



Study Finds IB Diploma Graduates Well Prepared to Succeed in college

Diploma Programme Highly Aligned with US College Readiness Standards

The Education Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) announced today the results from their report “International Baccalaureate Standards Development and Alignment Project.”

The report, which analyzes the alignment of the IB Diploma Programme standards and the Knowledge and Skills for University Success (KSUS) college-ready standards, found IB standards to be “highly aligned with the KSUS standards.” In particular, the key cognitive strategies emphasized in the Diploma—critical thinking skills, intellectual inquisitiveness and interpretation—were found to be fully aligned with the expectations of university faculty.

The study, led by David Conley, confirmed that IB Diploma Programme standards demonstrate a very high degree of alignment with the KSUS standards in all subject areas. In math, complete alignment was found between the IB Diploma’s mathematical studies and the KSUS’ algebra, trigonometry and statistics standards. In science, the 47 IB chemistry standards, 19 biology standards and the concepts of environmental science embedded in all three IB science courses aligned completely with KSUS.

Data on university graduation rates of IB diploma holders shows that the vast majority (more than 80%) graduate from university within six years. “In many ways, the findings from EPIC’s study confirm that the Diploma Programme is achieving one of its major objectives, preparing all students for university,” said Beth Brock, IB’s Global Head of Policy and Research. “Students that complete the programme have a strong foundation not only in academic skills but also in other areas, such as critical-thinking, problem-solving, research, writing and communication that are so vital to success in university and the 21st century world.”

“What is perhaps most notable about our findings is the degree to which IB standards were found to be related to the kinds of key cognitive strategies that our previous research points to as being so important for success in colleges and universities,” added David Conley, CEO of EPIC. “We have learned that it’s not enough for students to study content in isolation; they must use their content knowledge to solve problems, make conjectures and inferences, and think deeply about the big questions of the disciplines. The IB standards seem to be particularly well suited to achieving these aims.”

The goal of the project was to develop a set of standards that represented the knowledge and skills students learn in the curriculum of the IB Diploma Programme by reviewing course documents for Language A1, Theory of Knowledge, Extended Essay, Math Studies, Math SL, Math HL, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. The study utilized a criterion-based expert judgment decision-making model that employed successive reviews by experts to reach findings on the relationship of the IB standards to the Knowledge and Skills for University Success.

Founded in 1968, the IB works with 2,668 schools in 137 countries to develop and offer three challenging programs to over 725,000 students aged 3 to 19 years. The IB encourages students to be active learners, well-rounded individuals and engaged world citizens. It also serves in an educational advisory capacity to other educational organizations. To learn more about the IB, please visit: www.ibo.org