

# IB, AP courses offer early college credits

Students participating in International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement programs work to improve performances

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News Reporters

Across the school, dozens of high schoolers scowl at their class scheduling applications, weighing their options.

“AP stands for ‘Advanced Placement,’ and IB stands for ‘International Baccalaureate,’” said IB coordinator and English teacher Karen Mayer-Sebastian. “We offer both here at FC.”

Both courses serve as dual credit courses; students who take them will be able to earn college credits before they have even graduated.

“[The students] can get lots of college credit,” said Mayer-Sebastian. “Just taking the advanced courses like AP and IB gives them a better mindset, gets them more prepared for college, and gives them a much easier time going in.”

FC had begun to offer AP courses fairly early in the school’s existence, and quickly grew across the decades.

“[The AP program] came

here in the early 80s,” said principal Rob Willman. “It started off pretty small; we had calculus and maybe composition, and that was really about it. In 2003 we had maybe four, and now we are up to 15.”

IB, on the other hand, is a more recent addition, only arriving in the past few years.

As far as curriculum, AP and IB classes are radically different from each other.

“There’s a huge difference between the two,” said Mayer-Sebastian. “AP is about breadth of study, and IB is about depth of study. You may not cover as many subjects in IB, but you cover them at a much deeper level. In addition to that, the AP classes are very directive and teacher-driven. You have the knowledge, and you’re giving it to your students. IB is more about students taking charge of their own education. It’s more about them deciding what they want to study.”

The courses are popular among high-achievers.

“I love AP because it’s

standards are so high,” said senior Sofia Franco. “It’s been around along time, so they’ve worked out all the kinks.”

“The classes are really good,” said senior Alleson Estar. “Some of them could definitely use some work, but most are very effective.”

A number of opportunities can come from the programs, even if one’s score is low.

“I think it’s a great program,” said counselor Mark Clark. “Students should understand what their limits are, what they can handle. I encourage all students to at least try one AP course if they are planning on going to college. It’s great. It opens up a lot of opportunities for students to experience what a college level course is going to be.”

However, all benefits ultimately boil down to the student’s willingness to work.

“Do you have the discipline to make yourself work?” said Franco. “Do you feel like you can put in the hours, put in the work?”



Rebeca Flores/The Bagpiper

**ENGLISH TEACHER WALLACE AUSTIN** talks about classic literature along with modern literature to prepare his students for the AP essays. “Mr. Austin does a good job of making sure that his students are prepared not only for the AP exam, but also for the college English classes,” said senior Sofia Franco.

To participate in a poll on IB and AP courses, go to [fchsbagpiper.wordpress.com](http://fchsbagpiper.wordpress.com).

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