



**HOW - TO:**

**Navigate the IB Diploma  
Pathway at MBHS**

## **Freshman Year:**

While the majority of your freshman year classes will be required, and IB classes do not begin until your junior year, there are things you can do your freshman year in preparation!

### Advice:

- **Start brainstorming what pathways you might be interested in.** This will be beneficial in later years, planning what IB classes you would be interested in taking in order to fulfill the diploma requirements.
- **Get involved!** Joining ASB, clubs, and other organizations that align with your interests will help with identifying whether a certain pathway is best suited for you. Also, all of these involvements will be incredibly beneficial when it comes time to fill out your college applications.
- **Take Govt/Econ!** This is necessary to graduate and will be difficult to add into your schedule in the coming years with IB, so take it now!

## Sophomore Year:

Although you are not taking IB courses quite yet, the content you learn this year will help you for what is to come!

### Advice:

- **Talk to Ms. Borg, teachers, and upperclassmen.** Get an idea for the requirements and workload to receive the IB diploma as well as all the benefits it offers.
- **Establish study habits.** This year try your best to balance your schedule. Learning study techniques such as pomodoro or active recall can be useful but also establish your priorities and practice balancing self-care, social time, and study time.
- **Select your schedule.** Talk to Ms. Borg to ensure that you select classes that will fulfill the IB requirements \*see page 6\* but you will be left to choose from the classes our school offers. SL classes are one year courses and HL are two year. Use your insight from upperclassmen and consider what YOU are interested in when choosing which classes to take.
- **Take the two required science courses** (physics and chemistry) these are necessary credits to graduate and will be difficult to schedule into later years with IB courses.

\*Tip: if you take the optional history class this year and do well on your mini IA, consider turning it into your Extended Essay (EE) senior year.

## Junior Year:

### The first year of IB classes!

You will be beginning the first year of your HL (2 year) classes, and also taking up to two SL (1 year) classes. Due to this, the majority of your IB tests will take place senior year.

**Although many IB requirements typically occur during your senior year, there is much you can do your junior year in preparation, and lightening your workload for senior year.**

### Advice/What to Expect:

- **Theory of Knowledge:** Otherwise known as TOK, a mandatory class for all full IB students centered around reflecting on the nature of knowledge, and how we know what we claim to know.
- **AVID:** Alongside TOK this class will be focused on support for your IB requirements such as your extended essay and CAS hours.
- **Brainstorm Extended Essay topics.** The IB coordinator and your teachers will encourage this, however most students like to procrastinate! The extended essay is a 4,000 word research paper, and is no easy task. In brainstorming topics your junior year, and putting together an outline or even beginning the actual essay, you will save yourself a world of stress your senior year, when many other deadlines appear at the same time. Additionally, if you know what subject you would like to complete your EE in, ask a teacher to be your mentor in advance, as many will fill up quickly.
- **Work hard and dedicate time into your internal assessments.** These are research papers that will need to be completed for almost every IB class, and are completely student led in terms of deciding on the research question and the area in which you will be exploring. While IAs can seem incredibly stressful as this is the

first time you will be introduced to this type of work, if you don't procrastinate and dedicate real time into them, it will pay off in your IB scores. For example, if you don't score high on the May exams, a high IA score can help bring up your overall IB score for the class.

- **Begin your CAS documentation/project.** CAS stands for creativity, action, and service. 50 hours per category are required to be completed and logged, and are absolutely necessary to be awarded the IB diploma. These hours are not something to stress too much over, as most of the time things you are already partaking in would count. For example, playing the guitar counts for creativity, attending soccer practice counts for action, and any volunteer work counts for service. In addition, a CAS project needs to be completed as a necessary component in working towards the IB diploma. Like CAS hours, a CAS project can begin from the first day of your junior year, and must be completed and logged a few months before the end of your senior year. CAS projects are projects with lasting impacts on a community that were planned over several months, and reflected upon after. In order to keep track of CAS hours and the project, it is important to create a log and keep up with it regularly. While it may seem tempting to leave logging CAS hours or beginning the CAS project for the last minute, the earlier you get these done and logged, the more thankful your end of senior year self will be.

## Senior Year:

Welcome to the final stretch! This year you will be taking the majority of your IB exams and all of your HL exams. It truly is a test of your determination so push through the end and give it your all.

Advice:

- **Complete your TOK Essay.** Each year a list of questions will be released from which you will pick ONE. This essay is 1600 words and will be completed early on this school year. You will meet three times with your teacher to discuss initial ideas, progress, and your final draft. You will be walked through any further details in your TOK class.
- **Complete your Extended Essay (EE).** This 4,000 word paper asks you to dive deep into a topic of your interest. Pick a topic YOU are interested in for this essay. You will be spending several hours working and researching for this essay, you don't want to make it any more excruciating than it has to be. Try your best to split up your time while working. If you truly want to stay on top of it block out time each week starting at the beginning of the school year to complete a designated word count. Set up meeting days with your mentor in order to hold yourself accountable. Don't be shy to ask your IB coordinator (Ms.Borg) for example papers from past years, and for format requirements when to begin to write.
- **Submit CAS documentation and complete CAS project.** Follow the template given (you can find it on the IB diploma canvas page) and track your activity, service, and creativity throughout junior

and senior year. Additionally you will complete the CAS project this year.

- **Crush your IB Exams!** Your teachers will prepare and guide you through the testing process. The work load will ease up so focus all your time and energy into studying and doing well on these exams!

## **Overall:**

### IB Diploma Requirements - Classes:

- Take at least 6 IB subjects over the 2 years
- 3 must be HL
- Must cover subjects of: English, History, Math, Science, Language, and elective, however a second science/social science can be exchanged for the elective

### **Example Schedule:**

Jr Year: HL Bio, HL History, HL English, SL Spanish, SL Math

Sr Year: HL Bio, HL History, HL English, SL Psychology

This covers six subjects (Biology, History, English, Spanish, Math, and Psychology). In taking psychology in addition to history, this covers the elective class requirement. At Mission Bay, for specifically this schedule, IB Marine could have also been exchanged for psychology.

### IB Diploma Requirements - Exams:

- SL (1 year) exams will be completed at the end of the one year course, however HL (2 year) exams will be completed at the end of the second year of the course (end of senior year)
- Exams are scored 1-7, with a 4 being passing
- HL exams must total 12 points or higher, if a student takes 4 HL classes the best 3 of the scores must total a minimum of 12 points, and each individual HL score cannot be lower than a 3
- Scores for each class are typically sent out in July of the summer following completion of the class



### IB Diploma Requirements - Overall Scores:

- IB total scores of all classes must reach a minimum of 24 points to be awarded the diploma.
- In SL classes, the IA is worth 25% of the overall IB score, whereas in HL classes it is worth 20%. The rest of the scores come from the written IB exams.

*Senior Legacy Project 2023: Lily Moore and Simone Hekier*