



Greetings from Montezuma,

I hope that this overview of our academic programs answers initial questions you may have about the academic programming we offer. If you have any additional questions about our courses or the curriculum more generally, please contact me at academics@uwc-usa.org and I will be happy to assist you.

I have been teaching at UWC-USA for over 25 years and have seen our alumni excel at highly competitive colleges and universities around the world, and beyond in careers that put our graduates on the international stage. Academics works hand in hand with the Experiential Education and Student Life programs to provide students with the tools to be changemakers and leaders. It is my pleasure to be part of that important work.

Best wishes,

Alexis Mamaux
Dean of Academics

Visit us at:
www.uwc-usa.org
for more information



ACADEMICS AT UWC-USA: An Overview

The academic program at UWC-USA is a rigorous and challenging series of courses that follow the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program. As one of the first IB schools in the U.S., UWC-USA has been a pioneer in promoting IB education and has welcomed thousands of teachers to our IB Teacher Workshops over the years. While the academic program is challenging, students come from varied international academic backgrounds each year and those who apply themselves diligently can be very successful.

UWC-USA is an authorized International Baccalaureate World School and is proud to be accredited by the Independent Schools Association of the Southwest (ISAS). By completing the IB Diploma Requirements and a New Mexican Studies Course, students are eligible for a high school diploma.

* Updated January 5, 2022. Please note, that the courses listed are subject to change.

All students at UWC-USA complete the IB Diploma Programme, and take courses from the groups described below:

IB Diploma Requirements:

All students must take seven subjects:

- One course each from groups 1 through 5
- Either one from group 6 or another course from groups 1 through 4
- Theory of Knowledge (TOK)

In some cases, a student may substitute two group 1 subjects for the group 2 requirements.

Three academic subjects must be taken at Higher Level (HL) and three must be taken at Standard Level (SL).

Connections:

A high priority is placed on interdisciplinary study at UWC-USA and at all IB schools. The following graphic visually represents how the academic groups complement each other and work in tandem with extracurricular offerings and TOK.



Creativity, Activity and Service; Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge

In addition to the six academic groups, the core of the IB Diploma adds three additional dimensions to the program:

- Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) forms the basis for the way in which students are assessed in the Experiential Education program. Our students participate in community and campus services, physical education and a variety of other extracurricular activities.
- The Extended Essay is a 4000-word essay on a topic chosen by the student and approved by a supervisor.
- Theory of Knowledge is a course that explores at its core the question of “how do we know what we know?”



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UWC-USA course offerings:

Group 1: Studies in language and literature

Through each course, students are able to develop:

- a personal appreciation of language and literature
- skills in literary criticism using a range of texts from different periods, styles and genres
- an understanding of the formal, stylistic and aesthetic qualities of texts
- strong powers of expression, both written and oral
- an appreciation of cultural differences in perspective
- an understanding of how language challenges and sustains ways of thinking

Studies in language and literature develop a student's lifelong interest in language and literature and a love for the elegance and richness of human expression.

Group 1 courses offered at UWC-USA:

- English literature HL
- English language and literature HL/SL
- French literature SL
- Spanish literature HL/SL
- School supported self-taught literature SL (over 55 languages available)

Group 2: Language acquisition

Language Ab initio courses are for beginners (that is, students who have little or no previous experience of learning the language they have chosen). These courses are only available at standard level.

Language B courses are intended for students who have had some previous experience of learning the language. They may be studied at either higher level or standard level.

Language acquisition is critical for students to develop a deeper understanding of another culture through the study of its language. In both Ab initio and B language courses, students learn vocabulary, grammar and cultural contexts in a manner that explores concepts of international mindedness. In languages B, there is a deeper dive through exploration of the literature of the language.

Group 2 courses offered at UWC-USA:

- English B HL/SL
- French B HL/SL
- French Ab initio SL
- Spanish B HL/SL
- Spanish Ab initio
- Italian Ab initio



Group 3: Individuals and societies

Studying any one of these subjects provides for the development of a critical appreciation of:

- human experience and behavior
- the varieties of physical, economic, and social environments that people inhabit
- the history of social and cultural institutions

In addition, each subject is designed to foster in students the capacity to identify, to analyse critically and to evaluate theories, concepts and arguments relating to the nature and activities of individuals and societies.

Group 3 courses offered at UWC-USA:

- Economics HL/SL
- Global politics HL/SL
- History HL/SL
- Social and cultural anthropology HL/SL

Group 4: Experimental sciences

Students explore the concepts, theories, models, and techniques that underpin each subject area and through these develop their understanding of the scientific method.

A compulsory project encourages students to appreciate the environmental, social, and ethical implications of science. This exercise is collaborative and interdisciplinary and provides an opportunity for students to explore scientific solutions to global questions.

Group 4 courses offered at UWC-USA:

- Biology HL/SL
- Chemistry HL/SL
- Environmental systems and society SL
- Physics HL/SL
- Sports exercise and health science HL/SL



Group 5: Mathematics

All mathematics courses serve to accommodate the range of needs, interests, and abilities of students, and to fulfill the requirements of various university and career aspirations.

The aims of these courses are to enable students to:

- develop mathematical knowledge, concepts, and principles
- develop logical, critical, and creative thinking
- employ and refine their powers of abstraction and generalization.

Students are also encouraged to appreciate the international dimensions of mathematics and the multiplicity of its cultural and historical perspectives.

Group 5 courses offered at UWC-USA:

- Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches HL/SL
- Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation HL/SL

Group 6: Arts

Although the arts subjects are electives, we strongly encourage our students to participate in these subjects as they provide another dimension to a student's education and allow for the scholarly study of these subjects.

The subjects in the arts allow a high degree of adaptability to different cultural contexts. The emphasis is on creativity in the context of disciplined, practical research into the relevant genres.

In addition, each subject is designed to foster critical, reflective, and informed practice, help students understand the dynamic and changing nature of the arts, explore the diversity of arts across time, place, and cultures, and express themselves with confidence and competence.

Group 6 courses offered at UWC-USA:

- Dance HL/SL
- Theatre Arts HL/SL
- Visual Arts HL/SL