

International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement Programs, and Early Admissions to College

Thoughts by Bill Fitzsimmons, Dean of Admissions, Harvard University:

We would commend the decision not to rush off to college. Too many students ignore their personal and extracurricular development in their quest to "get ahead." There are many valuable lessons to be learned outside and inside the classroom during the senior year even for someone so advanced. Your plan sounds perfect.

An individually tailored combination of internships, college courses, high school courses, mentorship, and other creative local options would be extremely valuable to these students in the long run. There are also secondary schools such as Hunter College High School that provide various community service and other kinds of "extracurricular" opportunities to such students. They have many outstanding students like yours who are academically ready to go on to college after the junior year in high school but pursue the path you have so wisely outlined.

As these students apply to college in the senior year, your secondary school counselor should take pains to explain to colleges that these students have not avoided your high school's most difficult courses, but rather went beyond them with your blessings. I know we would certainly applaud this approach.

AP – IB Programs Well Respected by Universities:

I can only speak for Harvard but we value both programs equally -- and that's not a paid political announcement. The IB is a terrific program and we offer Advanced Standing on the basis of 6s and 7s in the full IB Program. Similarly, we offer the same sort of Advanced Standing for students with 4 or more 5s on AP tests. The AP offers a bit more flexibility for students who have heavy extracurricular, family or work commitments or simply are better at some things than others. We hope that students would be realistic about not getting in over their heads -- whether or not it's wise for them to take on the complete IB or the 6 or more AP classes.

All of which is a long way of saying we do indeed value the two equally. I hope this is helpful and please don't hesitate to be in touch if you need anything else.

Bill Fitzsimmons

AP – IB Comparisons

AP consists of a number of individual courses, and each course requires an AP Test for “verification.”

IB is a comprehensive *program*, and students who complete it receive an IB diploma. The diploma requires six exams, a 4,000 word essay, the Theory of Knowledge course and assessment, and a CAS Project.

AP courses can be taken at anytime during the student’s four-year program.

IB courses must be grouped into a two-year sequence.

AP – IB Comparisons

AP requires a test for each course.

IB requires six tests, typically English, Social Studies, Science, Math, World Languages, and one selected from the elective areas.

AP tests are scored by the College Board.

IB tests are scored by classroom teachers and IBO examiners internationally. Teacher scoring is verified by comparisons to IBO scoring.

AP – IB Comparisons

Both Programs Offer Similar Course Options

AP English Language and Composition
AP English Literature and Composition

IB/AP Junior English
IB/AP Senior English (HL Exam)

AP World History
AP U.S. History
AP U.S. and Comparative Government (2)
AP Psychology

AP World History (Interlake)
IB/AP History of the Americas
IB/AP Government (2 AP, HL Exam)

AP Chemistry
AP Biology
AP Physics B
AP Physics C
AP Environmental Science

IB Chemistry (SL Exam)
IB/AP Biology (SL Exam)
IB/AP Physics B (SL Exam)
IB/AP Physics C (HL Exam)

AP – IB Comparisons

Both Programs Offer Similar Course Options

AP Calculus AB
AP Calculus BC
AP Statistics

AP World Language (Fifth Year)
AP World Literature (Sixth Year)

AP Studio Art
AP Art History

AP Computer Science

IB Math Studies (SL Exam)
IB/AP Calculus AB (SL Exam)
IB/AP Calculus BC (HL Exam)
AP Statistics Offered at Interlake

IB World Language (Four Year, SL)
IB/AP World Language (Fifth Year, HL)
IB/AP World Language (Sixth Year, HL)

IB/AP Art Portfolio (HL or SL)

IB Integrated Tech in Global Society (SL)
AP Computer Science Offered at Interlake