

New IB Math Pathways:
Frequently Asked Questions FAQs

1. What will you call these new courses?

The course titles are quite long so when referring to them with students and families and on the Sequoia High School transcript, we will shorten them. The IB Math Analysis & Approaches will be referred to as IB Math Analysis. The IB Math Applications & Interpretation will be referred to as IB Math Applications.

2. I don't see Pre-Calculus on the Sequoia Math Course Pathways chart. What happened to this course? Will my student not learn Pre-Calc material?

Students will now choose which IB Math pathway they will begin directly after completing Alg II/ Trig. Students will still be taught all the course content of Pre-Calc. That content is now incorporated into the IB Math classes.

3. My student wants to take the AP Calc AB exam. I see the IB Math class no longer contains AP Calc in the course title. Will they still be prepared for the AP Calc exam?

Students will be able to sit for the AP Calculus AB exam after completing the IB Analysis HL course. Because Pre-Calculus is not a standalone course anymore, students are still prepared for and will sit for the AP Calculus exams at the same grade level that they would have sat for them under the old IB Math courses.

4. I know Sequoia prepared students for the AP Calc BC exam in the old IB Math HL course. Will my student still be able to sit for the AP Calc BC exam?

After students complete the IB Analysis HL course, they will take a year of college math the following school year. The first semester will cover the remaining topics on the AP Calculus BC exam. They may then sit for the AP Calculus BC exam in the spring. Dr. Terri Bittner will continue to teach these college math courses that follow our IB Math courses.

5. I know in the past, students could continue on to higher level math topics after the old IB Math HL course. Is Sequoia still offering this?

Yes, Dr. Terri Bittner will continue to teach these courses on a rotating basis including Linear Algebra, Multivariable Calculus, and Differential Equations after a semester of AP Calc BC Topics. These higher level courses will continue to be articulated with Canada College.

6. My student does not know what they want to study in college. How do they make the decision between the two offered IB pathways?

It is important for your student to feel comfortable and interested in the math course they are taking. Either pathway will prepare students well for college-level math. If your student is more interested in real-life applicable math, the IB Applications pathway is more appropriate. If your student enjoys the theory of math, making connections between different topics in math, and engaging in challenging problem-solving endeavors, the IB Analysis pathway is more appropriate. Furthermore, if your student has a stronger interest in Statistics, they should take the IB Applications pathway. If they have a stronger interest in Calculus, they should take the IB Analysis pathway.

7. Why is the IB Math Analysis Course open to 9th or 10th graders but not the IB Math Applications course?

When an incoming 9th grader comes in at the Alg II/Trig level or higher, they will advance past the two year IB HL math courses. We are lucky to have Dr. Bittner teach college topics past IB Math at Sequoia. In order to move on to these college-level math courses, students must complete the IB Math Analysis HL prerequisite. In order to be enrolled in a math course all four years as we recommend, students must then complete the IB Analysis course, leaving the IB Applications course available to only 11th and 12th grade students.

8. My student is a 9th grader in Alg II/ Trig (or Acc. Geo/Alg II). What will they do after they complete the IB Math Analysis HL course?

Fall semester of their senior year, they will take a college-level math class that covers the remaining topics on the AP Calculus BC exam. During the spring semester of their senior year, they will take a different college-level course that is taught on a rotating basis (potential topics include: Multivariable Calculus, Linear Algebra, and Differential Equations). All of these courses will be taught by Dr. Terri Bittner and articulated with Canada College.

9. Could Sequoia choose to remain teaching the old IB Math classes (IB Math Studies, IB/ AP Calc, IB Math HL)?

No. The formal IB assessments (including IA's and May exams) will change to match the new curriculum and thus, students will not be successful unless our course content changes to match the new curriculum. The new exams will start in May 2021. As an IB school, we are required to offer courses in all 6 IB subjects so students have the option of doing the full IB Diploma.

10. Can my rising senior take a new IB math course?

No. The new IB courses will not begin testing until the year 2021. Because your student has been prepared along the old pathway, they should continue with the old course in order to be successful with the IB assessments and/or AP calculus exams. If your 11th grader is currently in Algebra II/Trig, they should take IB Math Studies or AP Statistics next year. If your 11th grader is currently in Pre-Calculus, they should take IB Math Studies, AP/IB Calculus, or AP Statistics.