



Advice About Course Selection

2017

Students entering Year 2

ADVICE ABOUT COURSE SELECTION

This guide is intended to assist boys and their parents in the academic planning process from Year 1 to Foundation Year, with a particular focus on course selection for the following grade level, which occurs during the Winter Term. However, no summary of key elements can provide all of the information that is required for this very important aspect of each boy's Upper School career. It is therefore essential that families consult other sources, which include:

- The detailed descriptions of course content that are found in the Academic Program Guide on the UCC website under www.ucc.on.ca→**Upper School Academics**.
- Boys' past and current grades by subject. It is crucial to consider choices for subsequent years within the context of each student's academic record to date.
- Students' current teachers, especially those in subjects that are cumulative in nature (a second language, mathematics) and/or where natural aptitude and a boy's level of interest play an important role in determining success.
- Form and House Advisers. These are the faculty members who monitor students' overall progress through the Upper School and are therefore especially aware of each boy's academic strengths and challenges.
- The University Counsellors. When questions arise concerning the fulfillment of IB Diploma requirements or planning for postsecondary education, a boy's university counsellor is the best source of information and advice. Appointments can be made through Leigh Berndsen (x. 2262)

Bremner's, Howard's, Jackson's (Michelle Carvalho) Martland's, McHugh's (Katherine Ridout)
Mowbray's, Orr's, Scadding's (Jane Audet) Seaton's, Wedd's (Andrew Turner)

In order to ensure maximum flexibility of student choice, the Upper School rebuilds its timetable each year based on the selections that boys make. For this reason, course selections are due by **Friday, March 3**. While it is possible for students to make changes during the balance of the school year, as time passes there is an increased risk that courses of interest may have already reached their maximum enrolment.

Occasionally, a boy may decide to alter his original choices in the first few weeks of the next school year. While this is permitted by the College and usually possible based on enrolment patterns, in some cases, there may be an irresolvable timetable conflict and in other instances, a student may have to move from one section to another in other courses where he feels well placed. A student who changes courses after the beginning of the school year will also be responsible for making up any missed content. It is far better to take the time to engage in thorough research and consultation before the original submission date in order to ensure that those choices are the best ones possible.

STUDENTS ENTERING YEAR 2

- Each Year 2 student takes eight courses: five comprise a compulsory core; the remaining courses involve some choice. Each of the eight has a value of one credit toward the Ontario Secondary School Diploma.
- Because of the dominance of the core, course selections for those entering Year 2 are relatively straightforward. However, there are areas in which important choices must be made. The most challenging of these is often the second language requirement. Since French is part of the Year 1 core, those entering Year 2 will already have earned the credit in this subject that is required for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (known as the OSSD). For this reason, Year 2 boys may drop French as long as they replace it with one of Latin, Chinese, or Spanish, which then becomes their prospective Language B for the IB. In the case of Chinese, only those who are able to satisfy the instructor that they have already acquired some proficiency in this language will be enrolled in the Year 2 course and ultimately qualify to take Chinese as their IB Language B.
- Some boys who have struggled with French in Year 1 may for that reason decide to replace it with one of the other languages in Year 2. The College's best advice to these students is to continue with French, but add one of the other languages as an elective. In this way, a boy will be in a position to choose either French or his new language for Foundation Year, followed by IB1 and IB2. Otherwise he will have no choice but to continue with his third language for the three subsequent years, even though he may be faring no better in it than he did in Year 1 French. At first glance, this advice may appear to double the student's problem with second language study rather than resolving it, but experience shows that it is the safest course of action. An exception occurs when the Modern & Classical Languages Department itself recommends that a boy discontinue the study of French, usually because his lack of sufficient background prior to Year 1 is a permanent liability.
- A student who replaces French with either Latin or Chinese and then decides not to continue with his new second language in the IB diploma years may still find a feasible route to graduation through *ab initio* Spanish, which is taught entirely in Grades 11 and 12. However, even a boy who anticipates taking the *ab initio* course as his IB Language B must still earn a second language credit in both Year 2 and Foundation Year. Students who find second language study to be especially challenging should be cautious about assuming that *ab initio* Spanish is a 'way out,' since this course expects students to attain quite a high standard in just two years of study. Those who have already taken Spanish in Year 2 and/or the Foundation Year are not eligible for the *ab initio* course. The same is true of new boys who have studied Spanish at their previous school.
- Year 2 students have a choice of Visual Arts, Instrumental Music, or Dramatic Arts. They will be eligible to take the corresponding elective in Foundation Year only if they have completed the Year 2 course. Boys who take two of these subjects in Year 2 (the second as their elective)

and again in Foundation Year will have the opportunity to continue with both in their IB program.

- Year 2 students may choose one of two electives: Introduction to Computer Studies or Regional Geography (Focus Asia). Year 2 Computer Studies (ICS20) is not a prerequisite for the elective taught in Foundation Year. In the case of Geography, boys should ideally have the Year 2 elective and/or one of the two Geography courses offered in Foundation Year as background for Higher Level Geography in the IB. None of these courses is required for those who choose Standard Level Geography.

- Instead of choosing one of the two electives, a boy may select an additional language or a second arts subject.

YEAR TWO SUMMARY

A) The course load for Year 2 is:

Compulsory courses 5
Breadth requirements 2
Elective 1
Total: 8

B) Latin, Chinese, Spanish, Visual Arts, Instrumental Music, and Dramatic Arts are all prerequisites for the Foundation Year courses in these disciplines.

STUDENTS ENTERING FOUNDATION YEAR

- Boys in Foundation Year take eight courses. Under certain circumstances, the eighth course will be a Learning Skills credit (GLS40) taught by the Centre for Learning. This opportunity is typically offered to new boys, students of English as a Second Language, and those with identified special needs.
- Starting in Foundation Year, boys may choose to take an International Language (usually their actual mother tongue) rather than one of those (French, Latin, Spanish, and Chinese) offered within the regular Group 2 curriculum. International languages are studied through private tuition in classes held outside of the regular timetable. They are also at a cost that is in addition to regular College tuition. Any boy wishing to take an International Language should consult with his University Counsellor.
- Three Foundation Year courses (English, Mathematics, and Healthy Active Living Education) are compulsory. The next three are breadth requirements in the disciplines that correspond to IB Groups 2, 3, and 4 (Language B, Individuals & Societies, and Experimental Sciences). In each of these areas, students must select one course from among those offered. In most cases, the courses chosen will be the prerequisites for the Standard or Higher Level subjects they will take in the same groups during IB1 and IB2. Obtaining the relevant Foundation Year background is especially important for IB Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.
- The two remaining courses may be either electives chosen from the list at the bottom of the course selection sheet or additional subjects from Groups 2, 3, and 4.
- It is strongly recommended that those who will want to take Higher Level Geography in IB Group 3 choose one of the two Geography courses for Foundation Year. Any of the subjects in Pre-IB Group 3 are acceptable as a prerequisite for IB Standard Level Geography.

FOUNDATION YEAR SUMMARY

A) The course load for Foundation Year is:

Compulsory courses 3
Breadth requirements 3
Electives 2 (1 for those taking learning skills)
Total: 8

B) All three breadth requirements must be completed at UCC during Foundation Year.

C) Electives may be additional subjects in pre-IB Groups 2, 3, or 4.

STUDENTS ENTERING THE IB DIPLOMA YEARS

- The choice of six subjects to be studied in order to qualify for the IB Diploma is largely determined by the following factors:

1. The mandated structure of the program means that each candidate must complete three subjects at Higher Level and another three at Standard Level.

2. Five of the six IB subjects are in stipulated disciplines, called Groups. The sixth Group consists of four arts electives. As an alternative, this elective may be a second course chosen from Group 2, 3, or 4.

3. Almost all IB subjects have specified prerequisites at lower grade levels, either within the core or from among available electives. These are described on the IB course selection sheet. Exceptions are *ab initio* Spanish (Group 2), Economics (Group 3), Philosophy (Group 3), Environmental Systems & Societies (Groups 3 and 4), Sports, Exercise & Health Science (Group 4) and Film (Group 6). Students who are not taking Geography in the Foundation Year may select HL Geography with the permission of the department.

- In choosing their IB subjects, students must also consider which subjects are prerequisites for the university degree programs to which they wish to apply. Sometimes the level at which a subject is taken may also be significant. This aspect of course selection is treated in depth in the Guide to Choosing Foundation Year & IB Courses, which is provided to boys as part of their course selection package and also available in the Academic Program Guide.

- IB English is available as two courses: Literature and Language & Literature. Both are taught at Higher Level and Standard Level. Any of these four choices will satisfy university admission requirements in English. However, the courses themselves are quite different in content and focus, so students need to give careful consideration as to which course and which level best suits their interests and plans for post-secondary education. Referring to the detailed course descriptions in the Academic Program Guide is essential in this process. As well, members of the English Department are pleased to provide individual advice. Standard Level Language & Literature is strongly recommended for students who do not have English as their first (or best) language.

- Environmental Systems & Societies is what the International Baccalaureate Organization calls an interdisciplinary subject. Because of the special nature of this course, it may be used to satisfy the IB Diploma requirements in both Group 3 (Individuals & Societies) and Group 4 (Experimental Sciences). However, students choosing it may still take another subject in either of these two groups if they wish (Economics and Systems, for example, or Systems and Chemistry). The opportunity to use Systems to fulfil two of the IB's distribution requirements at the same time is especially attractive to boys with a strong interest and proficiency in the arts, since it means that (with the required Year 2 and Foundation Year background) they are able to take two of the four Group 6 subjects: Film, Dramatic Arts, Music, and Visual Art. It should be

noted that Environmental Systems & Societies is not acceptable as a prerequisite for admission to university degree programs in science or engineering. Students with these interests are required to take two Group 4 subjects, typically Chemistry in combination with either Biology or Physics, depending on their particular interests. Because of its interdisciplinary nature, Environmental Systems & Societies is not considered a laboratory science. Boys considering applying to American universities should be aware that they often have an expectation that applicants will have four years of science on their transcripts.

- Another Group 4 option is Sports, Exercise & Health Science (SEHS). The course incorporates the disciplines of anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, psychology, and nutrition, all of which are studied within the context of human performance and health. Emphasis will be placed on relating these topics to global issues as well as to daily life, and on developing skills in the areas of experimentation, research, critical thinking, and analysis. Ethical and political issues within the world of sport are also explored. Students should be aware that SEHS would not be acceptable as a prerequisite for some university science programs and may not be considered a laboratory science by some US colleges.

- Often the challenge faced by those assembling an IB Diploma program relates not to which subjects to take, but rather whether they should be taken at Higher or Standard Level. The best indicator with regard to this decision is a student's current level of achievement in that subject. Based on experience, a Foundation Year January report mark below 5 suggests that the Higher Level course (if available) would not be a wise choice.

- Foundation Year teachers are an excellent source of recommendations about appropriate IB choices for their students, especially in Language B, Science, and Mathematics.

IB1 AND IB2 SUMMARY

A) The course load for both IB1 and IB2 is:

Higher Level subjects 3
Standard Level subjects 3
Theory of Knowledge 1
Total: 7

B) Each of the six IB courses that a student chooses involves a two-year commitment.

It is important to keep in mind that it is seldom possible to change course selections between IB1 and IB2. An exception is the switch from SL Math to SL Math Studies, a move that some boys have made successfully.