

HL/SL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Group 1: Language A

English Literature

The model for language A: literature is the same at SL and HL but there are significant quantitative and qualitative differences between the levels. SL students are required to study 10 works, whereas HL students are required to study 13. Two of the assessment tasks for SL are less demanding than the comparable HL tasks.

- **Individual oral commentary**—SL students present a 10-minute formal oral commentary on one of two works studied in part 2 of the course, whereas HL students present a formal oral commentary on poetry studied in part 2 and then engage in a discussion with the teacher on one of the other two works studied.
- **Paper 1**—both SL and HL students write a literary analysis of a previously unseen prose passage or poem. However, SL students write in response to two guiding questions, whereas HL students write a literary commentary with no assistance from guiding questions.

In addition, the external assessment criteria for papers 1 and 2 and the internal assessment criteria are clearly differentiated. HL students are expected to show a deeper understanding of content and writers' techniques than SL students. The requirements for depth of knowledge and understanding, and for demonstrating the skills of analysis, synthesis, evaluation and organization are less demanding at SL than at HL.

Group 2: Language B: FRENCH OR SPANISH

Higher Level:

The distinction between language B SL and HL is demonstrated in the level of competency the student is expected to develop in the **receptive, productive and interactive skills**. HL students are expected to extend the **range and complexity of the language** they use in order to communicate.

- The study of **two literary works** originally written in the target language is a requirement for HL students. The literary works are used to expand vocabulary, discuss themes, plots and characters. Literary criticism is NOT the objective.
- Paper 1, **Productive Skills (writing)**: The word count for HL students is 450-600 words. The student is required to use more complex language and structures, as well as higher thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, synthesis and interpretation.
- Paper 2, **Receptive Skills (listening and reading)**: There is NO difference in this exam. Both HL and SL students will have 3 audio passages and 3 written passages.
- **Interactive Skills: Individual Oral**: The HL student has 20 minutes of preparation and 15 minutes of speaking. The oral is based on an extract of approximately 300 words from one of the literary works studied in class.
- HL French has mandatory summer reading of literary works.

Group 3: IB History

11th grade – IB History of the Americas (HL & SL)

This is the first of the two-year IB history program. During this first year students will be introduced to the skills and historical concepts necessary to be successful on their IB History exam. All students will engage in a comparative study of Europe and the United States in the 20th century. Activities such as open discussion, historical debate, document analysis, and independent research will be used to encourage an in-depth understanding of people in their time develop critical thinking and writing skills.

12th grade – IB Contemporary History 1 (SL) and IB Contemporary History 2 (HL)

Students will continue their study of the 20th century by examining the political causes and major developments of the Cold War. Students will develop an appreciation for the study of history both as content for understanding our times and as a method of critical thinking and lifelong learning.

Benefits of Taking History:

- Acquired understanding of current issues/events
- Interpret historical documents as used by SAT
- Meet basic college history requirements
- A knowledge of history is the mark of an educated person
- Must be enrolled in history to be eligible to write a history extended essay
- Complements many of literary works studied and can aid the student in understanding the topics of theater, ITGS, TOK, foreign language in a global society... Cultures understanding...

Differences between SL and HL:

- **SL:** students sit for Paper 1 and Paper 2 in May of Senior Year, and complete the Internal Assessment.
 - Paper 1 counts 30% of IB History score; Paper 2 counts for 45% of IB History score
 - Internal Assessment counts for 25% of final IB History score
- **HL:** In addition to the SL work above, students also sit for an additional exam May of Senior Year, Paper 3
 - Paper 1 counts 20% of IB History score; Paper 2 counts for 25% of IB History score
 - Paper 3 counts 35% of IB History score
 - Internal Assessment counts for 20% of the final IB History score

Psychology

Psychology is the course where you learn how to live. Psychology applies to all aspects of our lives, such as taking care of our health, raising children, developing empathy for the mentally ill, analyzing the behavior of family and friends, learning about the views of other cultures, getting the edge as an athlete, and preparing for careers in medicine, law, education, and business. The course has many benefits including understanding yourself, complimenting other courses, managing stress, and having a track record of excellent IB exam performance.

HL and SL students are in the same class. The difference between the levels is the amount of questions on the exam. Since SL students are in the same class, they do review projects when HL students study Paper 3 topics. The Internal Assessment projects (designing an experiment) differ.

Course topics include:

- Mental disorders/Emotions
- Psychology of terrorism
- Stress and coping with stress, including studying Tai Chi
- Causes of aggression
- How babies learn language and develop cognitively, including bilingualism
- Sleep and memory
- Stereotyping
- Why people conform
- Advertising and neuro-marketing
- Brain imaging and its use, such as lie detection in court
- Eyewitness memories

Group 4: Sciences

Group 4: IB Biology: HL/ SL

Biology students at both Standard and Higher Level undertake a common core syllabus, a common internal assessment scheme and have some overlapping elements in the options studied.

They are presented with a syllabus that encourages the development of certain skills, attributes and attitudes. While the skills and activities of Group 4 (science) subjects are common to students at both SL and HL, students at HL are required to study some topics *in greater depth*, to study *additional topics* and to study extension material of a more demanding nature in the common options. The distinction between SL and HL is one of both breadth and depth. Below you will find a breakdown of topics discussed in each class. Note that both classes are taught in a two-year period. Therefore, the pace of the HL class is significantly faster than the SL class.

Core topics	SL	HL
Cell Biology	•	•
Molecular biology	•	•
Genetics	•	•
Ecology	•	•
Evolution and biodiversity	•	•
Human physiology	•	•
Option C: Ecology and conservation	•	•
Additional Higher Level material		
Nucleic acids		•
Metabolism, cell respiration, photosynthesis		•
Plant biology		•
Genetics and evolution		•
Animal physiology		•
Practical scheme of work		
Required lab practical (Additional for HL)	•	•
Internal assessment	•	•

Chemistry- only offered as an SL course

Chemistry is an experimental science that combines academic study with the acquisition of practical (hands-on) investigative skills. It is called the central science because chemical principles underpin both the physical environment in which we live and all biological systems. Apart from being a subject worthy of study in its own right, chemistry is a prerequisite for many other courses in higher education, such as medicine, biological science and environmental science, serves as useful preparation for employment, and develops analytical skills.

Students considering careers in the sciences, medical or engineering are encouraged to consider chemistry as their sixth subject.

Physics HL/SL

SL and HL describe the breadth and depth of your student's study of college level physics; furthermore, it determines what they are accountable for when they take their IB exams in their senior year. Students of both levels must learn the eight Core topics and one of the Options. These topics range from classical mechanics and electromagnetism to modern particle physics. SL IB Physics students are only accountable for the Core and the Option. Through a study of the Core topics, SL students will have encountered almost every area of physics. They are more than prepared for introductory physics classes at the college level!

An HL student is responsible for the Core topics and one Option topic, but also four Additional Higher Level topics and more sections within the chosen Option topic. These AHL topics serve as major extensions of the Core curriculum and aim to provide a more complete understanding of the phenomena presented in the Core topics. A successful HL student's knowledge of physics can only be improved by specialized physics courses at the college level!

Below is an outline of the covered topics. The AHL extension is placed next to the corresponding core topic.

SL and HL (Core Topics)	HL Only (Additional Higher Level)
Topic 1: Measurements and Uncertainties	
Topic 2: Mechanics	
Topic 3: Thermal Physics	
Topic 4: Waves	Topic 9: Wave Phenomena
Topic 5: Electricity and Magnetism	Topic 11: Electromagnetic Induction
Topic 6: Circular Motion and Gravitation	Topic 10: Fields
Topic 7: Atomic, Nuclear, and Particle Physics	Topic 12: Quantum and Nuclear Physics
Topic 8: Energy Production	
Options: Relativity, Engineering Physics, Imaging, or Astrophysics	Additional sections within the chosen Option.

Both SL and HL are rigorous and dense; topics that seemed like a breeze in physics honors will now become complex, multilayered studies. The chief difference between SL and HL is the amount of material. Both classes are taught over the time span of two years, but significantly more must be covered in HL. There is no sugar coating here. My SL/HL recommendation is an honest evaluation of a student's readiness. But a student must have the *commitment* to succeed in IB Physics at either level, not just the ability. I ask that you and your student are honest with yourselves about taking IB Physics. I cannot promise an easy journey, but instead a challenging and ultimately rewarding one. I hope to see your student in IB Physics, ready to succeed!

6th Subject: Information Technology in a Global Society (ITGS)

(OR students can select a **second science** OR a **second Group 3 subject**)

This is the first course of a two-year program to prepare students for the IB examination.

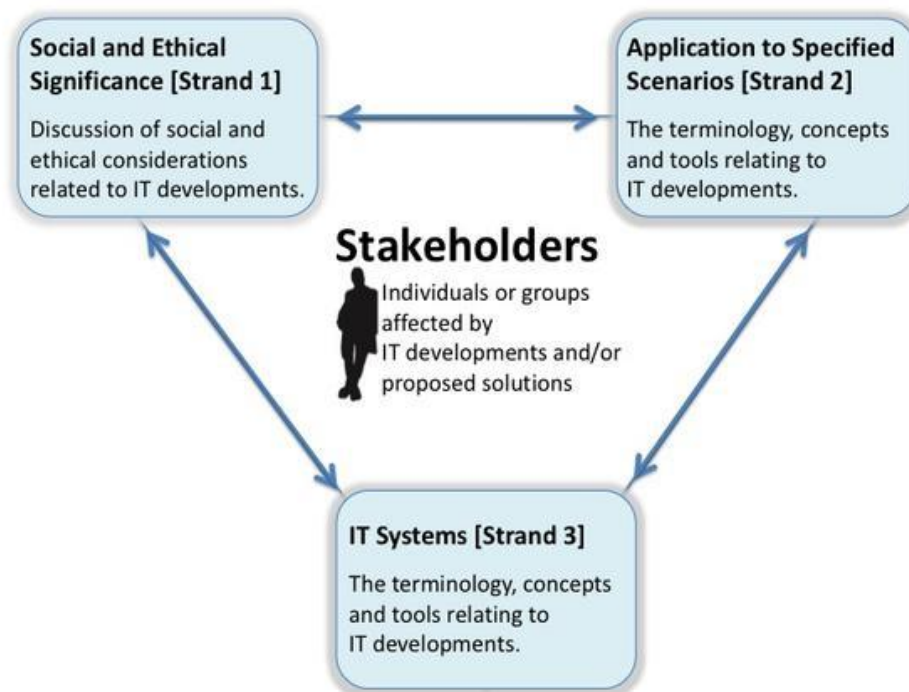
Topics studied from the ITGS syllabus include:

- hardware
- software
- databases
- spreadsheets
- modeling and simulations
- multimedia/digital media
- networks
- the Internet
- personal and public communications
- robotics, artificial intelligenc and expert systems
- project management

Hands-on computer applications are combined with a study of the social and ethical implications of various technologies at the local and global level. Current articles relating to the above topics, both positive and negative, will be explored and followed up with written and oral presentations.

Differences between Higher Level and Standard Level

- HL students will study and are responsible for additional topics that include:
 - IT Systems in Organizations
 - Robotics, Artificial Intelligence, and Expert Systems
 - Case study
- **IB Examination Requirements:** HL students will complete a third exam paper on a case study that will be reviewed prior to completing the paper. Also, HL study have additional requirements on the first exam paper that address the HL extensions described above.



IB CORE: Theory of Knowledge 1- REQUIRED

Semester 1: Research for the Junior Class

The goals and outcomes for this class are to:

- Increase student understanding of the IB DP and its requisites
- Continue developing the Approaches to Learning and Learner Profile
- Help students transition into the full Diploma Program
- Increase student performance in CAS, EE, and TOK

Major Assignments include:

- **CAS Plan**- Covers entirety of CAS over 18 months
- **Extended Essay Research Assignment**- Students develop the necessary research skills and begin outlining and developing knowledge on their Extended Essay subject/topic
- **Reflective writing** assignments on content area
- Formative Assessments on CAS/ EE requirements and expectations

Semester 2: Theory of Knowledge (TOK)- Junior year

The Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course encourages juniors to: **Think** about the nature of knowledge, **reflect** on the process of learning in all the subjects, and make **connections** across subject areas.

The philosophy behind TOK is that learning is connected, related, and does not exist in silos. A goal of TOK is that when we're done you'll see that all of the subject areas (the **Areas of Knowledge** or AoKs) and the **Ways of Knowing** (WoKs) are interrelated.

The fundamental question of TOK is “**how do we know that?**”

IB states that the specific aims of TOK are:

1. make connections between a critical approach to the construction of knowledge, the academic disciplines and the wider world
2. develop an awareness of how individuals and communities construct knowledge and how this is critically examined
3. develop an interest in the diversity and richness of cultural perspectives and an awareness of personal and ideological assumptions
4. critically reflect on their own beliefs and assumptions, leading to more thoughtful, responsible and purposeful lives
5. understand that knowledge brings responsibility which leads to commitment and action.