



Dual Diploma Academic Portfolio

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What is the Dual Diploma?

The International Dual Diploma allows students around the world to earn a United States high school diploma while simultaneously earning their home country secondary degree. Students will earn the Dual Diploma by completing six credits. The six credits, along with the classes that students take at their home school, satisfy the graduation requirements for high school. Students must maintain a 2.0 GPA (Grade Point Average). The core courses are: United States History, two English courses, and United States Government/Economics. In addition, students will choose two electives for a total of six credits.

Our program is fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (SACS CASI). Accreditation is designed to help educational institutions boost their ongoing performance efforts for the benefit of their students. Our schools meet the high standards required for accreditation by SACS, which sets global standards for excellence in education.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Dual Diploma Program is to give students in countries outside of the United States the opportunity to earn a U.S. high school diploma while simultaneously earning their secondary school degree in their country of origin. The purpose is to provide an additional competitive advantage to these students by fostering the development of self-directed and responsible 21st century life-long learners through the thoughtful use of interactive, media-rich educational opportunities in a flexible, student-centered, virtual learning environment.

Educational Philosophy & Core Values

Human Connections: The student-to-student and student-to-teacher interactions are at the heart of the Dual Diploma Program. We build connections among all stakeholders so that students have a personalized experience, while building a lifelong global network.

Critical Thinking: Foster and cultivate a spirit of critical inquiry in the students. In doing this, the teacher will become more of a facilitator and/or collaborator and will use interactive live sessions, discussion based assessments, and discussion boards to encourage active participation and help students connect with the subject matter presented.

English Immersion: Provide an English immersion environment to students in which language is not simply a subject of study but a tool to access greater knowledge. In addition, students are

better prepared for post-secondary English proficiency exams i.e. TOEFL as well as post-secondary studies.

Differentiated Instruction: Differentiate instructional strategies and tailor the curriculum to meet the needs, interests, and strengths of the learners while leading them to make personal connections with the subject matter. Teachers will use a variety of instructional and evaluation strategies such as: project and performance based assessments, summative assessments, group and individual discussions, and cooperative group learning/collaborative assignments.

Engaged Learners: Create opportunities for students to take an active role in their own education. Students learn best when they feel they have a voice. Learning opportunities are most meaningful when students can respond directly to teachers, collaborate with other students, and constantly share and weigh in on their perspectives, beliefs, and individual values.

Global Citizens: Encourage personal responsibility and a sense of local and global citizenship. Teachers should help to prepare young people to be the kinds of ethical, principled, and innovative leaders that will make the world a better place.

Curriculum & Instruction

Instructional Strategies & Pedagogy

In the Dual Diploma Program, students experience multiple types of instruction in order to meet the needs of all learners. Teachers utilize differentiated instruction during live sessions and one-on-one meetings where all students are engaged in the lessons. The Dual Diploma course content is comprised of a combination of teaching and presentation strategies to aid the students in the comprehension of the subject matter. Examples include interactive games and activities, videos, audio recordings, graphic organizers, visuals, and written text.

In addition, we use a variety of evaluation strategies in our courses to accurately assess the progress of our students. Examples include project and performance based assessments, summative assessments, asynchronous and synchronous group discussions, individual discussion based assessments with teacher, and cooperative group learning/collaborative assignments.

Live Sessions

Students are required to attend three Mandatory Live Sessions each semester. These are counted as part of their overall grade and student participation is mandatory. These sessions are live online meetings with their teacher and fellow Dual Diploma students.

The live sessions are interactive meetings where teachers link content to current events so students can see what they are learning and how it relates to current times and their lives, when applicable. The key components of live sessions are STUDENT PARTICIPATION and ENGAGEMENT.

Students also have the opportunity to attend additional content based live sessions each semester for their specific courses. During these live sessions, teachers review content related lessons and questions. These live sessions are voluntary.

Course of Study for Students

Students can complete the program in 2, 3, or 4 years depending on their age and grade level when they begin. We recommend that a student be at least 14 years old when enrolling in the program. A minimum of 6 of the 24 graduation requirements must be taken in order to earn the Dual Diploma. All students will take the 4 Required Courses: 2 Credits in English, United States History, and United States Government/Economics. Students will take 2 credits of Electives.

4 Year Program

Year 1: English

Year 2: English & Elective

Year 3: United States History & Elective

Year 4: United States Government/Economics

3 Year Program

Year 1: English & Elective

Year 2: English & United States History

Year 3: United States Government/Economics & Elective

2 Year Program

Year 1: English, United States History & Elective

Year 2: English, United States Government/Economics & Elective

Dual Diploma Graduation Requirements

In order to obtain the Dual Diploma, the following course requirements must be completed.

Subject Area	Course Requirements 24 Credits
Native Language & Literature	4 credits, with major concentration in composition, reading for information, and literature
English	4 credits
Mathematics	4 credits, one of which must be Algebra 1 or equivalent and one of which must be Geometry or its equivalent
Science	3 credits, two of which must have a laboratory component and one of which must be Biology 1 or equivalent course or series of courses
Social Studies	1 credit of World History 1 credit of US History .5 credit of US Government .5 credit of Economics
Fine Arts or Performing Arts	1 credit of fine or performing arts, speech and debate, or practical arts
Physical Education/Health	1 credit in physical education to include integration of health
Electives	4 credits
Grade Point Average	Cumulative GPA of 2.0 on 4.0 scale

Electives

Each school year, students are offered up to three elective options to choose from. Below is a list of the various electives. Two of the Dual Diploma required six credits are electives.

Course	Credits	Prerequisite
Global Studies	1	None
Life Management Skills	1	None
Psychology	1	None
Digital Photography	1	None
Criminology	1	None
SAT Prep	1	Successful completion of English II or equivalent
Introduction to Social Media	1	None
Hospitality and Tourism	1	None

Student/Teacher Communication

Office Hours

Teachers are available to students Mondays through Fridays on Skype during designated office hours. During this time, teachers can offer students one-on-one support with any course-related questions. Office hours also allow students the opportunity to practice their English conversational skills with their teacher. In addition, students may instant message their teacher via Skype during office hours for quick assistance instead of sending an email.

Email

Teachers send students emails regularly. Email is the main means of communication between students and teachers so it is imperative that students check their emails daily. Teachers will respond to students' emails in a timely manner with a minimum turnaround target of 24 hours during weekdays. The Academic Coaches and Administrative team also use email as the primary form of communication with students, parents, and program directors.

Edmodo

Students will also be able to interact with their teachers and peers via Edmodo. During their studies in the Dual Diploma program, students will find that their peers are from places all around the world. To assist them in interacting with their classmates and building more meaningful connections with each other, students may become part of the Dual Diploma

Edmodo group where they can connect and network with their fellow students outside of their courses.

Benchmarks & Objectives

High standards that challenge and motivate our students are essential. Dual Diploma courses are aligned to the Florida State Standards. These high standards encourage stronger critical thinking, problem solving, and communications skills. The Dual Diploma courses provide students with a detailed course outline, course objectives and expectations. Students begin each course with a pretest in order to measure learning gains throughout the school year. In addition, students are surveyed periodically to provide feedback on how to improve the quality of the courses. Students also have the opportunity to complete self-evaluations to reflect on their progress and mastery of the course benchmarks and objectives.

Platforms

The Dual Diploma Program uses the following platforms in order to provide students with a comprehensive learning experience.

Stoneware

This is a single sign on program where students can directly access Maestro, Brainhoney, Edmodo, etc. from one dashboard.

Maestro SIS

The Student Information System is used for keeping track of student progress and communication. Parents and program directors can also view student progress in Maestro.

Brainhoney

The Learning Management System is where the Dual Diploma courses are hosted. This is where students will access their lessons and submit assignments.

Burlington English

The English Language Learning Program that we use for our English I and English II courses. Burlington English allows students a variety of activities that focus on pronunciation, listening, grammar, reading, writing, and vocabulary skills.

AVE Horizon

This website is our global teacher site that contains guides and videos to assist the students in effectively navigating their Dual Diploma courses.

Skype

The tool used for office hours and as a means for students to communicate with their teachers one-on-one.

Zoom

This is a web conference program that the instructors use for live sessions and tutoring sessions with their students. Zoom allows students to interact with their peers and teacher in a group setting.

Expert Teachers

Dual Diploma teachers meet the state's professional teaching standards and hold a valid Florida Teacher Certificate. Teachers are evaluated in accordance with the iNACOL's National Standards for Quality Online Teaching. In addition, teachers participate in ongoing Professional Development and Professional Learning Communities. Continued professional development allows teachers to discover additional teaching strategies, improve upon best practices, and keep up with the latest trends in online education. Below is a list of topics covered during trainings:

- Pedagogy & Instructional Strategies
- Mastering Platforms
- Academic Policies & Procedures
- Gamification & Motivation
- Live Session Instruction
- Social Networking
- Universal Design for Learning
- Web 2.0

Benefits of the Dual Diploma Program

A U.S. High School Credential:

- Students will earn an American high school diploma while simultaneously earning their home country secondary degree
- Helps students to be more competitive when applying to colleges and universities
- Extremely helpful to students applying to U.S. colleges and universities

Enrichment:

- Exposure to subjects and courses not otherwise available in home country curricula
- A significant after school program that strengthens the student's academic resume
- An opportunity to improve time management skills and take responsibility for learning because of the autonomy inherent in the program

English Immersion:

- All content and teacher communication is in English
- English courses are a significant part of the required curriculum
- The English software provides opportunities for listening and speaking practice
- Program provides students with opportunities for practicing their English conversational skills
- Prepares students for formalized English proficiency assessments required for post-secondary studies
- 68% of our students who took the TOEFL in 2015 scored higher than the 2014 global average

21st Century Learning Skill Acquisition:

- Opportunity to become proficient with the tools of online learning, e.g. LMS, SIS, Web Meeting software, Social Media, Skype, Web 2.0 tools, etc.
- Today's students will find themselves needing high proficiency in these skills in an increasingly technologically savvy society

Extra-Curricular**Social Media Club**

The purpose of the Social Media Club is for the Dual Diploma Students to use Social Media (Edmodo) to regularly get ideas and exchange knowledge with other students as it relates to various student interests to create an online school community. Members will post regularly to the Dual Diploma Edmodo group on high interest topics such as Sports, Fashion, Travel, Music, Movies & TV, Books etc. This will allow many of our Dual Diploma students to find a topic they relate to and participate in the online community.

Newspaper Club

The Newspaper Club is designed to give Dual Diploma Students the opportunity to publish a formal Dual Diploma Newspaper. The newspaper will include global breaking news, interesting articles, entertainment, dual diploma news, a college corner, sports, fashion, alumni spotlight, comics/jokes, etc.

AVE Amici

The AVE Amici Program is our very own online Pen Pal Program. Our international Dual Diploma students are paired up with our American students at Academic schools in the United States. The students have the rich cultural exchange by communicating with one another online using webcams and speakers in a supervised setting. This allows the students to make a friend in a fun, safe and exciting way, while simultaneously working on listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in a real-life setting.

AVE Ambassador

The AVE Ambassador Program is designed to give Dual Diploma Students the opportunity to have an AVE Ambassador Peer Mentor. Each participating Dual Diploma Student will be paired up with an AVE Ambassador Mentor. The purpose of the AVE Ambassador Mentorship program is to train American students through our AVE Leadership course. Then, these trained Mentors will provide the Dual Diploma students with additional academic support in their Dual Diploma courses, team and community building, virtual pen pal interactions, English conversational practice, social networking, and student engagement and motivation.

Dual Diploma Leadership Program

The Dual Diploma Leadership Program is designed to give new Dual Diploma students the opportunity to have a peer mentor. Each participating new Dual Diploma student will be paired up with a returning Dual Diploma student. The role of the Dual Diploma Leader/Mentor is to support and help a new student get familiar with the program, learn the platforms, and provide academic support in their Dual Diploma courses. The program will also provide opportunities for team and community building, and networking among Dual Diploma students.