

North Atlanta High School

Center  
for  
International Studies

**The IB Handbook**

**IB**

# North Atlanta High School

## International Baccalaureate Handbook

### **Why Get an Education with an International Perspective?**

Participants in the International Studies Program elect to participate for numerous reasons, some of which are not necessarily based in a deep commitment to anything International. In reality, geopolitics and advancing technology have combined to make our planet a “small world.” We are witness to an ever increasing flow of products, services, information and people across national boundaries. Today, we are truly entering the era of the “global village.” Mastery of a foreign language is actually becoming an important job skill since over twenty percent of the U.S. population is expected to work abroad at some time during the next 10 years. Increasing prosperity in the United States has led to increasing numbers of Americans are traveling abroad to Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America, many of them the first member of their family to ever travel abroad. As well, America itself is changing as a new influx of immigrants has come from East Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Along with their baggage, these "New Americans" have brought languages, ideas, attitudes and cultural behaviors that are unfamiliar to most Americans.

In order to both cope with these changes and take your place in the mainstream of a more "globalized" planet, you need to learn the skills and knowledge necessary for successful participation in this changing world. The goal of International Studies is to prepare high school students for college and careers that will take them across borders and cultures with the attitudes, skills and knowledge of global citizens. Your participation is something to be very proud of.

### **Requirements for Completion**

Beginning in grade 9, students are expected to complete a four year interdisciplinary curriculum of language arts and social science, foreign language plus college preparatory math and science requirements. Program completion includes participation in annual class trips as well as hosting a foreign student and/or travel abroad. Students who successfully complete the four year plan of study of the Center for International Studies and either complete an International Business internship or complete the examinations of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program are awarded a Center for International Studies seal on their diploma and a red cord to wear at graduation, signifying that student as a graduate of the International Studies Program at North Atlanta High School.

### **Cultural Exchange at North Atlanta High**

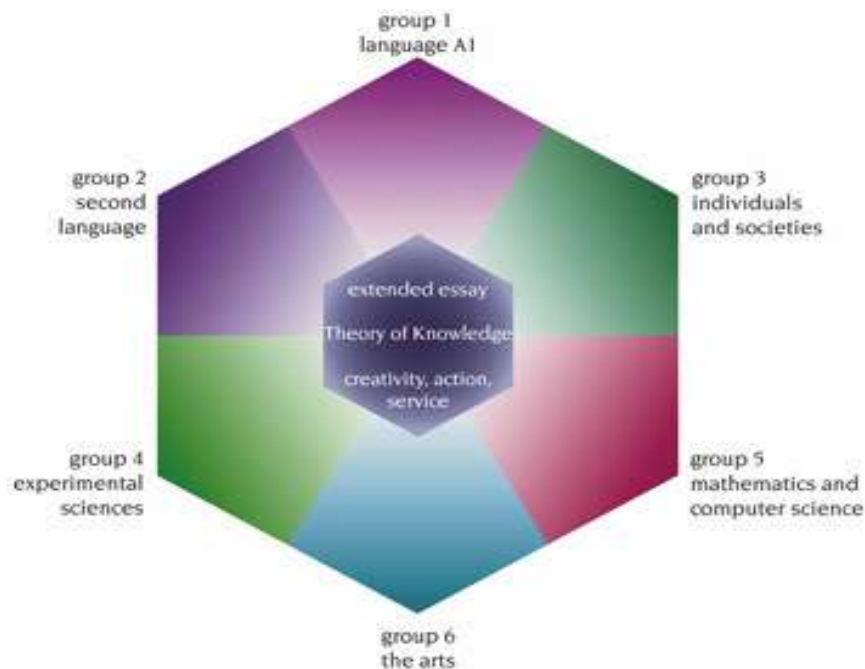
The Center for International Studies offers a wide variety of exchanges to NAHS students. As a component of their Program, International Studies students are "required" to host and/or go abroad at least one time during their four year enrollment. Of course, foreign exchanges based in language study are open to any NAHS student who has completed one year's study of the language. Certain exchanges, however, are restricted to CIS students because of their direct relation to the curriculum of the magnet. Those

during the school term are of generally of two-week duration; those during the summer are typically three weeks to one month in length. Students who go abroad are expected to host in exchange for the hospitality shown them by their host family. Programs abroad range in cost from \$1000 to \$4,000 so start saving your money now so that you will be ready to participate. You may be interested to know that more information on the specifics of the four major language exchanges (Arabic, Chinese, French and Spanish) can be found near the end of these handbook pages.

### **Why Might One Want the International Baccalaureate Diploma?**

Internationally competitive educational standards are assured by the International Baccalaureate program. In a “world class” city, the Center for International Studies offers a “world class” curriculum to young Atlantans. The most important reason for which students elect to undertake the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program is to insure that they have the knowledge and skills needed to be truly prepared for college. The I.B. Diploma Program serves as a true "College Preparatory Academy" in the Exeter or Strathmore quality of college preparatory program. Our graduates always report that they are extremely well prepared for their college or university. This has been true for 20 years. As well, most colleges and universities in the USA award credit or advanced standing for passing grades on IB exams. Many alumni enter college with little required for Sophomore status. The Internet site located at [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org) provides a great deal of detail about the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program. Information about university recognition policies for International Baccalaureate courses and the Diploma may be found specifically at: [http://www.ibo.org/ibo2/en/servicesuniversities.cfm#uni\\_recognition](http://www.ibo.org/ibo2/en/servicesuniversities.cfm#uni_recognition). As well, the International Baccalaureate Diploma will qualify graduates for admission to universities and colleges abroad.

### **The Diploma Program Curriculum**



The Diploma Program (DP) has the strengths of a traditional and broad curriculum, but with three important additional features, shown at the centre of the hexagonal model.

### **Theory of knowledge (TOK)**

TOK is an interdisciplinary requirement intended to stimulate critical reflection on the knowledge and experience gained inside and outside the classroom. The course challenges students to question the bases of knowledge, to be aware of subjective and ideological biases and to develop the ability to analyze evidence that is expressed in rational argument. It asks the students to question the validity of their learning. Usually this course is a student's first academic venture into the world of philosophy. As such it challenges students to think about what they know and how they know it. As a component of this course, students write essays which are evaluated by the IB. TOK is also a key element in encouraging students to appreciate other cultural perspectives. The course is unique to the IBO, which recommends at least 100 hours of teaching time spanning the program's two years. At North Atlanta High, all I.B. Diploma Candidates must take two semesters of Theory of Knowledge spanning the end of the Junior year and the beginning of the Senior year.

### **Creativity, action, service (CAS)**

The IBO's goal is to educate the whole person and foster responsible, compassionate citizens. The CAS component encourages students to share their energy and special talents with others. Students may, for example, participate in theatre or musical productions, sports and community service activities. Students should, through these activities, develop greater awareness of themselves, concern for others, and the ability to work cooperatively with other people. All students must engage in a minimum of 150 hours of CAS activities during their Junior and Senior years and keep records verifying their participation. Cultural exchanges, class trips, sports, service organizations, student government, and community service all add balance to the IB academic program and are accepted as CAS activities.

### **An extended essay of 4,000 words**

Each student has the opportunity to investigate a topic of special interest. The essay, perhaps more appropriately called a "research paper," requirement acquaints IB students with the kind of independent research and writing skills expected by universities. The IBO recommends that a student devote a total of about 40 hours of private study and writing time to the essay. It may be written on a topic from any one of the 60 subjects, including many languages. The essay permits students to *deepen* their programs of study, for example by selecting a topic in one of their higher level (HL) courses. At North Atlanta High School students begin preparing their Extended Essay by working on an initial research paper to satisfy a requirement of their Junior English and History classes. This paper is then expended by the student to meet the specifications of the Extended Essay and submitted in February of an IB student's Senior year.

## **The Six IB Subjects**

Completion of the IB Diploma requires that a student complete coursework and formal exams in six subject areas. The six academic subjects around the program model are studied concurrently; students are required to study both the humanities and the sciences. These are studied concurrently and students are required to study both the humanities and the sciences. Diploma candidates must select one subject from each of the six groups, although a second subject from groups 1 to 5 may be substituted for group 6. Three of the subjects are taken at the higher level (HL) requiring both a Junior and Senior year of study, while the other three subjects are studied at the standard level (SL), requiring one year of coursework for their completion. HL courses represent a minimum of 240 teaching hours, SL courses cover 150 hours. Students are thus able to explore some subjects in depth and others more broadly, a deliberate compromise between the early specialization of some national systems and the breadth found in others. The science-oriented student is challenged to learn a foreign language and the natural linguist becomes familiar with laboratory procedures.

### **Group 1 - Language A1**

More than 80 languages have been offered for examination as part of the IBO's policy of encouraging students to maintain strong ties to their own cultures. Very good writing and oral skills and respect for the literary heritage of the student's first language are complemented by the international perspective given through world literature studies. At North Atlanta High, IB students study English HL as their language A1 subject.

### **Group 2 – Second Language**

All diploma candidates are examined in a second language. Several options accommodate near-bilingual students with a very high level of fluency, genuine second language learners with previous experience learning the language, and beginners. The principal aim for the subjects in group 2 is to enable students to use the language in a range of contexts and for many purposes; the courses focus on written and spoken communication. At North Atlanta High, IB students may choose to study either Spanish or French as a higher level subject or they may choose to study Mandarin Chinese or Arabic and sit their exams at the standard level. The Chinese and Arabic are tested at the standard level since they require the learning of entirely new "alphabets," a factor that limits the extent to which our students are able to master the language in four short years.

### **Group 3 – Individuals and Societies**

To satisfy this requirement, North Atlanta IB students complete a two year study of history with a focus on the History of the Americas. This is logical since all students are required by state regulations to take a year of United States History in their Junior year of High School. A Senior year of History of the Americas completes the Higher Level requirement.

### **Group 4 – Experimental Sciences**

Practical laboratory skills are developed and collaborative learning is encouraged through an interdisciplinary group project. Students develop an awareness of moral and ethical issues and a sense of social responsibility is fostered by examining local and global

issues. At North Atlanta High, students may elect from among Chemistry and Biology at both the standard and higher levels.

### **Group 5 – Mathematics**

All candidates for a diploma are required to complete a mathematics course, and two options are available to cater for different abilities and levels of student interest. Each course aims to deepen a student's understanding of mathematics as a discipline and to promote confidence and facility in the use of mathematical language. In order to satisfy this requirement, IB students at North Atlanta High typically take IB Math Studies SL or Math Methods SL during their Junior year in place of Trigonometry. Math Studies students typically go on to study Statistics or AP Statistics. Math Methods students go on to take AP or regular Calculus during their Senior year.

### **Group 6 – Arts and Electives**

In September of 2001 this group became an arts only group which includes visual arts, music and theatre arts, with emphasis placed on practical production by the student and exploration of a range of creative work in a global context. Dance and film components will be added in the near future. The IB regulations allow students to take a group 6 subject or to elect certain subjects from other groups. Traditionally at North Atlanta High, students satisfied this requirement by taking a year of IB economics and sitting the SL economics exam. This is a sensible solution since the state of Georgia requires all graduates to take one semester of economics in order to graduate. We are now moving toward offering higher level coursework in music, dance and theatre arts so that students who are interested in participating in our Center for the Art's Program can do so and still benefit from participation in the full International Baccalaureate Diploma Program if they desire to do so.

An outline of the typical four-year plan for an International Business student may be found near the end of this handbook section, page 15. The plan listed there is for a student entering North Atlanta High school in the Ninth grade having already completed both Algebra I and Physical Science in their middle school. Adjustments must be made to this curriculum for students who have not completed those courses in middle school.

***Summer Abroad*** - Foreign language proficiency and cultural awareness are requirements of IB language studies, and it is rarely acquired without study abroad . In reality this is not a component of the IB Program but it is an essential component of a modern high school education. Hopefully all IB students will spend at least one summer abroad to assure foreign language competence. They will be amazed at how easy their foreign language class will suddenly become!

### **Assessing Student Work and Awarding the Diploma**

Classroom teachers and IB examiners and moderators around the world work in partnership to ensure that students have ample opportunity to demonstrate what they have

learned. Grades reflect attainment of knowledge and skills relative to set standards applied equally to all schools. Top grades are not, for example, awarded to a certain percentage of students.

Every one of the six subjects has an internal assessment component. This work is evaluated by the teacher, marks are assigned and samples are sent to a moderator to determine if the marks are appropriate, too high or too low. The moderator will adjust them as seems fit. These internal assessments vary with each discipline. For Math Studies students must do a Math Project. For Math Methods students must submit a Portfolio of their best work. For Biology and Chemistry Lab Notebooks must be submitted for evaluation and moderation. In both English and Language B an oral examination is required of each student and samples of the recordings are sent on cassette for moderation. (See the last page of this Handbook for a more thorough examination of Internal Assessment procedures.)

In each of the six IB subjects, final grades are assigned on a scale of 1 through 7. That score is arrived at through a compilation of the marks for the Internal Assessment, the May IB Exams and the Predicted Grade sent by the classroom teacher. If a student receives a "4" or more in each subject, that student receives the IB Diploma. Of course, the IB understands that students are stronger in some areas and weaker in others. Consequently, students are allowed to make a 3 in one higher level subject (as long as they have a 5 or better on another higher level subject) and still receive the Diploma. Similarly, a student may actually score a "2" in a Standard Level subject and get the Diploma if they have at least 1 Standard Level subject in which they scored a "4" or higher mark.

In the end, to receive the I.B. Diploma a student must average a mark of 4 in each of the six subjects. Six times 4 equals twenty-four, which is the magic number. Most of the students at North Atlanta High School who fail to get the IB Diploma have final scores of "22" or "23" failing just one or two points short of their goal. If they had worked a little harder on their Extended Essay or their TOK essays, or if they had focused better on their exams or prepared better for their oral exams they may have gained that one or two points they needed to get the Diploma. A total of forty-five (45) points are possible. That is 24 points in the six subject area evaluations and a bonus of up to 3 points for very well done Extended Essays and TOK essays.

Responsibility for all academic judgments about the quality of candidates' work rests with some 3,400 IB examiners worldwide, led by chief examiners with international authority in their fields. Some 50,000 high school students are assessed by the IBO annually. Each year approximately 80% of candidates who attempt the diploma succeed in earning it. Examinations are offered in May for northern hemisphere schools and in November for those in the southern hemisphere.

A copy of the exam schedule showing the dates, times and the approximate length of the exams is included at the end of this handbook. This schedule should give you an idea of the extensiveness of the IB diploma examination process. Of course students do not

typically take all six examinations during one May examination session. Rather, a typical student sits the exams in IB Math Studies and IB Science, (Biology or Chemistry) during their Junior year and takes the English, Foreign Language, History and Economics exams at the end of their Senior Year.

### **Academic Policy**

Students admitted to the Center for International Studies are expected to maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average (GPA) throughout their four years of study at North Atlanta High School. The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program requires extraordinary academic commitment, and standards of academic discipline must be developed through daily performance in this program.

Students in the Center for International Studies are expected to be on time to class. Absenteeism is not acceptable. Students are expected to miss no more than ten classes per year. I.S. Students are expected to behave attentively and responsibly toward teachers and classmates, and they will be disciplined for failure to do so. As well, I.S. students are expected to present assignments on the due date.

In all honesty, there should be no need for enforced discipline within the program. Every student that is accepted into the Program has already shown the ability to achieve high academic performance. All come to us with good attendance and good conduct records. All one has to do is to make some adjustments due to the higher demands placed upon you by the high school experience and, in general, continue to be the excellent students that you have been in the past.

The real purpose of high school is to provide you with the skills and knowledge that will open numerous doors of opportunity to you at the end of your Senior year. You know that you must have a good grade point average to get into the college or university that you want to enter. You know that you must learn a great deal in order to get the SAT scores that you will need to qualify for scholarships and grants. You know that you will need good recommendations from your teachers and administrators and that these recommendations will be based on your commitment to learning and the active, positive role that you play in your classroom experiences. When you graduate, you will graduate with a great many well-qualified students from all over this country. In order to compete for university admissions and scholarships you know that you must have a very productive high school experience. Certainly there is no place in that experience for behavioral problems or poor academic performance. You were all winners when you arrived and that is the way you must leave North Atlanta's International Studies Program.



# International Baccalaureate Program

## Typical Two-Year Plan

### Junior Year

#### First Semester

I.B. Grade 11 English  
I.B. United States History  
I.B. Biology or Chemistry  
I.B. Math Studies  
Foreign Language  
Health  
Elective

#### Second Semester

I.B. Grade 11 English  
I.B. United States History  
I.B. Biology or Chemistry  
I.B. Math Studies  
Foreign Language  
Theory of Knowledge I  
Elective

### Senior Year

#### First Semester

I.B. Grade 12 English  
I.B. History of the Americas  
I.B. Economics  
I.B. Foreign Language  
Calculus or Statistics  
AP or Regular Science  
Theory of Knowledge II

#### Second Semester

I.B. Grade 12 English  
I.B. History of the Americas  
I.B. Economics  
I.B. Foreign Language  
Calculus or Statistics  
AP or Regular Science  
Elective

#### Exceptions:

Students taking Arabic or Chinese typically take the Standard Level (ab initio) foreign language exam. This means that they must typically take the Higher Level Biology or Chemistry exam at the end of their Senior Year. Remember, students must take three Higher Level Exams and three Standard Level Exams. These students first take IB Chemistry I or IB Biology I during their Junior year and may take the exam that year for practice but are not required to do so.

Other students are behind in math or science since they have not completed Algebra II or Chemistry I (or both) by the end of their Sophomore year. They must take their IB Science (IB Biology or IB Chemistry) or their IB Math Studies course during their Senior year and take the IB exam in that subjects at the end of their Senior year.

## **I.B. Internal Assessment at North Atlanta High School**

All IB candidates must prepare for the “Internal Assessment” phase of the program. Some subjects require a research project or paper; for others an oral examination is held. Grades are given both by the students’ teachers and by external reviewers selected by the IBO. In all subjects this is an important segment of the IB performance and students must make adequate preparations outside of class. If a Diploma Candidate does not complete and submit one of these internal assessment items, that candidate will receive a failing mark on the IB exams for that subject and will not receive the diploma regardless of their other IB scores.

### **Theory of Knowledge -- To be turned in by all Seniors who are Diploma Candidates**

In Theory of Knowledge students must write a final “essay.” These essays are all sent to an external examiner by March 1. Mr. Featherstone, Ms. McVann and Mr. Yeargin, the TOK teachers, will collect these essays and submit them to Dr. Frutiger in February.

### **Extended Essays -- To be turned in by all Seniors who are Diploma Candidates**

At North Atlanta this year all Extended Essays were supervised either by Ms. McVann in English or Mr. Yeargin in History. Each has their own schedule for collecting and evaluating extended essays. All final marks for the papers must be electronically transmitted to the IB Organization and all papers mailed to the appropriate subject examiner by March 1.

### **IB World Lit Papers -- To be turned in by all Seniors who are Diploma Candidates**

These essays focus on works in translation studied over a two-year course. At North Atlanta, we focus primarily on Latin American novels. The World Lit papers must be sent to the appropriate external examiner by March 1.

### **IB Math Studies Projects – To be turned in by all Math Studies Students (typically Juniors)**

This Project consists of a written paper completed during the course involving the collection and/or generation, analysis and evaluation of data. The final project is submitted to Mrs. Hunter for evaluation by February 22. The final marks must be electronically reported to the IB Organization and samples sent to an external moderator by April 1. Math project mentoring has ended, but Extra Help sessions are offered in Room 326 after school every Monday with Mrs. Hunter.

### **IB English Oral Exams -- To be done by all Seniors who are Diploma Candidates**

This individual oral assessment, conducted March 21-24, tests students' analytical skills by asking them to speak extemporaneously on a passage selected from a specific list of works: *The Scarlet Letter*, the poetry of John Keats or Derek Walcott, *Othello*, or *Measure for Measure*. The students do not know what passage they will receive. The resulting oral exam grades and the a sample of the tapes selected by the IB Organization must be sent to an external moderator by April 1.

### **IB Foreign Language Oral Exams -- To be done by all Seniors who are Diploma Candidates**

This year, between March 29 and April 1, foreign language oral exams will be conducted for all Seniors in French, Spanish, Arabic or Chinese. This internal assessment will represent 15% of the final IB grade examination mark, and will be coupled with another 15%, awarded externally by the IBO. The resulting oral

exam grades and the a sample of the tapes selected by the IB Organization must be sent to an external moderator by April 1.

**> Tips for Students (from Maria Galindo, Spanish):**

- \* Get to know everything you can about your topic so that you are ready to answer ANY question you may be asked.
- \* Make sure you know as much vocabulary related to your topic as possible.
- \* Get exposed to your language! Videos, radio, DVDs, TV... there are a lot of possibilities out there to train your ear. Class time is not enough!
- \* Remember during the exam, your teacher is the interviewer, but is on your side!

**> Suggestions for Parents (from Fred King, French):**

- \* Ask your student to explain the rules of the interview. They all have papers explaining it step by step.
- \* Ask to see the student's note cards or documents for the segment.
- \* Make your student practice! Insist on hearing the oral delivery.
- \* Have your student tape-record the entire interview/speech.
- \* Time the presentation. (A minimum of 9-10 minutes is required.)

**IB Chemistry Lab Notebooks – Required of all IB Chemistry Students (typically Juniors)**

All IB Chemistry students taking exams this year must submit their Lab Notebooks for evaluation at a time in March designated by Ms. Drewry. Very specific criteria are used to evaluate each lab notebook. By April 1, the final grades for the notebooks, using an IB scale, must be electronically sent to the IB Organization along with the sample lab notebooks the IB selects for external moderation.

Throughout the semester there will be "Think and Eat" sessions at a nearby restaurant for IB Chemistry study groups. Check with Ms. Drewry for the schedule.

**IB Biology Lab Notebooks – Required of all IB Biology Students (typically Juniors)**

All IB Biology students taking exams this year must submit their Lab Notebooks to Dr. Gosier for evaluation at a time she sets in March. Very specific criteria are used to evaluate each lab notebook. By April 1, the final grades for the notebooks, using an IB scale, must be electronically sent to the IB Organization along with the sample lab notebooks the IB selects for external moderation.

**IB History Internal Assessment -- To be done by all Seniors who are Diploma Candidates**

All IB Seniors taking the History (HL) exam must submit a research paper to Mr. Yeargin on a date he selects. When the evaluation of these papers is completed, the final grades, using an IB scale, must be electronically sent to the IB Organization and a sample of the papers, selected by the IB must be sent to an external moderator by April 1. Mr. Yeargin holds study sessions after school on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays in the Media Center Conference Room. Topics are online through the school web site. Go to [www.northatlantahigh.org](http://www.northatlantahigh.org) > Academics > Teacher Pages > Mr Yeargin.

**IB Economics Internal Assessment -- Done by all Seniors who are Diploma Candidates**

Each IB Senior taking the Economics exam must submit a series of essays analyzing news articles to Ms. Stewart on a date she selects. When the evaluation of these papers is completed, the final grades, using an IB scale, must be electronically sent to the IB Organization and a sample of the papers, selected by the IB must be sent to an external moderator by April 1.