

Name of Student

Adviser's Name

Dear Tenth Grader,

This is the first step of your registration into the Diploma Programme. On the next page, you will find the courses offered for your cohort. Please go over them carefully and:

1. On the next page, review the courses highlighted for you, whether as first choice or backup choice, based on the initial interview. Revise as necessary.
2. Visit the present Grade 11 teacher/s to clarify course content, objectives and methodology. **Please note, though, that these are not necessarily the teachers teaching the course next year, but that they have enough knowledge to introduce the course and its demands.** Have each teacher you visit sign on your form.
3. Visit your Grade 10 teachers to discuss the viability of your course choice for the subject group. Your teacher will sign on your form, and indicate whether they endorse you for the course or not.
4. Decide on the courses you'll register for with your parents, your adviser, and/or the guidance counselor/s and the DP Coordinator. When you've made your decisions, please tick your choices in the "Final Course Selection" section.
5. Sign the form, and have your parents sign their consent.
6. Turn this in to the Diploma Programme Coordinator on or before **December 16, 2013**. Incomplete forms will not be processed. Remember, an early submission means a stronger assurance of a slot in the courses of your choice.

Decide wisely. If you have any questions, please feel free to see me.


Mr. Patrick Ong
Diploma Programme Coordinator

M2016 IB Diploma Programme Course Descriptions

GROUP 1: STUDIES IN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

To fulfill the requirements of the Diploma Programme at the Beacon Academy, all students must study an **English A** subject from one of the courses below. One path to a **bilingual diploma** is to take both English and Filipino in grades 11 and 12.

Group 1 courses are designed to support future academic study by developing a high social, aesthetic and cultural literacy, as well as effective communication skills.

Language A Literature: English and Filipino (standard & higher levels for English; standard level only for Filipino)

Through the study of a wide range of literature, the Language A: Literature course encourages students to appreciate the artistry of literature and to develop an ability to reflect critically on their reading. Works are studied in their literary and cultural contexts, through close study of individual texts and passages, and by considering a range of critical approaches.

NEW! English A Language and Literature (standard & higher levels)

The Language A: Language and Literature course aims to develop in students skills of textual analysis and the understanding that texts, both literary and non-literary, can be seen as autonomous yet simultaneously related to culturally determined reading practices. An understanding of the ways in which formal elements are used to create meaning in a text is combined with the exploration of how that meaning is affected by reading practices that are culturally defined and by the circumstances of production and reception.

GROUP 2: LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

At the Academy, Group 2 consists of two modern language courses – language ab initio and language B – that are offered in Spanish and Chinese Mandarin. Both courses are language acquisition courses designed to provide students with the necessary skills and intercultural understanding to enable them to communicate successfully in an environment where the language studied is spoken.

To fulfill the requirements of the Diploma Programme at the Beacon Academy, all students must study a language other than English. They may select a course from group 2, or take Filipino A in group 1 in lieu of Chinese Mandarin or Spanish.

Language B: Spanish and Chinese Mandarin (standard level only)

Language B is an additional language-learning course designed for students with some previous learning of that language. The main focus of the course is on language acquisition and development of language skills. These language skills will be developed through the study and use of a range of written and spoken material. Such material will extend from everyday oral exchanges to literary texts that are related to the culture concerned.

Language ab initio: Spanish and Chinese Mandarin (standard level only)

Language ab initio is an additional language-learning course designed for students with little or no previous learning of that language.

The Language ab initio course is organized into three themes: individual and society, leisure and work, and urban and rural environment. Each theme has a list of topics that provide the students with opportunities to practice and explore the language as well as to develop intercultural understanding. Through the development of receptive, productive, and interactive skills, students will be able to respond and interact appropriately in a defined range of everyday situations.

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GROUP 3: INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETIES

To fulfill the requirements for the Diploma Programme at the Beacon Academy, all students must register for a course under Group 3. Students may opt to enroll in a second Group 3 course instead of taking an Arts class.

The Academy also offers *Environmental Systems and Societies*, a transdisciplinary course that can count as a Group 3 and/or Group 4 course.

Business and Management (standard and higher levels)

Business and Management is an in-depth study of how decisions are made in the varied activities of the business world. Essential to understanding these decision-making processes is the understanding of business theory and its application in business practice. Further, the course is intended to facilitate an understanding of how the many varied activities in business are linked and often interdependent. In particular, students will focus on marketing, production, human resource management, and finance.

Economics (standard & higher levels)

Economics is a social science that examines how scarce resources are allocated to fulfill the infinite wants of consumers. What to produce, how things should be produced, and whom things are produced for, are questions that economics seeks to answer.

The course seeks to provide students with a core knowledge and understanding of economics, encourage students to think critically about economics, promote an awareness and understanding of internationalism in economics, and encourage students' development as independent learners. Alongside the empirical observations of positive economics, students are asked to formulate normative questions and to recognize their own tendencies for bias.

History Route 2: Asia and Oceania, Communism in Crisis (higher level only)

DP History aims to allow students to study a broad range of topics spanning human history, provide them with the opportunity to compare common human situations, and ultimately give them an appreciation of the general human experience. Its international perspective opens the path towards understanding and respect of diverse cultures – attitudes that would help them become better citizens of the world.

There is a core curriculum that is recommended for the course, but History HL students in particular are required, in addition, to undertake an in-depth study of a period in history. They will be expected to gather and sort historical evidence, recognize and understand historical processes, and organize and express historical ideas and information. Combining the rigor of compiling and understanding breadth and depth of information with the ability to analyze that information, consider a range of perspectives and opinions, this course will develop students capable of making informed and effective decisions, using the past to inform and shape the present.

Psychology (standard and higher levels)

The Psychology course examines the interaction of biological, cognitive, and sociocultural influences of human behavior, thereby adopting an integrative approach. Understanding how psychological knowledge is generated, developed and applied enables students to achieve a greater understanding of themselves and appreciate the diversity of human behavior. Examples of these applications are in the areas of human development, abnormal behavior, health, sports, and social relationships. The ethical concerns raised by the methodology and application of psychological research are key considerations in Psychology. HL students are taught qualitative research methodology and the use of inferential statistics in psychological research.

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Environmental Systems and Societies
(standard level only)**

Environmental Systems and Societies is an interdisciplinary group 3 and group 4 course that provides students with a coherent perspective of interrelationships between environmental systems and societies; one that enables them to adopt an informed personal response to the wide range of pressing environmental issues that they will inevitably come to face. The teaching approach is such that students are allowed to evaluate the scientific, ethical, and sociopolitical aspects of issues.

GROUP 4: SCIENCES

To fulfill the requirements for the Diploma Programme at the Beacon Academy, all students must register for a course under Group 4. Students may opt to enroll in a second Group 4 course instead of taking an Arts class.

Students will be exposed to both traditional and modern approaches of discovering and reinforcing competencies in experimental sciences through inquiry-based activities using laboratory equipment and technology. Students will also be equipped with skills needed to make scientific investigations independently and collaboratively through the proper execution of laboratory skills and the use of diverse experimental techniques.

Also, part of the requirement of Group 4 courses, students complete the Group 4 Project, a collaborative activity where students from different group 4 subjects work together on a scientific or technological topic, allowing for concepts and perceptions from across the disciplines to be shared.

The Academy also offers *Environmental Systems and Societies*, a trans-disciplinary course that can count as a Group 3 and/or Group 4 course.

Biology (standard and higher levels)

Biology in the DP focuses on structure and function, the relationship of which is probably one of the most important in a study of biology, and operates at all levels of complexity. Students should appreciate that structures permit some functions while, at the same time, limit others.

As an experimental science, Biology provides students with the opportunity to explore and appreciate the different levels of interaction within and amongst organisms on the molecular, cellular, and community levels. This goal is achieved through the mastery of the foundations of life's building blocks, cell structure and function, and the energy pathways of photosynthesis and respiration. Emphasis will also be given in evolution, ecosystems, communities, population, genetics, and physiology.

Chemistry (standard & higher levels)

Chemistry aims to further students' understanding of how science is conducted and how the world works. With this in mind, the course will provide opportunities for students to look at the fundamental concepts of atomic structure, periodicity, bonding, energetics, kinetics, equilibrium, acids and bases, oxidation and reduction, as well as organic chemistry. Through the development of content knowledge and investigative skills, students will be able to engage in real-world simulations and address problems seen through various contexts.

Physics (standard and higher levels)

Physics is the application of mathematics to the physical world. Observing and keeping track of what happens is made much simpler when a thorough understanding how math and physics are intrinsically linked; this course is designed to do just that. By looking at mechanics, thermal physics, harmonic motion, electrical currents, fields, nuclear physics, and energy, students will be given the opportunity to relate how the world can be explained and why it works as we observe it. Also, as physics is a fundamental science, the course will be built upon the backdrop of experimentation within the classroom, so students can explore the different phenomena we encounter firsthand.

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GROUP 5: MATHEMATICS

To fulfill the requirements for the Diploma Programme at Beacon Academy, students are required to enroll in one Group 5 subject. The choice of Group 5 course must be made vis-à-vis the student's own abilities in mathematics and the type of mathematics in which they can be successful.

At Beacon Academy, we offer Math at standard and higher levels, and Math Studies at standard level.

Mathematics (standard level)

Math at the standard level focuses on introducing important mathematical concepts through the development of mathematical techniques. The course introduces students to these concepts in a comprehensible and coherent way, rather than insisting on the mathematical rigor required for HL Math. Students, should, wherever possible, apply the mathematical knowledge they have acquired to solve realistic problems set in an appropriate context.

Mathematics (higher level)

Math at the higher level focuses on developing mathematical concepts in a comprehensible, coherent, and rigorous way. This is achieved by means of a carefully balanced approach. Students are encouraged to apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems set in a variety of meaningful contexts. Development of each topic should feature justification and proof of results. Students embarking on this course should expect to develop insight into mathematical form and structure, and should be intellectually equipped to appreciate the links between concepts in different topic areas. They should also be encouraged to develop the skills need to continue their mathematical growth in other learning environments.

This course is a demanding one, requiring students to study a broad range of mathematical topics through a number of different approaches and to varying degrees of depth. Students wishing to study mathematics in a less rigorous environment should therefore opt for one of the standard level Math courses.

Mathematical Studies (standard level only)

Math Studies focuses on important mathematical topics that are interconnected. The syllabus is organized and structured with the following tenets in mind: placing more emphasis on student understanding of fundamental concepts than on symbolic manipulation and complex manipulative skills; giving greater emphasis to developing students' mathematical reasoning rather than performing routine operations; solving mathematical problems embedded in a wide range of topics; and using the calculator effectively.

Students most likely to select this course are those whose main interests lie outside the field of mathematics, and for many students this course will be their final experience of being taught formal mathematics.

GROUP 6: THE ARTS

Group 6 is meant for students who are inclined to study art, communication and multimedia; or for students who wish to pursue a balanced selection of courses in the Diploma Programme.

To fulfill the requirements of the Diploma Programme at the Beacon Academy, each student must choose either a Group 6 course or a second course from any of the subject groups (except Group 5, Mathematics).

Film (standard and higher levels)

Film in the Diploma Programme explores film history, theory and socioeconomic background through the study and analysis of film texts and exercises in filmmaking. The course develops students' critical abilities, enabling them to appreciate the multiplicity of cultural and historical perspectives in film. To achieve an international understanding within the world of film, students are taught to consider film texts, theories, and ideas from the points of view of different individuals, nations, and cultures.

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Music (standard and higher levels)

Music in the Diploma Programme provides an appropriate foundation for further study in music at university level or in music career pathways. It also provides an enriching course of study for students who may pursue other careers. The course also provides all students with the opportunity to engage in the world of music as lifelong participants. At both standard and higher levels, students will be expected to create and perform their own compositions either individually or collaboratively.

Visual Arts (standard and higher levels)

The Visual Arts course enables students to engage in both practical exploration and artistic production, and in independent contextual, visual, and critical investigation, with option A students focusing more on the former and option B students on the latter. The course is designed to enable students to study visual arts in higher education and also welcomes those students who seek life enrichment through visual arts.

CORE COMPONENTS

All three components listed below are not only required for the IB Diploma, but also for graduation from the Beacon Academy; therefore, all graduates of the Academy will have completed Theory of Knowledge, the Extended Essay / Senior Project, and Creativity, Action, Service.

Theory of Knowledge

Theory of Knowledge (TOK) is a core course of the IB Diploma Programme that requires students and teachers to think critically about knowledge itself, the ways by which we gain knowledge, and the different areas of knowledge that are in and of themselves, academic disciplines.

TOK is taught within a conceptual, inquiry-driven framework. It is directed by questions such as: What counts as knowledge? What are the implications of having, or not having knowledge?

In TOK, students are provided with opportunities to question the knowledge they have accumulated throughout their years of schooling, to examine newfound knowledge purposefully and critically. They are expected to be able to see themselves as knowers: to ask how they know what they know, how they know what they know to be true, how they can verify the validity of their knowledge, or perhaps even nullify it.

Students will learn how to phrase their inquiry as knowledge issues, understanding that knowledge is a human construct constantly in various stages of development, and appreciating the implications that lie therein.

Creativity, Action, Service

Creativity, action, service (CAS) is at the heart of the Diploma Programme. It involves students in a range of activities alongside their academic studies throughout the DP. All proposed CAS activities need to involve real, purposeful activities with significant outcomes; a personal challenge; thoughtful consideration; and reflection on outcomes and personal learning.

The Extended Essay

The Extended Essay (EE) is an in-depth study of a focused topic, normally chosen from one of the student's six chosen subjects for the IB Diploma. The EE intends to promote high-level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery, and creativity. It provides students with an opportunity to engage in personal research in a topic of their choice, under the guidance of a supervisor assigned by the Academy. This leads to a major piece of formally presented, structured writing, in which ideas and findings are communicated in a reasoned and coherent manner, appropriate to the subject chosen.

Students who are not pursuing the full IB diploma will complete a Senior Project, a modified iteration of the Extended Essay.

Both the EE and the Senior Project are assessed against common criteria, interpreted in ways appropriate to each subject.

All course descriptions are taken or adapted from the official IB subject guides.