

The INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMME at LAMAR ACADEMY

THE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME



Recognized as an IB School of Distinction, 2017



IB at LAMAR ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the International Baccalaureate Programme at Lamar Academy is to educate all students to become lifelong learners and caring, productive citizens in an ever-changing global society.

Through the employment of inquiry, community, and technology in a comprehensive, academically rigorous program of studies, students will develop into more knowledgeable individuals who understand the value of culture and open-mindedness in promoting a more peaceful world.

Life in the 21st century, in an interconnected, globalized world, requires critical-thinking skills and a sense of international-mindedness, something that International Baccalaureate® (IB) Diploma Programme students come to know and understand.

The IB Diploma Program at Lamar Academy opened its doors in 2001. Since then, over 98% of the graduates have obtained the IB Diploma; a rate higher than the global, national, and state averages. Through the IB curriculum, students develop and hone the skills necessary for their future university studies, community service, and life-long learning.

What is the IB Diploma Program (DP) curriculum?



The curriculum is comprised of six required subject groups:

Group 1: Studies in Language and Literature (English)

Group 2: Language Acquisition (Second Language)

Group 3: Individuals & Societies

Group 4: Sciences

Group 5: Mathematics

Group 6: Arts

To ensure a breadth of knowledge, IB DP students choose one subject from each of the first five groups. DP students may also choose a group 6 arts subject or a second subject from groups 1-5 to complete their six courses of study.

At least three and not more than four subjects are taken at higher level (HL – 240 hours of instruction), while the other subjects are taken at standard level (SL – 150 hours of instruction).

In addition to these six courses, students are responsible for meeting three core requirements.

Core Requirements:

- **Theory of Knowledge:** an epistemology course that helps students understand the nature of knowing.
- **Extended Essay:** a 4,000 word academic research paper relating to a DP subject under study.
- **Creativity, Activity, Service:** experiences that engage the students in creative, active, and service-oriented experiential learning (7 goal outcomes/ collaborative CAS project).

What sets the IB DP apart?

- Internationally recognized program
- Broad global curriculum that helps students develop intellectually, physically, emotionally, socially, ethically
- Academic environment that requires students to take an all IB curriculum, therefore, challenging students to develop in all areas of academia
- Curricular design that allows students to make connections across disciplines
- Impressive community service portfolio
- Universities want to know that students are taking the most challenging courses available, and IB provides excellent preparation for university studies
- Common Application used by many universities asks IB student applicants to identify themselves
- Texas public universities award 24 credit hours, minimally, to students earning an IB Diploma

Earning the IB Diploma

Internal Assessments: Diploma students complete assessment tasks in each subject, which are either graded by teachers and then external moderators or sent directly to external examiners.

External Assessments: Diploma students also take written examinations at the end of their junior and senior years in May. These examinations are sent around the world to external examiners for scoring.

IB Grades/Points: The marks awarded for each course range from 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest). Students can also be awarded up to three additional points for their combined results in the Theory of Knowledge course and the Extended Essay (awarded letter grades A - E).

IB assessments are criterion related, which means student performance is measured against pre-specified assessment criteria based on the aims and objectives of each subject's curriculum.

Students must earn at least 24 points across the entire Diploma program, with certain required minimums based on HL and SL course designations. Students must also complete all requirements of the Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) component. The highest total that a Diploma Program student can be awarded is 45 points.

"It is even clearer now that the energy and dynamism we need to succeed in this program continues to exist in our lives. The IB gave us many of the tools we need to navigate through life with more ease."

*---Ludwig Barragan, Delta Class, IB at Lamar Academy graduate, 2006
---excerpt from his speech at the IB Americas Regional Conference in Cancun, Mexico, 2012*



Grade Weight/Ranking

In McAllen ISD, IB courses receive the same weight as an Advanced Placement (AP) course. So core courses (English, history, science, math) will earn an extra 13 points because of their rigor.

IB in McAllen ISD

Within McAllen ISD, Lamar Academy serves as a satellite campus that provides the Diploma Programme to students from all three of the district's high schools.

Because of this structure, students attending IB at Lamar Academy are students of record at each of the McAllen high schools. IB students who live outside of the McAllen school district will be assigned to a McAllen high school as a student of record.

IB students must enroll at their designated high school, IB students are ranked with the graduating class at their designated campus, and IB students participate in athletics, fine arts, UIL, and the graduation ceremony with their designated schools.

Go Bulldogs!
Go Mustangs!
Go Warriors!

Structure

School day begins at 8:00am and ends at 4:00pm
Alternating Block Schedule with designated A day and B day class schedules
90 minute class periods
5 classes per day
Small student body
Grades 9-12
Bus transportation between home campus and Lamar Academy is provided after every class period



Applying to the Diploma Programme

All McAllen ISD students entering grade 11 may apply for the Diploma Programme at Lamar Academy. Rising juniors from schools outside of the McAllen school district may also apply.

Applications are available beginning in November on the Lamar Academy website.

The application is composed of four components: letters of recommendation; semester grades; state exam scores; writing and math samples. The deadline for receipt of all application materials is in February.

After consideration of these four components, students are notified of their invitation to the Diploma Programme in March. Students must accept or decline the invitation within a specified time frame.

Students will register with their designated home campus and will enroll in McAllen ISD to attend IB classes at Lamar Academy.

Frequently asked questions about the Diploma Programme

Adapted from IBO.org Parent Pack, 2015

What kind of student is a good candidate for the DP?

The DP is a rigorous course of study for motivated students. That said, prior academic success is less an indicator of ability to earn the diploma than are a student's determination to do his or her best, willingness to be organized in order to complete the work while leading a full, balanced life, and a strong commitment to learning in and beyond the classroom.

Are IB programmes considered "gifted" programmes?

The IB does not control how schools designate their Diploma Programme. In some instances, schools choose to designate the programme as selective enrolment via application or as a magnet programme. In other cases, the programme is open to any student.

How does the IB DP differ from other university-preparatory programs such as Advanced Placement and Cambridge?

The IB DP is a two-year comprehensive curriculum with a culminating set of externally graded final exams. IB, Advanced Placement (AP) and other college-preparatory curriculums like Cambridge are all university preparatory, academically rigorous programmes. There are important differences, however, in the content and exams. The DP is a cohesive and comprehensive programme, not a collection of individual courses as is the case with Advanced Placement. The most important distinguishing factor is the core of the Diploma Programme (CAS, TOK and extended essay).

Do DP teachers receive special training?

All DP teachers receive professional development in the IB's approaches to teaching and approaches to learning from certified IB workshop leaders. This is a requirement for IB World Schools implementing the DP.

Do DP students have time for anything beyond academics?

Absolutely. Most successful Diploma Programme students lead very full lives. They are often members of athletic teams and involved in a wide range of activities. Time management and organization are key skills the IB develops in students.

How do colleges and universities view the Diploma Programme?

The DP is internationally recognized as representing one of the highest standards in university preparatory education. More than 1,000 colleges and universities in North America have recognition policies on how they weigh it in admissions, advanced standing, college credit and scholarships. A list of colleges and universities that grant credit, scholarships and/or advanced standing for DP diplomas and certificates is available at www.ibo.org.

Can you give a specific example of how the DP prepared students for college?

A 2012 study by the Consortium for Chicago School Research found that Diploma Programme students who graduated from 12 Chicago public schools were more likely to attend college, attend a selective college and persist in college for 2 years than a matched comparison group. Additional studies on programme impact are available at www.ibo.org/research.

How can I learn more about the IB and DP?

- Visit the IB website at www.ibo.org
- Attend school meetings and events
- Speak with your school's DP coordinator
- Speak with your child's DP classroom teachers.



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Lamar Academy

<http://www.iblamar.org>

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IB Organization

www.ibo.org