

A Brief View of the AP Art Portfolio and the IB Art & Design Examination and Moderation

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The Advanced Placement Program (AP) was initiated in the early 1950s. Since the inception of the AP Program, the popularity of secondary schools offering AP courses has grown to 31 subject areas across 18 disciplines. The growth of the AP Program is not limited to geographic boundaries. In response to growing numbers of overseas students, schools, and colleges, the College Board of Trustees approved the offering of an AP International Diploma (APID) in 1995. In 1996, about 540,000 students took almost 850,000 examinations (*Teacher's Guide*, 1977).

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) was founded under Swiss civil code and is headquartered in Geneva (International Baccalaureate Organization, 1997). The IBO was founded in the 1960s through the efforts of a few international schools that generated a unified curriculum, which would allow geographically mobile students the opportunity, regardless of location, to study a consistent and rigorous curriculum.

The AP and IB Programs

With the growth of both AP and IB programs, one has to question how large these programs can become before the operational philosophy turns from a student-centered concern to an economic one. Given this, concerns arise about pressure placed on individual school programs, teachers, and students, as to how the students measure up against others from across town and across continents. School administrators, politicians, and community leaders look to the end-result scores as a measurement for accountability. In AP and IB teacher training sessions, participants have frequently voiced concerns about overemphasis by school administrators on scores, and how those decisions affected course stability and availability (*personal notes, AP and IB Teacher Training Sessions, 1997-99*).

In the pursuit of high scores, while being careful of the dangers of a formulaic curriculum, one should inquire, as Eisner (1994) stated, about the null curriculum. What is missing? Indeed, what are the questions to ask? How big can a program become before the individual is lost in the crowd—from individual to identity number? This is especially dangerous in art programs where individuality and uniqueness are coveted.

Concerns for equity of assessment seem to vary between the AP and IB programs and these differences are beyond the scope of this paper. However, since both programs are international, can such large programs equitably assess the artworks of individuals that originate from wide cultural, economic, and geographic diversities? Can Western aesthetics be applied to non-Western art? Can minority, peripheral, or outsider art, within Western aesthetics be equitably assessed? Is it possible that within these assessment systems that the small, the minority, the peripheral, the outsider, and the non-Western images could be misunderstood by the examiner, and consequently, underscored?

With these questions in mind, two things are evident. First, it is dubious that any system, regardless of size, treats everyone equally. Second, portfolios that are outside of the established AP and IB Western paradigm may not receive high scores. As Gardner (1996) pointed out, there is an obvious difficulty in assessing peripheral information with central measurements and he suggested a modification of assessment systems to incorporate a broader range of methods to equitably attempt to measure knowledge. Both the AP and IB programs are in process of developing wider portfolio ranges.

There is evidence that things are changing in the AP and IB assessment procedures to provide for a broader diversity. Much has to be considered and modified to broaden the assessment methodologies to embrace others' ways of thinking, discussing, and producing art images. Repeatedly, in training sessions and general meetings, both teachers and students have stated that they feel they would benefit in an honest, two-way dialog between them and the program in reference to the scores they received (*personal notes, Teacher/Student Training Sessions, 1997-99*).

However, care should be taken not to eliminate successful components in exchange for the new, but to expand and embrace the new. Hicks' (1994) statement seems relevant in this instance that, "...education must have two goals which look in two different directions at once: outwards towards the realities of other cultural communities, and inwards towards the realities of the educator's [programs'] own starting point" (p. 155).

Until the resolution of assessment procedures, the following table outlines current (1999-00) AP and IB program assessment and moderation.

AP and IB Assessment and Moderation

Advanced Placement	International Baccalaureate
Extensive training prior to the assessment process. Considerable dialog and visual examples are utilized during the Standard Setting Sessions.	No training for the examiners. Visual exemplars are available through publication.
Five divisions (Original 33.3%, Concentration 33.3%, and Breadth 33.3% [color/design, 3-D, and drawing]), 117 descriptors, and 2,010 words.	Six criteria (Imaginative and Creative Thinking and Expression 35%, Persistence in Research 20%, Technical Skill 15%, Understanding of the Characteristics and Function of the chosen Media 10%, Understanding of the Fundamentals of Design 10%, Ability to Evaluate Own Growth and Development 10%), 50 descriptors, and 1,585 words.
Assessment range is 6 to 1. Grade is reported in a range of 5 to 1. Portfolio contains three sections: Originals, Concentration, and Breadth.	Assessment range is 5 to 1. Grade is reported in a range of 7 to 1. The exhibition is inclusive of studio procedures and visual research.
Portfolio Section 1 is viewed by three different Faculty Consultants. Sections 2 & 3 are viewed by two. Discrepancies require an additional evaluation.	The exhibition, Research Workbooks, and Record Workbooks are viewed by one examiner. Discrepancies are reviewed by the Grade Award Committee.
Discrepancies are indicated by category and posted on a quarter-day schedule. Moderation is immediate.	Discrepancies are adjusted after the examination.
Consultants are notified immediately of discrepancy rate, and adjustments are made as necessary.	Examiners are notified in writing after the moderation session.
School programs are not notified of discrepancies.	School programs are not notified of discrepancies.
Examples are generated out of current student submissions.	Exemplars are generated out of past student submissions.
Consultants work in concert with each other for the duration of the assessment process.	Examiners work alone except for the Grade Award Committee.
In 1999, there were approximately 13,000 portfolios evaluated.	In the May 1999 session, there were 3,286 Art & Design examinations from 68 different countries.
In 1999, there were 45 Faculty Consultants.	In 1999, there were 164 assistant examiners.
Discrepancies are moderated by a rotating team of 8 Faculty Consultants acting as Table Leaders, and the Chief Faculty Consultant.	Discrepancies are moderated by a 6-person Grade Award Committee.
Consultants have active procedural dialog concerning assessment while maintaining clearly independent judgments.	Examiners have limited assessment dialog.

Though there are questions concerning the equity of the breadth of the assessment procedures in AP and IB, both programs appear to be striving to resolve constraints and to reduce ambiguity. AP portfolio changes are scheduled to commence in the 2001-02 academic year. The next *Advanced Placement Course Description Art: Studio Art, History of Art* will contain a full account. Information concerning the IB holistic assessment criteria should be available in the near future.

Both programs provide extensive literature and teacher training. On-line information for The Advanced Placement Program is available at <http://www.collegeboard.org/ap>, and for The International Baccalaureate, <http://www.ibo.org>.

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