

UNIVERSITY SENATE

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Introduced by: Undergraduate Academic Council

Date: May 4, 2009

**Admissions Policy for Students in an International Baccalaureate Program
Effective Fall 2009**

**Proposal to Increase Transfer Credits for Freshmen with the International
Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma from High School**

**It is proposed that the University's freshman admission policy for students
graduating from high school with the International Baccalaureate Diploma be
revised as follows:**

The University at Albany will award 30 credits to students completing the requirements for the **IB Diploma** with a cumulative score of at least 30 (including both Standard Level and Higher Level exams) and no individual score lower than a 4 (satisfactory) in any one of the six subject areas. The credits will be awarded as follows:

- 12-24 credits assigned course credit equivalents on a course-by-course basis for Higher Level courses completed with a score from 4 (satisfactory) to 7 (excellent).
- 6-18 credits assigned as CAS010 for the completion of the balance of the Standard Level courses and the Extended Essay requirement.

In addition, the University at Albany will consider for credit and/or placement on a course-by-course evaluation those IB subjects completed at the Higher Level with a score of 4 or higher.

History and Rationale

The current University policy is: The University at Albany will consider for credit and/or placement on a course-by-course evaluation those IB subjects completed at the Higher Level in which a score from 4 (satisfactory) to 7 (excellent) is earned.

This proposal would award 30 credits to students completing the entire diploma program, with course-by-course credit awarded for Higher Level exams and the balance of the 30

credits awarded as CAS 010 in recognition of the totality of the work. There are several reasons for this proposed change:

Quality of the IB curriculum: A secondary education program with origins in Europe, the International Baccalaureate Program is increasingly being offered in American high schools. The IB is an advanced secondary-level program with a core curriculum and distribution requirements leading to a diploma or one or more certificates of examination.

Similar to the British “A Level” examinations and the French Baccalaureate, the IB program is a system of syllabi, or course descriptions, and examinations based on the concept that general education at the upper-secondary-level should encompass the development of all the main powers of the mind through which a person interprets, modifies, and enjoys the environment. The IB program requires that each student become proficient in language and mathematics, the two most important tools of communication and analysis; become familiar with at least one subject that exemplifies the study of human behavior and with another that involves scientific inquiry; develop an acquaintance with aesthetic and moral values; engage in creative, aesthetic, social service, or physical activities; and participate in a common course that reflects upon the truth, criteria, values, and inter-relations of the subjects under study.

The components of the IB Diploma are as follows:

- Completion of 6 courses, offered at two levels, standard (SL) and higher (HL), three of which are required to be at the higher level and the remaining three at either level. HL courses are taught over two years and SL courses over one. HL courses require 240 teaching hours, SL require 150. The courses are:
 - (1) Language A (first language);
 - (2) Language B (second language);
 - (3) Study of Man;
 - (4) Experimental Science;
 - (5) Mathematics;
 - (6) Art, Music, Classical Language.
- A seventh course, “Theory of Knowledge.” This course is offered over a one-year period during the second half of the junior year and first half of senior year. It is a capstone-like course that integrates learning, is writing intensive, and focuses typically on several classical works.
- An Extended Essay, which is a 4,000 word research paper, done during the final year of the program on any of a number of topic, as approved by the high school IB coordinator.
- Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) requiring 150 hours over the course of the two-year program. It includes requirements in music and/or arts, athletics, and service. Averaging about three hours per week, this is satisfied only by actual performances, game and physical service hours. Rehearsal and practice are not factored into the requirement and students must have a portfolio and consistent documentation of their activity.

- To receive the diploma, students must also have a cumulative score of at least 24 on their IB exams. Exams are scored on a 7-point scale. Assessment of exams is done via several third parties from around the world.

(Additional detail about the IB program can be found at www.ibo.org.)

Comparability to AP: High school teachers report that many standard level IB courses “co-seat” students with students taking AP courses in the high school. Since the University at Albany grants college credit if students pass the exam with a 3 or higher, it is appropriate to award college credit for these IB courses as well.

Trends in Admissions: While many peer institutions follow a policy similar to UAlbany’s current practice, two of our major competitors for top students -- University at Buffalo and Binghamton University -- recognize the entire diploma (with the minimum 30 score) and award students up to 30 college credits. Both award a combination of elective and equivalent credit depending on the course.

Attractiveness to Top Students: Granting full credit for the IB Diploma rewards students for taking the most challenging coursework available to them. IB is intensely demanding and students come to college with a strong writing ability and research experience. They tend to be very high achieving students and this will attract them to UAlbany with a guarantee of 30 credits.

Passed by UAC April 27, 2009.