

## IB what? Addressing Dominican questions about IB:

### 1) *What is IB?*

IB is the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme for the last two years of high school. This programme is unique in combining academic rigor across six subject areas, instilling interdisciplinary critical thinking skills and community service. IB doesn't just look at one subject or at schoolwork alone. IB addresses and challenges all sides of a student.

Founded in 1968, IB currently teaches 646,000 students across three programmes in 2,382 schools in 129 countries. IB's worldwide reach and acknowledged excellence is distinctive.

### 2) *Why is IB important to Dominican?*

Dominican has long sought to be both a college preparatory high school and a place where the complete person matters. There is more to all of us than being just one thing: be it student, mother, father, job, etc. Many factors define us. IB is the one academic program that infuses all parts of what is to be a complete person to each student. All our students will be ready for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century whether in the university, on the job, or as a compassionate global citizen.

### 3) *When will Dominican begin to offer IB?*

We currently are in the Application Process. Our timetable calls for a site visit by an IB team in the Fall of 2009, followed by a decision process in Spring 2010. Once Dominican is authorized as an IB World School we can begin teaching the Diploma Programme in the Fall of 2010. Our current sophomores could be IB Certificate candidates for their senior year in 2011. Incoming freshmen would be our first full IB Diploma candidates to graduate in 2012.

### 4) *Will Dominican continue to offer Advanced Placement (AP) classes?*

Advanced Placement (AP) classes will continue to be offered until 2011. The year 2011 will be a transition year for AP and IB. After 2011, only IB classes will be offered. This decision will not only conserve resources (teachers per class) but also reinforce our focus as an IB school.

### 5) *Why has Dominican chosen IB over AP?*

AP classes cater to the top tier of students and narrowly focuses one's attention to one test, one subject, one grade. IB, like Dominican, does not consider that students should be so excluded or one-dimensional. We look to all our students to achieve their best in all subjects and in their life. IB reinforces Dominican's philosophy. Good teachers do not teach to the test—good teachers test to teach. Assessments are a result, not a goal. Questions are greater than answers. Dominican, as an IB school, looks to have every student soar past their norm while AP looks for the some to rise and then perch.

Note: IB coursework appears on official high school transcripts.; AP courses do not.

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6) *How many students do you think will participate in the Diploma Programme? What about the IB Certificate Programme?*

Expectations are that the same percentage of enrollees now in advanced classes will also be enrolled in the Diploma Programme. Traditionally, half again as many students will enroll in the Certificate Program. Initial enrollment numbers will begin small and build over time in gradual increments. Most IB schools experience a five-year continuum of graduated growth as the first enrollees (our present freshman) go through the entire program. Participation numbers begin increasing after graduates and their families start to realize IB's benefits in college.

7) *If my child is not enrolled in either the Diploma Programme or the Certificate Programme will they be affected/benefit in any way? Put another way, if my child is not IB-material, will they be at a disadvantage?*

Courses will be offered at both Higher Level (HL) and Standard Level (SL) in IB. The difference between the two is in the number of required teaching hours and in the depth of material covered. Also, there still will be non-IB courses offered for those in either the Certificate Programme or non-IB. For students who do not take any IB classes, the net affect for them is an advantage, not a disadvantage. By every teacher attending Level I IB training, we have raised the bar. When a teacher engages their content at a more profound level, ALL students benefit.

8) *How will IB classes differ from Dominican's current curriculum?*

Emphasis will be on higher level, critical thinking. Analysis, synthesis and applied learning will be key and integral to each course. Knowledge of fact-based material will be foundational, not a pinnacle in and of itself. More stress will be put on concepts, ideas and pushing students towards investigative learning. Active versus passive modes of learning will be the norm. That action will also involve an international perspective, which implies thinking globally and acting locally.

9) *You indicated you will begin to offer the program in the 2010-11 school year...why the delay?*

The IB application process is a set schedule over a two-year period. This amount of time is necessary in order for staff to attend training and to revise our curriculum within IB guidelines.

10) *How much does it cost to implement IB? Who is paying for this?*

The first year implementation of \$129,400 was met by a foundation grant. The second year projected cost of \$104,700 will also be met by outside funding. Years one and two are considered the start-up period. Besides the IB application fees, the bulk of these monies will go to staff training, curriculum writing and the IB Coordinator position.

11) *How do you plan to cover the ongoing costs beyond the two-year implementation costs?*

Starting in year three, a modest 2.9% tuition increase of \$237 will be enough to sustain the ongoing costs of IB.

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12) *Is there a religious studies component to IB? If not, will IB dilute the current religious studies offerings?*

IB does offer a World Religions course in comparative religions. Our Religious Studies Department will also be an integral part of the Service component in the core of CAS (Creativity, Action, Service). Dominican's core requirements for religion will remain the same. Religion is what makes Dominican, Dominican. Our core values and mission remain the same.

13) *Will all Dominican teachers be certified to teach IB? What does certification involve?*

All Dominican teachers will go through Level I IB training. Teachers who will actually be teaching IB courses will additionally take Level II and III IB coursework to further their expertise. Significantly, IB teachers will also teach non-IB classes. The entire curriculum will be interlaced with the groundwork and concepts of IB, whether a student is in an IB class or not.

14) *Understanding that there will be somewhat of a learning curve for faculty, I'm concerned my child will be a guinea pig in the early years of the IB implementation. Can you address this?*

By the time that IB is implemented, faculty will have been involved with IB and its practices and methods for two years. Administration will make sure that the best of our best will be teaching to the rigor of IB and guiding their students. To be a "guinea pig" in the most rigorous university preparatory curriculum available isn't the right phrase. This is not an experiment. This is an opportunity to be involved in the best results-oriented program around.

15) *Will you have quantitative measures in place to evaluate the success of IB over time? If so, what types of measures are involved?*

Assessments are measured both internally (Dominican) and externally (IB outside examiners) in oral, written and project assessments. All assessments are standardized annually. Feedback that accompanies the scores from the annual exams will also address accountability and progress. Every year will entail an examination on not just scores but a breakdown on the different areas. Where do we excel? Which subjects have attained equivalence? Where do we need to improve? All learning involves reflection. Enough system-wide measures are in place to both monitor progress and, more importantly, to pinpoint those areas that call for praise, maintain or to attain.

James Buckingham, IB Coordinator  
[jbucking@dominicanhighschool.com](mailto:jbucking@dominicanhighschool.com)