



Johnson H.S. IB Newsletter

Progressing with a Purpose: A Message From the IB Coordinator

This semester seems to have “flown” by. It is hard to believe that one-half of the school year is already over.

Witnessing the students’ growth this semester—both academically and personally—has been an exciting experience. Our JHS IB students are bright and full of potential. I feel truly privileged to be able to work with these students. With their academic abilities and motivation, they will go far.

Thank you for allowing your child the opportunity to participate in the IB Diploma Programme at JHS. If I can be of any assistance, please feel free to e-mail me (amanda.griffin@hallco.org) or call me (770-536-2394 x 7182).

Ms. Amanda Griffin



Volume 2, Issue 1
December 2008



A snapshot of the JHS IB students after they finished an ultimate frisbee game organized by Ms. Kerri Napoleon.

Upcoming Events

- January 30, 2009—Visit with Brenau’s Afghani Students
- February 2009—Visit to the University of Georgia

JHS IB Students—Governor’s Honors Program Nominees

Four JHS IB students have been nominated by the Hall County School System to participate in the state-level competition of the Governor’s Honors Program. The JHS IB student nominees are:

- Di Chung—Social Studies
- Stephanie Pham—Communicative Arts
- Jinyong Sim—Mathematics
- Ariel Simmons—Music/Voice (Soprano)



Congratulations to these students for this impressive honor! Good luck!

Ms. Amanda Griffin



September IB Lunch & Learn

IB Lunches

A big “thank you” to Mr. and Mrs. Whiting and Mr. and Mrs. Johnson for providing IB lunches for the students during fall semester. The students greatly enjoyed the meals! Anyone interested in providing a lunch or snack for the IB students spring semester, please contact Amanda Griffin (amanda.griffin@hallco.org).

HALL COUNTY IB COORDINATORS VISIT UGA

The Hall County IB Coordinators visited UGA and spoke with the Admissions Director, Senior Director of Admissions, and Associate Director of Admissions, who serve the students of Hall County. The UGA Admissions staff seemed very knowledgeable about and supportive of the International Baccalaureate Programme.



They shared the following thoughts about IB and UGA admissions and college credit:

- UGA recognizes full IB Diploma students as taking the most rigorous curriculum at their respective high schools
- UGA considers GPA in admissions, but it is balanced by the level of rigor of the curriculum. (Note: This year, 144 students who had a 4.0 average in high school were not admitted to UGA because of not having a rigorous enough high school curriculum.)
- The UGA Admissions office calculates an IB student's GPA by averaging all of his/her **academic** class grades from 9th – 11th grades on a 4-point scale (the 12th grade class grades are not finalized at the time of applying). If there are any additional points added by the school, UGA subtracts them first. For example, if a school adds 5 points to an IB or AP grade, they will subtract the 5 points. However, they will then add a .5 weight to every IB or AP class (not honors classes).
- UGA considers the student's involvement in the IB Programme when looking at the admissions application. They consider the rigor of the curriculum, GPA, SAT scores, and then the overall application (short answer/essays, recommendations, etc.) They do not consider the student's IB or AP exam scores in the admissions process. If an IB diploma student is admitted to UGA and he/she does not earn the diploma because of their IB test scores, he/she will still be admitted to UGA.
- If an IB diploma student opts out of IB after he/she has submitted the application, the school and/or the student must notify UGA and UGA may withdraw their offer of admission to the student.
- UGA is now offering college credit for standard level courses for IB Diploma students. The specifics for this can be found on their website – www.reg.uga.edu/or.nsf/html/international_baccalaureate_diploma_completion.
- IB students should come to orientation in mid-July or late July so that they can be advised for fall schedules after UGA has received their IB exam scores and has awarded the appropriate credits.

In addition to meeting with members of the admissions office, the coordinators also met with the Vice-President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Arnette Mace. Dr. Mace shared the following thoughts with regards to UGA's view of IB:

“The University of Georgia provides a quality education to the very bright young men and women of this state. We highly value IB students because we recognize that they have made a commitment to enhance their academic background; this will permit them to be competitive at UGA and at other prestigious universities in this country.”

UGA's knowledge of the IB Diploma Programme and the recognition they offer those students pursuing the IB Diploma is very encouraging.

Ms. Amanda Griffin

IB Course Updates

IB HISTORY OF THE AMERICAS

In this course, we are focusing on an international perspective in the time period from the establishment of Western Hemisphere colonies through their emergence on an international scale at the beginning of the 20th century. During this time period, drastic change occurred in all countries of the region. Some of the changes that we will cover in this course are Civil War, Modernization, and Imperialism. Throughout all of these changes, the interactions of the countries of the Western Hemisphere shaped the relationships they would have throughout the 20th and into the 21st centuries.

In line with the International Baccalaureate Programme, our class has focused on the assessment method of essay writing. Though essay skills are time consuming and tedious, their development is essential to future success. In concentrating on these assessments, we are working together to be the best prepared that we can be for the IB assessments at the end of the two-year programme.

Ms. Kerri Napoleon

Visit the JHS IB Website
www.hallco.org/johnsonhs/ib/index.htm



IB MATH SL

Trigonometry and the unit circle proved to be an easy mark for our Mathematics SL students. They easily grasped the key concepts and were interpreting sine, cosine, and tangent relationships in the blink of an eye. They have mastered triangle trigonometry and eagerly await periodic functions when we return in January.

Mr. Dennis Abercrombie

IB BIOLOGY



IB Biology HL has covered topics concerning ecology and conservation this year. We have completed many labs with various skills embedded within the topics. One of the most interesting labs was the survivorship lab where students went to various cemeteries to comb through data on birth and death dates. We chose to graph the information based on death dates from 1829-1859 and 1869-1899. We also did a Simpson Diversity Index lab using the cars in the front parking lot. This school year's goal is to do as many labs and gain as many skills as possible for the internal assessment in 09-10 school year!

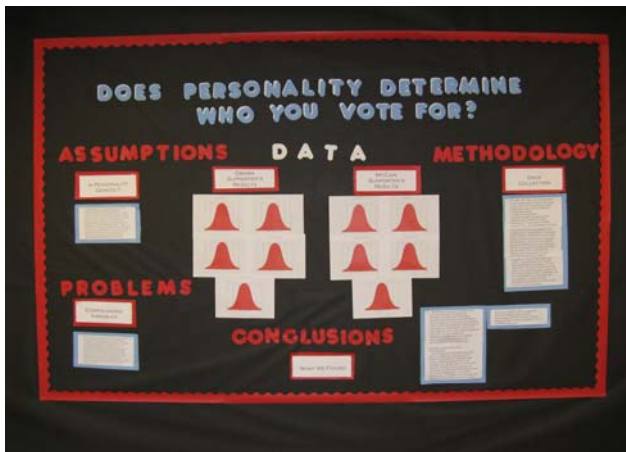
Mrs. Jean Prezel

IB PSYCHOLOGY

My students so far have learned about research methods in psychology, biological psychology, and behavioral psychology. They have examined studies in each of the perspectives and conducted research on issues relating to the methods of research. We have done applied research on personality traits and political affiliations. We also conducted basic research on bullying as it applies to learning principles.

Next semester we will be studying cognitive psychology. We will then devote time to researching and understanding the big debates in psychology such as free will vs. determinism, nature vs. nurture, stability vs. change. We will also be selecting our topics for our internal assessment.

Mr. Phil Higgins



Above/Below: The IB Psychology students posted the results of their personality and political affiliations study on one of the school bulletin boards.



IB VISUAL ARTS



In IB Visual Arts, students have experimented with a wide variety of media and techniques, including drawing, watercolor, screen prints, linoleum prints, grid drawings and pen and ink. For the second half of this

year, students will begin more serious and purposeful work in their IWB, research relating to various artists and topics related to art and future planning for art pieces to culminate in their senior year examinations. If your son or daughter is an IB Visual Arts student, encourage them to take their IWB everywhere – you never know when inspiration (or an interesting composition) may strike!

Ms. Stephanie Turk

Visit the IBO Website



www.ibo.org

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Starting in January, we will shift into our Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course, and I'm very excited. TOK is unlike any course the students have ever taken. TOK focuses on knowledge issues. A knowledge issue is question that a learner, or knower, may have about a body of accepted knowledge. I encourage you to get involved in thinking about knowledge issues at home too. Here's a start with a natural sciences knowledge issue: What kinds of explanations do scientists offer, and how do these explanations compare with those offered in other areas of knowledge (history, psychology)? What are the differences between theories and myths as a form of explanation? The ultimate questions for TOK are *How do we know what we know? How do we arrive at this knowledge?* I'm looking forward to a fabulous second semester.

Mrs. Holly Wilson

IB SPANISH AB INITIO

Students have covered 2 units specifically this semester. This included vocabulary related to "The Individual" and "Education." In regards to grammar, students learned all regular present tense and some essential irregulars. Next semester they will cover "Transportation" and "Communication." Bear in mind that these titles are very broad and encompass fairly large vocabulary and grammar lessons.

As far as recent activities, all of the IB students are participating in a partnership with the (dual immersion) kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade students at the World Language Academy. They have written pen-pal letters and recently visited the campus to read children's stories to the students in Spanish. It was a great experience for all and we plan to return for more interaction next semester.

Mrs. Gina Caston

Below: The IB Spanish ab initio students read children's books in Spanish to the elementary students at the World Language Academy in December.



IB CHEMISTRY

IB Chemistry has completed 4 topics so far: measurement and data processing; atomic theory; periodicity; and bonding.

We are currently performing our 3rd lab research project and the students are coming up with some great investigation ideas. The titles for the students' investigation ideas include: Accuracy and Precision of Aspirin, Vitamins, and Cereal, Chemical Reactivity of Metals, and Testing Intermolecular Forces.

Mr. Jeremy Pirkle

IB ENGLISH

The first year of English A1 has presented exciting challenges both to teacher and students. The first challenge is to read analytically and to think metaphorically about literature. In addition, we have to look at patterns in literature in order to understand what and how we are reading. Our first challenge was to explore *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster. In this valuable text, we learned that "every trip is a quest;" if it's square, it's a sonnet; when in doubt, it's from Shakespeare or the Bible; geography matters, and many more insightful tips to help us go beyond the obvious in reading, writing, and commenting on literature.

We have now completed section four of the IB required sections for this diploma programme. In fact, students have been involved in preparing original topics for oral presentations (15% of the IB requirements) based on the readings of World War I poets, *The Things They Carried*, *Heart of Darkness*, and *The Lord of the Flies*. I have been pleased to witness the growing maturity in students' research, organization, and presentation of very complex topics and themes.

The next half of the year, we will be immersed in the World Literature component with readings from *Anna Karenina*, *School for Wives*, and *A Doll's House*, and students will be coming up with more original topics, this time with the emphasis on writing, and based on comparisons found in the novel and plays. Students will be able to write rough drafts of their World Literature paper which travels to Cardiff, Wales for outside assessment during their senior year. This is a good head start and one less stressor for next year's requirements!

In addition to the above, we work on vocabulary acquisition, poetry and prose commentaries, and, hopefully, the full appreciation of the art and craft of literature as it relates to helping us understand universal themes and to fathom our own humanity. Yes, IB English A1 is challenging, but the rewards are many. Parents and family and friends are invited to read along with us and to join the class to discuss art mirroring life any time!

Ms. Valerie Noble

Right: The IB students had the opportunity to hear a presentation by Khaled Hosseini, author of the [Kite Runner](#), at Brenau University this fall.



IB COMMUNICATIONS

IB Communication is a course designed to encourage students to do as its name suggests—communicate. From August to December, we have concentrated on getting started on the Extended Essay, improving research skills, and developing writing style. We've also spent time researching, discussing, and preparing for the English Oral Presentation. Earlier in the semester, students presented their prospective Extended Essay theses to the class and to a few visitors—Ms. Griffin, Mrs. Sawyer, and Dr. Gibbs. I was elated to hear some of the interesting research ideas that students have developed. This showed me, and our administrators, that these students can take an interest in

topics that matter to the world. Some of the topics include the ethical treatment of animals, a view of Hitler from the perspective of a Nazi youth, educational systems across the globe, and the psychological development of children. As an additional assignment, I have asked students over the last few weeks to keep a homework log, a method of consciously reviewing the progress they make each day. For the log, they record the times they spend studying and working on assignments. For some students this opened their eyes and helped them see where they concentrate their after school time.

Mrs. Holly Wilson

IB MATH STUDIES



The Math Studies students have reviewed math from previous years and most recently completed a unit on statistics. The students have either completed and presented an investigation in class or are currently working on an investigation. The titles for these investigations include: Mathematical Astronomy, Venn Diagrams, Early Computer Programming, Fibonacci's Mathematics, Fractal Geometry, Mathematics of Evariste Galois, Projectile Motion, and Archimedes, The Inventor. Most of the investigations are related to statistics. After the new year, students in Math Studies will choose a topic for their junior project. This will be a practice project for the senior project they will complete next year as part of their internal assessment. Next year, they can either expand this year's project or start a new one.

We have also completed, as part of the statistics unit, three large graphs displaying data about the internationalism within the Johnson High School student body. Ms. Griffin is going to display these graphs in the school.

Mrs. Carol Blackburn



Johnson High School

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www.hallco.org/johnsonhs/ib.htm