



ADVANCED STUDIES

Students have the option of choosing from two advanced studies programs at Fairmont High School. Both Advanced Placement (AP) classes and International Baccalaureate (IB) classes were developed to challenge students with college level content and skills. Some students may choose to take only Advanced Placement while others may choose to take only International Baccalaureate courses. Some students choose to take classes and tests in both programs.

What is the Advanced Placement Program? AP courses are taught at high schools across the United States and allow students to participate in college level courses. Students could possibly earn college credit while still in high school. Secondary schools and colleges cooperate in this program to give students the opportunity to show mastery in college-level courses by taking the AP exam in May of each school year. Colleges and universities may grant students college credit and/or accelerated placement on the basis of their AP test scores. It is important to note that these policies vary among institutions of higher learning. Neither Fairmont High School, the AP Program, nor the College Board have any input into those university policies regarding credits or placement for AP high school work. It is advised that students check with the colleges and universities they are interested in to see if they accept AP exams for credits.

What is the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program? The IB Diploma Program is a rigorous, two-year comprehensive curriculum for students in grades 11 and 12 that seeks to prepare students for post-secondary study through courses and instructional techniques that emphasize:

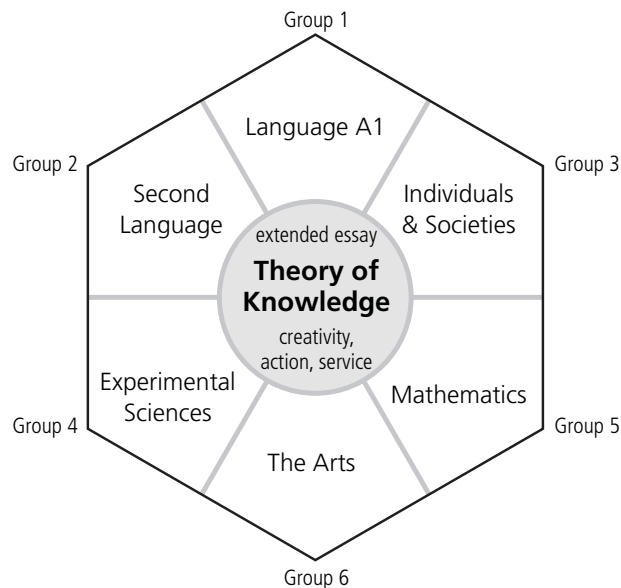
- critical thinking
- effective self-expression in presenting and defending one's point-of-view
- application of knowledge, and
- an interdisciplinary approach with strong international focus.

Students complete course work in IB subjects, complete all internal assessments which are scored by the teacher, and sit for external examinations which are scored by International Baccalaureate assessors. To receive the IB Diploma, students must successfully take one course from each of six groups, three one-year courses at Standard Level (SL) and three two-year courses at Higher Level (HL). These courses are chosen from the six different groups listed in the diagram to the right. This requirement ensures a broad exposure across the liberal arts spectrum.

Students who do not want to earn the IB Diploma may also take individual IB courses, for which they will earn certificates upon successful completion of any of the IB components. Earning an IB Certificate is comparable to a gaining credit for AP exam.

What are the advantages of taking an AP or IB course? The main advantage of taking an AP or IB course is better preparation for college. It has been shown that students master in depth content at the college level more easily after completing AP or IB courses in high school. Students also acquire sophisticated academic skills and increased self-confidence in preparation for college.

How does an AP or IB class compare to other high school courses? AP and IB classes are more challenging and stimulating, but they take more time and require more work. These classes require energetic, involved, and motivated students.



IB Diploma Hexagon

Why should I take an AP or IB class? Will it hurt my GPA? Students who succeed in AP or IB courses generally do well in college as a result of rigorous academic preparation. Fairmont High School gives extra grade point weight on the GPA for taking an AP or IB course and exam. In this way, a student's GPA is not adversely affected by taking accelerated courses (see page 15). Colleges look favorably on students who tackle AP or IB courses.

What are the prerequisites for becoming an AP or IB student at FHS? Fairmont High School will have an open enrollment policy for both AP and IB certificate and Diploma Program candidates. There are no courses specifically designated as pre-AP or pre-IB. Nevertheless, students should read carefully each department's program and choose their courses carefully with advice from their counselor. There will be courses in some instances that must have been taken to be prepared for selected AP or IB courses. In addition, participation in Honors courses is encouraged. All IB Diploma candidates must have passed all five sections of the Ohio Graduation Tests.

Students in grades 9 and 10 interested in AP classes or the IB program should take as many graduation requirements as possible to free up time in grades 11 and 12 for these classes. Public Speaking is also highly recommended for IB Diploma candidates. Each IB Diploma Program candidate will sit with the IB Coordinator in grade 10 to plan a full IB Diploma Program schedule for grades 11 and 12. (See the sample choices for Fairmont Advanced Studies on the next page.)

What are the differences between AP and IB classes? Diploma Candidates in the IB program take courses from across a broad curriculum and that they must complete the three core components (see example above). This integrated curriculum distinguishes

Continued on page 21

the IB program from a collection of individual AP courses. However, these two programs do not necessarily conflict with one another and, in many cases students can satisfy the requirements of both programs in the same course and sit for both exams if they elect to do so.

IB students experience courses conforming to international standards across the broad curriculum. The courses and the core components ensure that these students are well prepared regardless of where they decide to go to college, what they decide to study, and what they choose to do with their lives. IB courses offer the advantage of allowing the student various opportunities to exhibit his/her capabilities, instead of having one standardized test be the total assessment as in AP classes.

Students electing to take individual IB courses instead of pursuing the Diploma Program requirements receive certificates for successfully completing each course that they take. Many colleges grant college credit (similar to AP credit). Diploma Program candidates often have advantages in competing for college admission and scholarships; many colleges, in fact, go so far as to grant sophomore status for incoming IB Diploma recipients. The amount of college credit given for the program rests entirely with each individual university.

In addition to the course work from the six core groups, IB Diploma candidates must successfully complete three additional core components to earn the IB Diploma. These include:

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE (TOK): Theory of Knowledge is a two-year course, taken throughout the junior and senior years. Sometimes called “the jewel in the crown,” the Theory of Knowledge class engages the learner in ways of knowing while exploring areas of knowledge. By equipping the student with the tools of inquiry, discernment, analysis,

and insight, this course aims to lead the student to processes and activities that stimulate independent thinking. The inclusion of six areas of knowledge (Natural Science, Human Sciences, History, The Arts, Ethics, and Mathematics) as well as four ways of knowing (Emotion, Reason, Language, and Perception) guides a student to a balanced understanding of his/her world. This course is taught seminar style and leads to both a formal presentation and a formal paper.

EXTENDED ESSAY: This is an independent research project of some 4000 words on a topic of a student’s choice and related to one of the IB courses that he/she has studied. The extended essay process begins in the second semester of grade 11 and concludes by the end of the first semester of grade 12. Members of the teaching staff at FHS will mentor students preparing for their essays. The Extended Essay Coordinator and the IB Coordinator will also offer guidance to the student. During the summer between grades 11 and 12, students are expected to choose their subject area, individual topic, and mentor. In order to do this effectively, it is assumed that students will have completed a substantial portion of the preliminary research in their chosen topic area.

CREATIVITY, ACTION, SERVICE: The IB goal of educating the whole person and fostering a more compassionate citizenry comes alive through the CAS requirement. CAS requires students to reach beyond themselves and their books and encourages them to share their energy and special talents with others. CAS activities begin in the summer between grades 10 and 11 and continue through the senior year. A system of self-evaluation and reflection enables students to critically evaluate the understanding and insight they acquire. Students will spend at least 150 hours fulfilling this requirement.

GRADE 11 & GRADE 12

AP COURSES

Art: AP Studio Art- Drawing,
AP Studio Art- 3-D Design

English: AP English Lit and Comp, AP English
Language and Comp

Foreign Languages: AP French IV, AP German IV, AP Latin
IV, AP Spanish IV

Math: AP Calculus (AB), AP Calculus (BC),
AP Statistics

Science: AP Biology II, AP Chemistry II, AP Physics
II Lecture, AP Physics II Lab

Social Studies: AP U.S. History (sophomore year), AP
U.S. Government and Politics

IB COURSES

Group 1: Language A1 (language of instruction) –
English HL, Theory of Knowledge**

Group 2: Second Language (modern foreign language) –
French SL, Spanish SL, German SL, Latin SL

Group 3: Individuals and Societies - History SL,
History HL, Psychology SL, Integrating
Technology in a Global Society (ITGS) SL

Group 4: Experimental Sciences - Biology HL, Environ-
mental Systems and Societies SL, Physics SL

Group 5: Mathematics – Math Studies SL, Math SL,
Math HL Year 1, Math HL Year 2

Group 6: Fine Arts - Exploration of Design SL, Explora-
tion of Design HL, Music SL, Music HL

** Theory of Knowledge offered only to
IB Diploma Candidate