

Advanced Placement vs. Dual Credit vs. International Baccalaureate vs. Dual Enrollment

Knowing and understanding the differences between Advanced Placement, Dual Credit, International Baccalaureate, and Dual Enrollment courses will assist you and your student in planning for high school and college courses.

	Advanced Placement	International Baccalaureate	Full Time Dual Credit	Dual Credit at High School
Description	The AP program allows students to take college-level courses and exams to potentially earn college credit while still in high school.	The International Baccalaureate program allows high school student to take college-level courses and exams to potentially earn an international diploma and college credit while still in high school. Courses undergo a seven year review, revision and edit process so that courses are responsive to changes in the world and cultures, reflect what students need to know in the present day, and are updated appropriately.	Dual Enrollment allows high school students to simultaneously earn high school and college credit by completing courses entirely on the campus of ECC.	Dual Credit allows high school students to simultaneously earn high school and college credit by completing courses at their high school.
Credit	College credit is awarded based on the score the student receives on the AP exam. Public schools in Illinois must award credit for a score of 3 or better, and no school will award credit for a score lower than 3.	College credit is awarded based on the score the student receives on IB coursework and exams. Public schools in Illinois must award any student making a 4 or higher rating college credit.	Students earning a “C” or better may be able to transfer the credit to another college or university after graduation.	Students earning a “C” or better may be able to transfer the credit to another college or university after graduation.
Teachers/Instructors	EHS Teachers with AP training	EHS Teachers trained by the IB to offer the IB coursework	ECC Professors	EHS Teachers who have been trained to teach ECC Courses
College/University Acceptance	AP scores are accepted throughout the nation. However, students should note individual	IB scores are accepted internationally as well as throughout the nation.	Dual Credit hours are accepted at public colleges and universities in Illinois.	Dual Credit hours are accepted at public colleges and universities in Illinois.

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	college and university requirements for credit may vary. Students should check with each school's policy.	However, students should note individual college and university requirements may vary. Students should check with each school's policy.	Other colleges and universities MAY accept the hours, but students should check with each school's policy.	Other colleges and universities MAY accept the hours, but students should check with each school's policy.
Grading	AP grading follows SBLA, Courses are weighted	Grading is weighted and out of 100, not SBLA 1-4 scale, Courses are weighted.	Grading follows ECC guidelines.	Grading follows ECC guidelines. Courses are weighted.
Rigor	College Level Rigor - AP courses are standardized and controlled by The College Board.	College Level Rigor – IB courses are standardized internationally and controlled by the International Baccalaureate Organization.	College Level Rigor - Dual Credit course syllabi are submitted and approved by ECC.	College Level Rigor - Dual Credit course syllabi are submitted and approved by ECC.
Application Needed	No application needed to sign up for an AP course. Teacher recommendation is encouraged.	No application needed to sign up for an IB course. Teacher recommendation is encouraged. Academy Students eligible to be Full DP students. If an Academy Student, must have applied in the fall of 8th grade, and been invited to attend the Academy.	Current sophomores and juniors are eligible to apply to the Dual Credit program Fifty rising juniors across all 5 high schools(10 for EHS) and twenty-five rising seniors across all five high schools (5 for EHS) are accepted into the program each year. Must complete an ECC application and take placement tests to determine eligibility. Students earning a “C” or better may be able to transfer the credit to another college or university after graduation.	Students must meet the prerequisite criteria including an unweighted GPA of 3.0 or better and college-ready scores on the PSAT, SAT, or ECC placement tests. Students enrolled in dual credit courses will receive a transcript from both their U-46 school and ECC for the dual credit course. Students earning a “C” or better may be able to transfer the credit to another college or university after graduation.

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GRADING SYSTEM

A	Mastery of standards	AU	Audit (insufficient time to earn a grade)
B	Proficient knowledge of standards	NC	No credit
C	Basic knowledge of standards	WP	Withdrawn Pass
D	Below basic knowledge of standards	WF	Withdrawn Fail
E	No evidence of standard knowledge	P	Pass (pre-approval required)
NE	Standard was not evaluated at this time	M	Medical, no credit (student must complete work to earn credit and grade)
I	Incomplete (10 days to complete work)	R	Repeat Course

COURSE WEIGHTING

Letter grades received in subjects are converted into grade points at the end of each semester to determine a student's grade point average and class rank for the classes of 2024, 2025, and 2026 only. Letter grades earned in courses receive the following numerical values:

<u>Grade Weight</u>	<u>Course Level</u>		
	<u>Regular</u>	<u>Honors</u>	<u>AP/Dual Credit/IB</u>
5.0		A	A
4.0	A	B	B
3.0	B		C
2.0	C	C	
1.0	D	D	D
0.0	E	E	E

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Transfer Courses Weighting

1. AP courses taken via distance learning will be granted a weighted grade only if the issuing organization is listed on the AP Course Audit Form of the student's high school.
2. Transfer students will be awarded a weighted grade for all AP and International Baccalaureate courses taken.
3. For honors level courses, transfer students will only be issued a weighted grade if School District U-46 offers an equivalent course at the honors level.

Procedure to Determine Grade Point Average (GPA)

Two grade point averages are computed and recorded on report cards and transcripts. The **weighted GPA** is computed by dividing the sum of the weighted grade points by the number of credits attempted.

The **non-weighted GPA** is computed by dividing the sum of non-weighted grade points (A=4, B=3, etc.) by the number of credits attempted.

Grades earned in physical education and driver education are not included in either GPA.

Curriculum Distinctions

AP V IB

All the IB coursework is interconnected.

The AP program, on the other hand, has no unifying core.

Difference in Exams

The core of the AP program boils down to one test, taken at the end of the academic year, usually May. You don't even have to take an AP class to take the test. You can simply sign up for the test and show up. So really the AP program is not so much a curriculum as it is a tougher (much tougher) version of the SAT subject tests.

IB exams are class based. You have to take both class AND test to qualify for the diploma.

Each AP course comes down to one test. The College Board does not care what you got in the class; it only cares about how you did on the exam. The exams range from two to three hours and are broken up into two parts. The first part primarily consists of multiple-choice answers. The second part is free response. The general idea behind each AP is after you take the test, you are done, you will not have to sit down for that subject area again.

Each IB exam consists of the three "papers" of each subject that cover different topics but do not necessarily increase in difficulty.

TEST SCORING: ONE EXAM VS. THREE PAPERS/TESTS

Grading for the exams is slightly different.

The AP goes from a 1 to 5 scale

The IB a 1 to 7.

5 is the highest AP score whereas 7 is the highest IB.

The AP subject score is based on one test, the IB on all three papers.

Because the AP is based on an individual subject, each subject score is assessed by itself.

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To earn the IB diploma, you need at least 24 points from all of your tests combined; that means you need to earn at least a 4 on all 6 subjects tests.

Learning Focus:

The AP focuses on what. The IB focuses on how.

In Short:

- Critical thinking is important for AP but essential for IB
- Breadth of knowledge is important for AP but breadth and depth of knowledge is important for the IB.
- AP is content driven. IB is process driven. The AP cares about the right answer. The IB cares about how you got the right answer.

AP English Courses

AP Language - AP English Language and Composition is an **introductory college-level composition course**. Students cultivate their understanding of writing and rhetorical arguments through reading, analyzing, and writing texts as they explore topics like the rhetorical situation, claims and evidence, reasoning and organization, and style.

Analytical Focus:

- Identify an author's purpose and intended audience
- Recognize rhetorical devices and strategies in an author's work
- Demonstrate understanding of citations in research papers
- Apply these skills and techniques to their own writing
- Create and organize an argument defended with evidence and reasoning
- Plan, write, and revise cogent, well-written essays

Readings consist of traditional fiction such as novels and plays, but relies heavily on the interpretation of nonfiction texts in order to understand the impact and importance of rhetoric.

Writing - will be done to reflect the types of writing required on the end of year AP exam.

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- Synthesis essay: You'll be given a scenario and tasked with writing a response using at least three of six or seven short accompanying sources for support.
- Rhetorical analysis essay: Asks you to analyze the techniques an author uses, and discuss how they contribute to the author's purpose.
- Argument essay: Presents a claim or assertion in the prompt and then asks you to argue a position based on your own knowledge, experience, or reading.

AP Literature - AP English Literature and Composition is an **introductory college-level literary analysis course**. Students cultivate their understanding of literature through reading and analyzing texts as they explore concepts like character, setting, structure, perspective, figurative language, and literary analysis in the context of literary works.

Analytical Focus:

- Character—Characters in literature show a wide range of values, beliefs, assumptions, biases, and cultural norms, and provide an opportunity to study and explore what the characters represent.
- Setting—A setting and the details associated with it represent a time and place, but also convey values associated with the setting.
- Structure—Structure refers to the arrangements of sections and parts of a text, the relationship of the parts to each other, and the sequence in which the text reveals information. These are all choices made by a writer that allow you to interpret a text.
- Narration—Any narrator's or speaker's perspective controls the details and emphases that readers encounter; therefore, narration affects how readers experience and interpret a text.
- Figurative language—Comparisons, representations, and associations shift meaning from the literal to the figurative. Figurative language can include word choice, imagery, and symbols. Simile, metaphor, personification, and allusions are all examples of figurative language.
- Literary argumentation—How do you write about literature yourself? You develop your interpretation and then communicate it. You need to develop a thesis—a defensible claim—and support it with textual evidence.

Readings consist of traditional fiction such as novels and plays and also includes a concerted practice in the analysis of poetry.

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Writing - will be done to reflect the types of writing required on the end of year AP exam.

1. Analysis of a passage of prose
2. Analysis of poetry
3. Response to an open ended prompt using a piece of literature of your choice

Using these skills:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents an interpretation and may establish a line of reasoning.
- Select and use evidence to develop and support your line of reasoning.
- Explain the relationship between the evidence and your thesis.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

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Group 1: Studies in Language and Literature

IB Language A: English Literature

The course aims at developing an understanding of factors that contribute to the production and reception of literature—the creativity of writers and readers, the nature of their interaction with their respective contexts and with literary tradition, the ways in which language can give rise to meaning and/or effect, and the performative and transformative potential of literary creation and response. Through close analysis of a range of literary texts in a number of literary forms and from different times and places, students will consider their own interpretations as well as the critical perspectives of others, to explore how such positions are shaped by cultural belief systems and to negotiate meanings for texts.

Analytical Focus:

- engage with a range of texts, in a variety of media and forms, from different periods, styles and cultures
- develop skills in listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, presenting and performing
- develop skills in interpretation, analysis and evaluation
- develop sensitivity to the formal and aesthetic qualities of texts and an appreciation of how they contribute to diverse responses and open up multiple meanings
- develop an understanding of relationships between texts and a variety of perspectives, cultural contexts, and local and global issues, and an appreciation of how they contribute to diverse responses and open up multiple meanings
- develop an understanding of the relationships between studies in language and literature and other disciplines
- communicate and collaborate in a confident and creative way
- foster a lifelong interest in and enjoyment of language and literature.

Reading - consist of traditional fiction such as novels, short stories and plays and also includes a concerted practice in the analysis of poetry. Literature will be read from different time periods, from a variety of cultures and civilizations, and some will have been translated from languages other than English.

Writing -

- Guided literary analysis from different text types.
- Comparative essay based on two literary works written in response to a choice of a prompt.
- Oral essay prepared regarding readings from the course and delivered to the instructor/moderator.

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Assessment -

1. Know, understand and interpret:

- a range of texts, works and/or performances, and their meanings and implications
- contexts in which texts are written and/or received
- elements of literary, stylistic, rhetorical, visual and/or performance craft
- features of particular text types and literary forms.

2. Analyse and evaluate:

- ways in which the use of language creates meaning
- uses and effects of literary, stylistic, rhetorical, visual or theatrical techniques
- relationships among different texts
- ways in which texts may offer perspectives on human concerns.

3. Communicate:

- ideas in clear, logical and persuasive ways
- in a range of styles, registers and for a variety of purposes and situations
- (for literature and performance only) ideas, emotion, character and atmosphere through performance.

Group 2 Language Acquisition -subject briefs to help explain/explore the courses

[Language Acquisition\(Language B and ab initio\)](#)

French B:

IB French B curriculum is extremely similar to/identical to French 3H/4H; the only difference is the IB exams at the end with a chance to earn college credit. Students should feel confident in their abilities to take the IB course and do well enough on the exams to earn credit.

Group 3 Individuals and Societies - subject briefs to help explain/explore the courses

Global Politics HL(subject undergoing revision) [last assessment in 2025](#); [first assessment in 2026](#)

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[Social and Cultural Anthropology](#)

Group 4 Sciences - subject briefs to help explain/explore the courses

[Chemistry](#)

Difference between AP and IB Chemistry from the instructor:

AP Chem is a single year course that prepares students to take the AP Chemistry exam in May. The course covers nine major units; starting with atoms and ending with complex chemical concepts. The course moves very quickly....and although not required, a good foundation in chemistry and algebra/pre-calc would be ideal.

IB Chem Higher Level is a two year course that prepares students to take the IB Chem papers spring senior year. The course covers all material taught in AP Chemistry plus other topics including organic chemistry and materials science. The course does not move as fast as AP Chemistry, but the course goes more in depth. We connect chemistry to life/culture/politics/etc via article readings, the news, book discussions, etc. There is an individual project required during the two-year course where students will design and conduct their own experiments.

Physics - [Standard Level](#); [Higher Level](#)

Difference between IB and AP physics from an instructor:

IB Physics is an algebra-based course, as opposed to a calculus-based course.

AP Physics C, on the other hand, is calculus-based.

IB Physics will allow you to develop a deep understanding of physics as the focus of IB classes is not on what you know(memorization) but how you get to the answer(process knowledge) that will prepare you exceptionally well for the physics courses you'll need to take in college.

[Environmental Systems and Societies](#) (a science elective)

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Difference between IB and AP environmental science from the instructor:

<p>AP Enviro moves very quickly because we have one year to cover all the topics, and that includes major projects we do that take up some time.</p> <p>Units include: Ecosystems Biodiversity Populations Earth's Systems and Resources Land and water use Energy resources and consumption Atmospheric pollution Aquatic and terrestrial pollution Global climate change</p>	<p>IB Enviro is two years, covers much of the same big units, but covers more topics within those units.</p> <p>Units include: Foundations Ecosystems and ecology Biodiversity and conservation Water and aquatic food production systems Soil systems and terrestrial food production Atmosphere Climate change and energy production Human systems and resource use IB gives us time to really get deeper into the environmental content and explore historical contexts. I expect my IB students to leave with more confidence in their learning because of the time we have and the depths we can explore!</p>
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Group 5 Mathematics - subject briefs to help explain/explore the courses

Basics of IB versus AP Maths:

IB Math Analysis and Approaches covers, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, statistics, and calculus over two years.

AP Calc covers just calculus (using some trig and algebra) at a deeper level over one year.

AP Stats covers probability and statistics at a deeper level over one year.

So IB math doesn't go as deep into a single math course but is very broad.

AP math goes much deeper in a single mathematical area per course but isn't as broad.

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[Mathematics Analysis and Approaches](#)

Group 6 The Arts - subject briefs to help explain/explore the courses

We don't offer the AP versions of either of these courses, so there is no basis for comparison.

[Music](#)

[Visual Arts](#)

DP Core - subject briefs to help explain/explore the course/experience - ONLY AVAILABLE TO FULL DIPLOMA STUDENTS

Theory of Knowledge (TOK)

Asks students to reflect on the nature of knowledge, and on how we know what we claim to know.

A thoughtful and purposeful inquiry into different ways of knowing, and into different kinds of knowledge, TOK is composed almost entirely of questions. The most central of these is "How do we know?" Through discussions of questions like this, students gain greater awareness of their personal and ideological assumptions, as well as developing an appreciation of the diversity and richness of cultural perspectives.

Assessment of TOK

The TOK course is assessed through an exhibition and a 1,600 word essay.

The exhibition requires the students to create an exhibition of three objects that explores how TOK manifests in the world around us. The essay focuses on a conceptual issue in TOK. For example, it may ask students to discuss the claim that the methodologies used to produce knowledge depend on the use to which that knowledge will be used.

Significance of TOK

TOK aims to make students aware of the interpretative nature of knowledge, including personal ideological biases – whether these biases are retained, revised or rejected.

It offers students and their teachers the opportunity to:

- reflect critically on diverse ways of knowing and on areas of knowledge

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- consider the role and nature of knowledge in their own culture, in the cultures of others and in the wider world.

In addition, TOK prompts students to:

- be aware of themselves as thinkers, encouraging them to become more acquainted with the complexity of knowledge
- recognize the need to act responsibly in an increasingly interconnected but uncertain world.

TOK also provides coherence for the student, by linking academic subject areas as well as transcending them.

It therefore demonstrates the ways in which the student can apply their knowledge with greater awareness and credibility.

Creativity, Activity, Service(CAS)

Studied throughout the Diploma Programme, CAS involves students in a range of activities alongside their academic studies.

It is not formally assessed. However, students reflect on their CAS experiences as part of the DP, and provide evidence of achieving the seven learning outcomes for CAS.

Seven Learning Outcomes:

1. Identify your own strengths and develop areas for personal growth.
2. Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken, developing new skills in the process.
3. Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience.
4. Show commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences.
5. Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively.
6. Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance.
7. Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions.

Structure of CAS:

The three strands of CAS, which are often interwoven with particular activities, are characterized as follows:

- Creativity – arts, and other experiences that involve creative thinking.
- Activity – physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle, complementing academic work elsewhere in the DP.

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- Service – an unpaid and voluntary exchange that has a learning benefit for the student. The rights, dignity and autonomy of all those involved are respected.

In order to demonstrate these concepts, students are required to undertake a CAS project. The project challenges students to:

- show initiative
- demonstrate perseverance
- develop skills such as collaboration, problem solving and decision making.

Extended Essay(EE)

An independent student-driven piece of research, culminating with a 4,000-word paper.

Structure of the EE

The extended essay provides:

- practical preparation for undergraduate research
- an opportunity for students to investigate a topic of personal interest to them, which relates to one of the student's six DP subjects, or takes the interdisciplinary approach of a World Studies extended essay.

Through the research process for the extended essay, students develop skills in:

- formulating an appropriate research question
- engaging in a personal exploration of the topic
- communicating ideas
- developing an argument.

Participation in this process develops the capacity to analyze, synthesize and evaluate knowledge.

How are Students supported in this process?

Students are supported throughout the process of researching and writing the extended essay, with advice and guidance from a supervisor who is usually a teacher at the school.

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Students are required to have three mandatory reflection sessions with their supervisors. The final session, a concluding interview, is also known as *viva voce*.

The extended essay and reflection sessions can be a valuable stimulus for discussion in countries where interviews are required prior to acceptance for employment or for a place at university.

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