Virtual education in legislative spotlight

In the last issue of Dateline IUHS, I noted that Indiana University High School meets or surpasses all seven accreditation standards established by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement.

We are very proud of this distinction, especially at a time when virtual education is high on the Indiana State Legislature’s agenda. Issues before the legislature include:

• establishing state standards for virtual education
• making completion of virtual education credits a requirement for graduation in the state of Indiana
• state funding for virtual education initiatives

As a provider of online and correspondence study, Indiana University High School is of course keenly interested in these discussions. We will do our best to keep you informed of developments, especially as they relate to Indiana University High School.

Two recent items of note:

1. In presentations to Indiana legislators over the last several months, I – both in my capacity as director of Indiana University High and as chair of the Indiana Virtual Learning Consortium – have tried to impress upon legislators the need for state standards which ensure that students enrolling in Indiana virtual programs receive the high-quality education they expect and deserve.

2. The budget passed by the Indiana State Legislature this past summer makes allowances for the creation and funding of full-time virtual charter schools in Indiana. The Indiana Department of Education is developing guidelines to determine how the creation and funding of such schools would work. We at Indiana University High School will be following the evolution of these guidelines closely to determine the course of action that will enable us to serve students best.

Stay tuned to Dateline IUHS for future updates. In the meantime, enjoy the upcoming holiday season!

Bruce Colston
Director, Indiana University High School Programs
IUHS garners media attention as interest in virtual education grows

Indiana University High School is garnering a fair share of media attention as statewide and national discussions regarding virtual education proliferate.

WFIU, the Indiana University public radio station, recently did a three part series about virtual education that included an interview with Bruce Colston. Colston is the director of Indiana University High School Programs and also serves as chair of the Indiana Virtual Learning Consortium.

In his interview, Colston focused on the importance of educational standards for virtual education. “[There are] hundreds of providers all over the country—some of them accredited, some of them not accredited,” said Colston. “Some of them are being run out of somebody’s basement on a Xerox machine. Others are high quality. [With the range of programs available,) the consumer is almost clueless as to what they’re paying for — and how to even judge what they’re paying for. Right now it’s the Wild West,” (Read or listen to the entire series at indianapublicmedia.org/news/virtual-learning-indiana-part-1-3/.)

Indiana University High School is also mentioned in a recent book by IU professor of education, Curtis Bonk. The book, The World Is Open: How Web Technology Is Revolutionizing Education, discusses how technology is transforming education and providing vast opportunities for learners all over the world. (Learn more at worldisopen.com.)

Registration for Spring 2010 AP Courses Set to Begin

Registration for this spring’s semester-long AP courses will open in December. Spring offerings include second-semester AP calculus, English, and U.S. history.

The semester-long courses are recommended, but not required, for students planning to take the May 2010 national AP exams, and for other students who would benefit from the structure of an accelerated-term course. Extended-term online AP courses are also available, and may be most appealing to students who want the challenge of AP courses but who prefer additional time to complete their course work.

You have four months to complete the semester-long courses, and 12 months to complete the extended-term courses. You can register for an extended-term course anytime of year.

Learn more at alturl.com/id49.
Exams 101: Everything You Need to Know about IUHS Exams

Most IUHS courses include at least two exams that must be taken in order to complete the course. An approved proctor (exam supervisor) must oversee exams, and you must earn an average exam grade of at least a D- in order to pass a course, with some courses having stricter standards.

Understanding exam policies and procedures is crucial to your smooth progression through an IUHS course.

Three ways students can apply for an exam:

1) Whether you’re taking a correspondence course or an online course, you can apply for an exam in Dragon. Log in to Dragon with the user name and password we gave you when you first enrolled at IUHS. Get step-by-step directions for completing an exam application in Dragon at scs.indiana.edu/dragonexams.html.

2) If you’re taking a correspondence course, you can complete the exam request form in your print learning guide. Simply mail or fax it to our office.

3) You or your FERPA-approved representatives can apply for an exam by phone at 800.334.1011.

Most common reasons an exam application is denied:

1) You provide incomplete or incorrect information about your exam proctor.
   We must have the following information about your exam proctor:
   - full name and official job title
   - mailing address and phone number
   - institutional email address (if applicable—see “Emailed exams take off”)

2) Your proctor does not hold an approved position. Exam proctors must be:
   - a high school principal or guidance counselor
   - an administrative officer or designee of an accredited college or university
   - a public library administrator
   - a military education officer
   - an IU exam center supervisor

3) You have not submitted all your assignments, or your previous exams have not been graded.
   - You may apply to take a midterm (or other nonfinal) exam only after all submissions preceding the exam have been received and recorded and after all but the submission prior to the midterm have been graded.
   - You may apply to take a final exam only after all midterms (or other nonfinal exams) have been graded, after all submissions preceding the exam have been received and recorded, and after all but the submission prior to the final have been graded.

4) You have an unpaid course balance. In order to take the final exam in a course, all course-related fees must be paid in full.

Want to retake an exam?

As a general policy, you cannot retake an exam without submitting a written appeal that describes the extenuating circumstances which you believe warrant the retake and that provides supporting documentation (e.g., statement from a physician, school official, or exam supervisor).

However, you may retake, without appeal, the first exam for any IUHS course as long as you apply to retake it within 30 days of your grade being posted in Dragon. Once we receive your $65 retake exam fee, we will send an alternate version of the first exam to your exam proctor.

Note: You must retake the first exam before you take the final exam. The retake option applies only to high school courses and not to undergraduate dual-credit courses. Also, if you retake an exam, the grade on your second exam will be the grade of record.
Emailed exams take off!

Both students and proctors like the newest method of exam delivery: secure pdf exams sent via email. Email delivery has cut exam turnaround time by as much as 70 percent. If you want an exam emailed to your proctor, make sure that

- emailed exams are permitted in the course you are taking. Some courses use test materials that can’t be delivered via email.
- your exam proctor agrees to print out the pdf file they’ll receive from IUHS.
- your exam proctor has an institutional email address. We can send to school and library email addresses, but we cannot send exams to email addresses provided through Internet account services such as Hotmail, Yahoo, or Google.

Special exam accommodations are available!

Indiana University provides reasonable support services and/or auxiliary aids that facilitate the education of eligible students with temporary or permanent disabilities. The extent to which these services are supplied is based on a student’s individual needs as supported by documentation (Individualized Education Program, or IEP; 504 Plan; or psycho-educational evaluation) and on academic requirements of the course(s).

Consistent with federal law, students seeking any accommodation for completion of assignments and examinations must provide documentation of the disability to Indiana University High School. Please submit the documentation, within 45 days of course registration, to

Eileen Balliet
Disabilities Coordinator
Owen Hall 205
790 E. Kirkwood Ave.
Bloomington, IN 47405
eballiet@indiana.edu

Why do courses go on hold?

IUHS will from time to time put a course on hold. Courses go on hold for a variety of reasons. Sometimes it’s difficult to find required textbooks or support materials. Sometimes we’re close to releasing a revised version of the course.

In short, we put courses on hold to protect you from registering for a course and finding that you either can’t locate required materials, or that you have purchased the wrong materials.
Are you approaching senior status?

If you are an IUHS diploma student who has completed 28 credits (33 if you are working on the academic honors diploma), you are a senior.

This means that this year is different, especially if you intend to attend college next fall. Graduation is around the corner, and you’ll want to complete all of your course work (including exams) in plenty of time.

To help you, the IUHS academic advisors have created a checklist of things you need to do in the coming months.

View the checklist online at alturl.com/zgye.

As always, the IUHS advisors are available to answer questions from IUHS diploma students. Call 800.334.1011, or send an email to askiuhs@indiana.edu.

IUHS ACT scores surpass state average

Indiana University High School’s graduating seniors showed a strong edge over their peers in this year’s ACT tests, surpassing state averages in all categories. IUHS graduates scored

- 27 in English, surpassing the Indiana average by 5.4 points
- 23.1 in mathematics, surpassing the Indiana average by .7 points
- 28.8 in reading, surpassing the Indiana average by 6.2 points
- 22.9 in science, surpassing the Indiana average by 1.3 points

The average composite score for IUHS graduates was 25.6, placing IUHS graduates in the 80 percentile of all recent graduates taking the ACT.
New Online Courses

Spanish 11S

Spanish 11S has been revised to incorporate exercises that give you even greater opportunities to develop Spanish listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. In addition to traditional activities, you have access to online games, flash cards, and practice quizzes.

Culture study centers on the United States, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Spain. You need to be able to download and listen to MP3 files, download and open PDFs, view animations with Adobe Flash Player, view videos with QuickTime, and call in (toll-free) your speaking assignments.

Multidisciplinary Education 01V, Career Information and Exploration

This new online course gives you opportunities to learn about yourself and about various traditional and nontraditional occupations and careers. You will gain an awareness of the type of occupational preparation or training needed for various occupations and careers. In addition, you’ll develop skills in:

- employability
- understanding the economic process
- decision making and planning

You will use online and other resources for career-related testing, and develop a portfolio of career-related materials, including resumes and cover letters. Textbook includes a CD-ROM.

Indiana University High School is accredited by the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement and the Commission on International and Transregional Accreditation (CITA), accreditation divisions of AdvancED.