

California Association of IB World Schools
Information for IB Diploma Schools
University of California A-G Course Guide 2015-2016

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Courses from California high schools and online schools used to satisfy the "a-g" subject requirements must be approved by UC and appear on the institution's "a-g" course list. These courses are to be academically challenging, involving substantial reading, writing, problems and laboratory work (as appropriate), and show serious attention to analytical thinking, factual content and developing students' oral and listening skills.

Important Tasks for IB Schools

- Submit new courses for “a-g” approval, and follow the deadlines/due dates.
 - Add approved IB Program courses to your school’s course lists *[see below].
 - Work with CAWS in advance to develop and submit any new IB Program courses your school will offer that are NOT on the IB Program course list. All new courses must be submitted through CAWS for approval on the IB Program course list.
- Revise existing school courses if needed.
- Keep track of submissions, under-review and reviewed courses.
- Check your course list for accuracy. Add/remove courses on an annual basis so there is an accurate profile of your school’s academic and IB offerings.

***Adding IB Diploma Courses to your school’s A-G list.** Authorized IB Diploma Program Schools can add IB Program “a-g” approved courses to their own school’s “a-g” course list without having to prepare a full “a-g” course submission to UC for review through an annual application process. UC grants *program status* to select organizations, including IB, offering standardized high school curriculum that fulfills the “a-g” subject requirements. Such approved “a-g” courses are referred to as *program courses*. Each organization with program status has an established “a-g” course list composed of the program courses that have earned “a-g” approval. Program course lists serve as an easy way for any California high school to refer to a program’s “a-g” courses and identify the particular course(s) the school intends to offer to its students. High schools then add a program’s “a-g” course to their own school’s “a-g” course list without having to prepare a full “a-g” course submission to UC for review. UC encourages schools, districts, and school networks to consider adding and teaching program courses because the schools that do so can expect to receive curriculum resources and related support from the organization with UC program status. IB Program Course list: <https://hs-articulation.ucop.edu/agcourselist#/list/details/4486/>

FAQ: What if our school wants to offer an IB course that is not on the UC IB Program course list?

Please contact CAWS if your school wants to offer a new IB course that is not on the UC IB Program course list. Individual schools cannot add new IB Program courses on their own; they must be submitted as program courses through the IB Program course portal. It is strongly recommended that new course proposals be submitted by the Phase 1 application deadline (February 1, 2016-May 31, 2016). New courses initially submitted during Phase 1 may have up to 2 opportunities to resubmit. The UC A-G guide for honors courses should be closely followed if courses are to be approved. Address the criteria for the subject and use the required submission format. Course proposals that just submit the IB course guide have little chance of approval. Teachers from different IB schools are encouraged to work collaboratively on their course proposals, and CAWS can help facilitate this. **CAWS is currently offering stipends to teachers who develop and complete new IB course proposals.**

FAQ: Many IB program courses do not receive “honors” designation from UC. Why is this and what can be done about it?

There is a lengthy review process by individual UC campuses and departments for honors designation. Many of the IB courses were submitted and reviewed many years ago when the IB Program was not very well known in California. With the new UC A-G guide and a better review process, CAWS believes there is a new “window” to resubmit IB courses for honors designation. **CAWS is seeking teachers who would like to work on course resubmissions, and is offering stipends to teachers for this. Please contact CAWS if you are interested.**

There are a limited number of honors courses that count toward the UC GPA. The number of UC-designated honors courses receiving the additional grade points is limited to eight semesters or four years. The rigor of a student’s schedule (which includes IB courses) is another factor in admission decisions. Schools are urged to emphasize the documented benefits of IB in preparation for college success, including on-time graduation, when communicating with students, parents and the community about the advantages of the IB Program.

FAQ: Our school offers an SL course over two years but only one-year SL courses are on the IB Program A-G list.

There is currently no recognition for two-year SL courses with UC. From a brief survey of IB schools, most schools now do one of the following:

1. For SL1, use a regular approved school course name and number. For example, a school may use English 3 P for the first year of its IB English SL course. For SL 2, use the IB SL approved course title such as English IB SL. It is similar to schools that offer AP over two years. For example, students may take Biology P for one year, and then AP Biology for year 2.
2. The other option is to enroll all students in HL1 and HL2 courses, and then some students will test at SL instead of HL.

FAQ: Our school offers an IB approved school-based syllabus course.

School-based syllabus courses cannot be approved as IB Program courses. Schools offering a school-based syllabus will need to submit the course for approval at their site, and give it a school name (for example, Honors Astronomy). You can indicate elsewhere (for example, your school profile) that it is an IB approved syllabus.

The following is general information from the University of California A-G Guide.

IB Coordinators should be familiar with this guide, and to work closely with school/district staff on their school's A-G lists. This can help your students in the UC/CSU application and admission process.

A-G Course Criteria

California high schools, online schools and designated programs and publishers can submit their courses to UC for "a-g" approval using the [A-G Course Management Portal \(CMP\)](#). Approval is based on the course meeting the following subject-specific course criteria established by the UC faculty:

- [History/social science \("a"\)](#)
- [English \("b"\)](#)
- [Mathematics \("c"\)](#)
- [Laboratory science \("d"\)](#)
- [Language other than English \("e"\)](#)
- [Visual and performing arts \("f"\)](#)
- [College-preparatory elective \("g"\)](#)

Once approved, the course is added to the institution's ["a-g" course list](#).

To satisfy the "a-g" subject requirements, the course must appear on the institution's course list for the year the student took the course.

Honors courses

To encourage students to undertake more challenging studies in high school, the University of California assigns extra weight to grades received in honors-level courses. UC maintains an [honors "a-g" course policy](#) that defines the types of honors courses eligible for the UC honors designation.

When calculating a student's UC GPA to determine if the student meets or exceeds the [minimum GPA](#) by residency status, the number of UC-designated honors courses receiving the additional grade points is limited to eight semesters or four years. Students may complete more than eight semesters of honors coursework, but a maximum of eight extra points will be factored into the UC GPA.

Most students complete UC-designated honors courses in grades 11 and 12, although some may complete these courses as early as grade 10. The University limits the amount of extra points

added to the UC GPA for UC-designated honors courses completed in grade 10 to no more than four semesters or two years. This limitation also only affects the GPA calculation that determines if an applicant meets or exceeds the [minimum GPA](#) UC requires based on residency status.

Course criteria & guidelines

Courses that meet the criteria outlined below may be granted UC honors designation and qualify students to earn extra points in their UC GPA computation. The University strongly encourages honors-level courses be made available to all segments of the school population.

International Baccalaureate (IB) courses

Designated “a-g” approved IB courses receive the UC honors designation. For a list of IB courses that carry the UC honors designation, please refer to the International Baccalaureate program’s [“a-g” course list](#).

Advanced Placement (AP) courses

All “a-g” approved AP courses receive the UC honors designation. For a list of approved AP courses, please refer to the College Board Advanced Placement program’s [“a-g” course list](#).

Beginning with the 2015-16 “a-g” course submission period, institutions may only add AP courses to their “a-g” course list that have passed the College Board’s [AP Course Audit](#). Institutions should submit AP Course Audit materials to the College Board in a timely manner to ensure their new AP courses are authorized and then submitted to UC for “a-g” review prior to the close of UC’s annual “a-g” course submission period on September 15.

All AP courses on an “a-g” course list must be authorized by the College Board’s [AP Course Audit](#) for each year the course is offered.

School-created honors courses

Beginning with the 2015-16 submission period, the following course criteria are effective for honors-level courses seeking "a-g" approval:

Honors courses designed by an institution to demonstrate distinctive features that set it apart from regular high school courses in the same "a-g" subject area are eligible for the UC honors designation. **These courses should be comparable in terms of workload and rigor to Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB) or introductory college-level courses in the subject.**

There is no limit to the number of UC-designated honors-level high school courses that may be approved for an institution's “a-g” course list.

General requirements

School-created honors courses must satisfy the following general requirements:

CAWS Information: A-G Course Lists for IB Diploma Schools (revised 11/2015)

1. Honors-level courses are specialized, advanced courses designed for 10th-, 11th- or 12th-graders who have already completed foundation work in the subject area. High school courses offered at the grade 9 level that schools might locally designate as “honors” are not eligible for the UC honors designation.
2. Courses must have established prerequisites, as appropriate to the discipline.
3. Honors-level courses must have a comprehensive final examination or a substantive, culminating project. The purpose of the final exam/project is for students to exhibit depth of knowledge and sustained mastery of subject material.
4. In general, high school courses being considered for UC honors designation will have a non-honors equivalent course offered at the same frequency (e.g., annually, every other year, etc.), in the same subject area, and at the same grade level. Exceptions to this criterion may be allowed under certain subject-specific circumstances. Please refer to the subject-specific honors course criteria below for details, as appropriate.

Subject-specific requirements

In addition to meeting the general UC honors course criteria, courses must meet the A-G subject-specific requirements:

College courses

UC-transferable college courses with 3 (or more) semester units or 4 (or more) quarter units in any “a-g” subject area will receive UC honors status. Designated non-transferable college courses in English and mathematics may fulfill the “a-g” subject requirements, but will not carry the extra honors weight when calculating the UC GPA.

To determine whether a California community college course will satisfy the “a-g” subject requirements, search for the college’s [“a-g” course list](#).

Satisfactory scores on SAT Subject, AP or IB exams can also be used to satisfy the “a-g” requirements.

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