

## College Benefits Stemming from IB

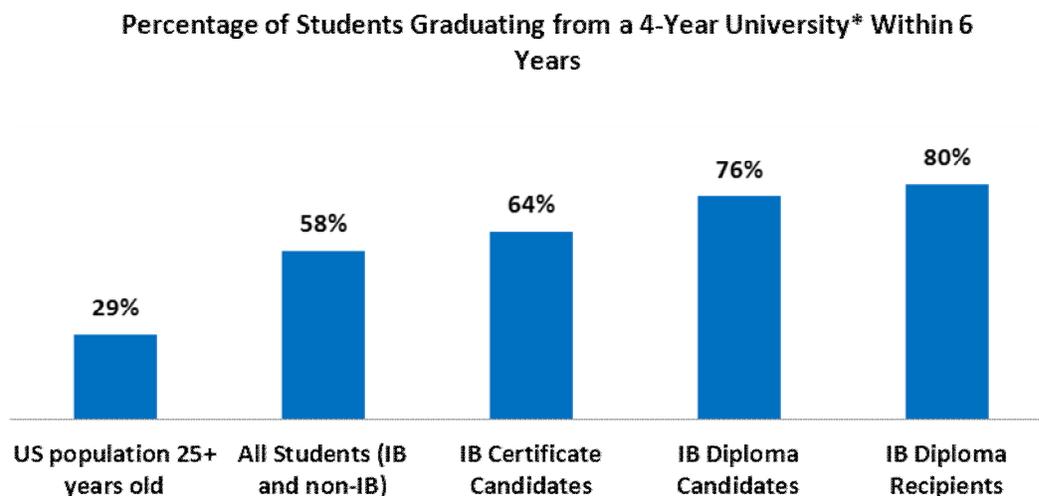
There are two distinct college benefits resulting from involvement in IB: performance in college and advanced standing in college. Of these two the first is by far the more important even though many families are more focused on the second, making programmatic high school choices that sometimes don't provide maximum benefit to the student over the long term. This document will attempt to highlight both issues.

### 1: Performance in college:

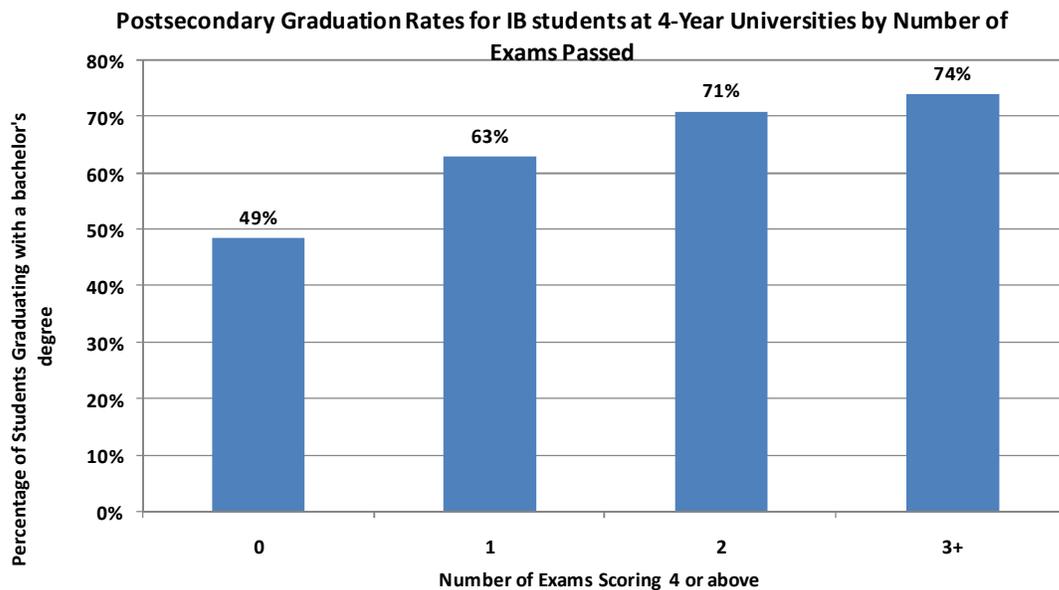
Though advanced standing credits are nice, they do the student little good if the student is not also adequately prepared to take on real college/university level work. This critical fact is sometimes undervalued in the decisions families make when choosing academic coursework for their high school aged student. Involvement in IB coursework (regardless of whether they test or not) can ensure that students are exposed to and encouraged to master the skills that will help foster success at university.

The skills of analysis, interpretation, clear communication, organization, and time management are embedded in all IB courses. Anecdotally, it these very things that we hear back about from our graduates each year (<http://www.hsd401.org/ourschools/highschools/mtrainier/IBTestimonials.htm> ). In general, they are far more thankful for this than the credits they may receive.

As an extension of the skill acquisition the students receive, there is a much greater chance of the student successfully finishing college over those who do not participate in IB courses (see charts below).



*\*Source: US Census, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) of NCES, and the National Student Clearinghouse*



**Source: "Postsecondary Graduation Rates of IB Students in the US", IBO**

Of further interest is some related research done by EPIC (Educational Policy Improvement Center) that clearly shows IB courses are delivering highly relevant experiences for students aspiring to attend post secondary education. The following excerpt comes from *"Summary Brief: International Baccalaureate Standards Development and Alignment Project", subsection; Alignment With College Ready Standards*. EPIC. May 2009.

"After the IB standards were developed and reviewed by EPIC, then subsequently authorized by IB, a separate study was conducted to determine the degree to which they aligned with the Knowledge and Skills for University Success (KSUS) college-ready standards. Content experts who originally helped to develop the KSUS standards performed the alignment. All are university faculty members in the respective content areas.

The Knowledge and Skills for University Success (KSUS) college-ready standards are a comprehensive set of standards describing what university faculty expect in entry-level students. The KSUS standards were developed using a process in which more than 400 faculty and staff members from 20 leading research universities, all members of the Association of American Universities, participated in extensive meetings and reviews. They indicate what students must know and be able to do in order to succeed in entry-level courses at AAU institutions. The KSUS standards are divided into subject-area groups covering English, mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, second

languages and the arts. For a complete listing of the KSUS standards and the methodology used to develop them, go to: <http://www.s4s.org/cepr.uus.php>.

**Table 1. International Baccalaureate standards aligned to KSUS standards by content area**

| IB Content Area            | Aligned to KSUS Subject Area |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Language A1                | English                      |
| Theory of Knowledge        | English                      |
| Extended Essay             | English                      |
| Mathematical Studies       | Mathematics                  |
| Mathematics Standard Level | Mathematics                  |
| Mathematics Higher Level   | Mathematics                  |
| Biology                    | Natural Sciences             |
| Physics                    | Natural Sciences             |
| Chemistry                  | Natural Sciences             |

### **Results**

The IB standards are highly aligned with the KSUS standards indicating that students who learn the IB curriculum in high school enter college with the type of knowledge and skills not only expected by college faculty but also with skills known to promote academic success in entry-level courses. Of the 73 KSUS standards in English only seven KSUS standards were not aligned with the IB standards across Language A1, Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge. Similarly in mathematical studies, for the 83 KSUS standards only 11 were not aligned to the IB standards. Of special note is the complete alignment found between the mathematical studies standards and the algebra, trigonometry and statistics standards of the college ready KSUS. A large section of the KSUS standards are devoted to the study and acquisition of algebra skills. This emphasis is intentional because college faculty members know that strong algebra skills are closely linked with success in college math and science courses. Students who take the IB mathematical studies course have the opportunity to learn every algebra standard expected by the college faculty who will teach them (as represented by the KSUS). In science there is complete alignment between the KSUS standards and the 47 IB chemistry standards, the 19 biology standards and the concepts of environmental science that are embedded across all three IB science courses. For IB physics (31 standards) only five KSUS standards could not be detected. In general those KSUS standards for which the faculty alignment experts could detect no alignment were simply of a grain-size more detailed than the IB standards.

Faculty members consistently report that critical thinking skills, intellectual inquisitiveness and interpretation are skills that should be mastered prior to enrolling in college freshman courses. The key cognitive strategies emphasized within the IB Diploma Programme show evidence that the content of IB is fully aligned with what is expected by university faculty.

The results of this study clearly confirm the strong relationship between the IB Diploma Programme and standards for college readiness and success. The IB standards demonstrate a very high degree of alignment with the KSUS standards in all subject areas. In addition, many of the individual IB standards are at a level more advanced than entry-level college courses. Furthermore, the IB standards address key cognitive strategies that are critical to success in entry-level college courses. These key cognitive skill areas are rarely addressed in state content standards but are identified almost universally by college instructors as being central to success in entry-level college courses. In short, students who participate successfully in IB should be well prepared to succeed in entry-level college general education courses and in some cases to have already learned material covered in such courses.+

Similar and extensive data also exists for the positive effects that IB imparts on Free and Reduced Lunch student populations. Students from this demographic achieve a Bachelor's Degree at success rates ranging from 62%-81% (depending on various school statistics and level of involvement in IB) as compared to the 58% success rate for all students seeking a 4 year degree.

## **2: Advanced standing in college:**

Taking the end of course IB Exam is a required condition if students are seeking advanced credit standing at college/university. All colleges set their own policies for accepting advanced standing credits (IB, AP, Running Start) so it is crucial that families investigate the college/university they are going to in order to determine the validity of any possible advanced standing credit opportunities. Historically, the general rule of thumb for IB courses is that colleges/universities award credit to students who score 5 or better on Higher Level (HL) exams. This policy is starting to shift some as more colleges/universities recognize the value of an IB education. There are now several colleges awarding credit for HL scores of 4 in some disciplines as well as credit for some Standard Level (SL) courses with an exam score of 5 or higher.

For more information on this please refer to <http://www.ibo.org/diploma/recognition/>. Search directories available here will direct you to university-specific websites detailing advanced standing policies.