplines and of the individual's own heritage, while fostering inquisitiveness and openness to new ideas; and
- equip students with a genuine understanding of themselves and others, heightening the capacity for tolerance and engendering respect for different points of view

Within the IB Program students can choose one of two pathways: a) the IB Diploma or b) one or more IB Certificates. Agoura High School offers a generous selection of subject choices within the IB curriculum. IB classes follow a curriculum mandated by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) in Cardiff, Wales. IB courses include papers, projects, portfolios, and other assignments graded by AHS (known as internal assessments) and papers and IB exams graded by IBO external assessors. IB final exams are given in May and are graded on a 1 to 7 scale, with 7 being the highest. Scores are reported in early July.

Students can take individual IB classes and earn a certificate of completion for each class (with a score of 4 or higher) or can be IB diploma students, which is a 2-year program for juniors and seniors. Students who decide to pursue an IB diploma must complete a specific set of courses, the Theory of Knowledge course, a 4,000 word Extended Essay, and 150 hours of Creativity, Action, and Service hours.

Courses are either standard level (one year of study, followed by the IB exam) or higher level (two years of study, followed by the IB exam). IB diploma students must take at least 3 higher level courses. Students must earn at least 24 points (based on exam scores of 1 to 7 and the extended essay and Theory of Knowledge assessments) to receive an IB diploma. Only juniors and seniors are eligible to take IB exams. Only IB diploma students can participate in Theory of Knowledge, the Extended Essay, and Creativity, Action, and Service.

The IB program is for motivated learners – all IB classes generally require preparation of papers, oral presentations, and written exams, all of which are either internally or externally assessed. Note also that prospective IB diploma students do need to plan ahead because there are certain Pre-IB courses students need to take in 9th and 10th grades to prepare for the IB diploma program in 11th and 12th grades. Please refer to the IB DP Course Pathway sheet for more information.