

Chapter 9: Course Selections

Grade 9 students select the courses they wish to complete in their first year of high school. Teachers, guidance counsellors and parents may play a role in the course selection process. Students can choose either general or academic level courses in mathematics, sciences and/or English language arts. The general courses are designed to meet the needs of students who are experiencing difficulties in that particular subject. The academic courses are intended for the majority of students and particularly those who intend on pursuing a post-secondary education. The following table lists the course sequences in mathematics, sciences and English language arts for both the general and academic routes. Level II and III students also have the option of following the advanced mathematics program.

Subject		Level I	Level II	Level III
Mathematics	Advanced	1204	2205	3205
	Academic		2204	3204
	General	1206	2206	3206
Science	Academic	Science 1206	Biology 2201/3201 Chemistry 2202/3202 Earth Systems 3209 Physics 2204/3204	
	General	Science 2200	Science 3200	
English	Academic	1201	2201	3201
	General	1202	2202	3202

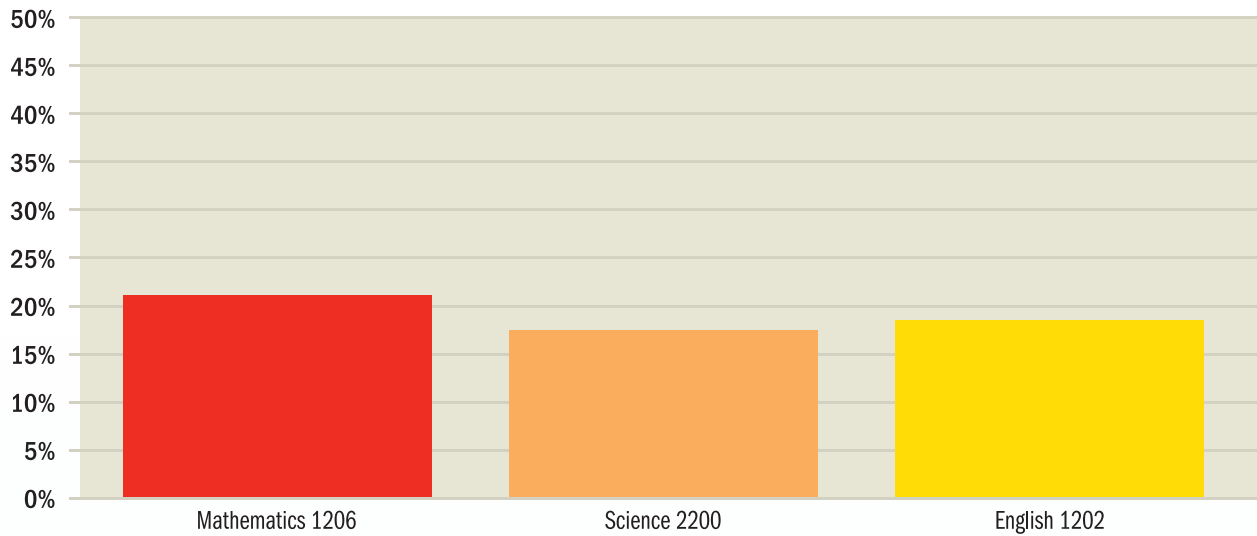
The remainder of this chapter will focus on student enrolment in first year general courses in mathematics, science and English language arts because these subjects will impact the type of diploma they will earn, as well as their future post-secondary options.

Enrolment in first year general courses (2009/10)

Overall, less than a quarter of students select the general course in the first level (see Figure 9.1). There was a slightly higher percentage of students completing the general level course in mathematics (20.8%) as compared to the general level course both in science and English language arts (17.5% and 18.3% respectively). For example, in 2009/10, there were 6,318 students completing one of the two first level mathematics courses. Of these, 20.8% enrolled in the general course (Mathematics 1206) and the remaining 79.2% enrolled in the academic course (Mathematics 1204).

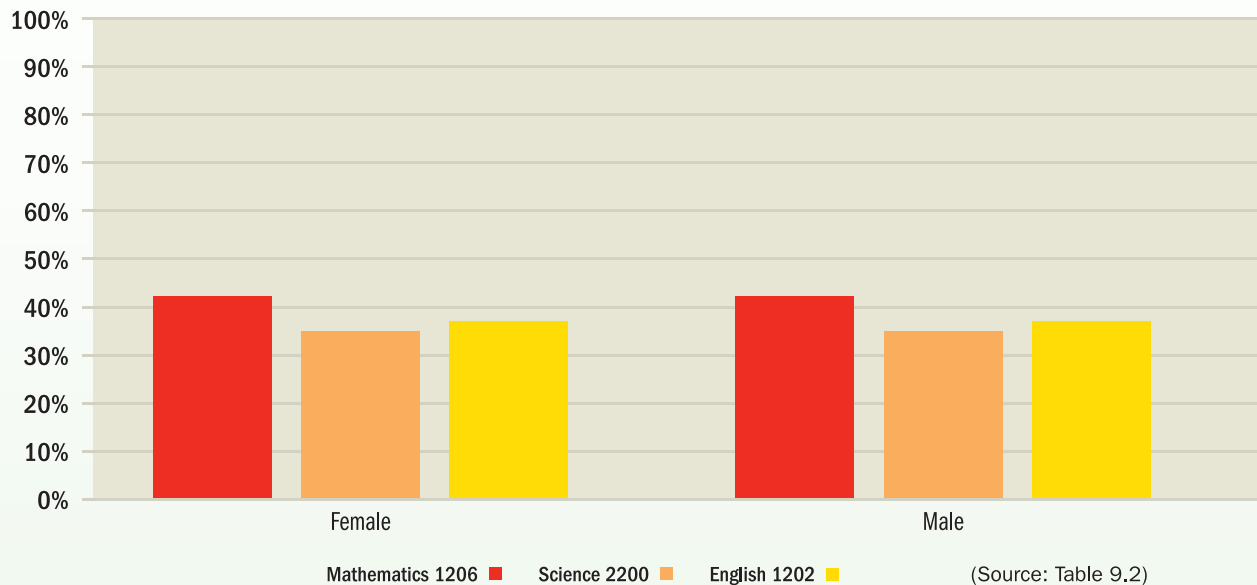
Males make up a higher percentage of students enrolled in general level courses. In each of the three subjects, about two-thirds of the students were males. For example, in 2009/10, there were 1,313 students enrolled in general mathematics (Mathematics 1206). Of these, 62.8% were male and 37.2% were female (see Figure 9.2)

Figure 9.1: Percentage of students enrolled in first year general level subjects (2009/10)



(Source: Table 9.1)

Figure 9.2: Gender composition of students enrolled in general level courses (2009/10)

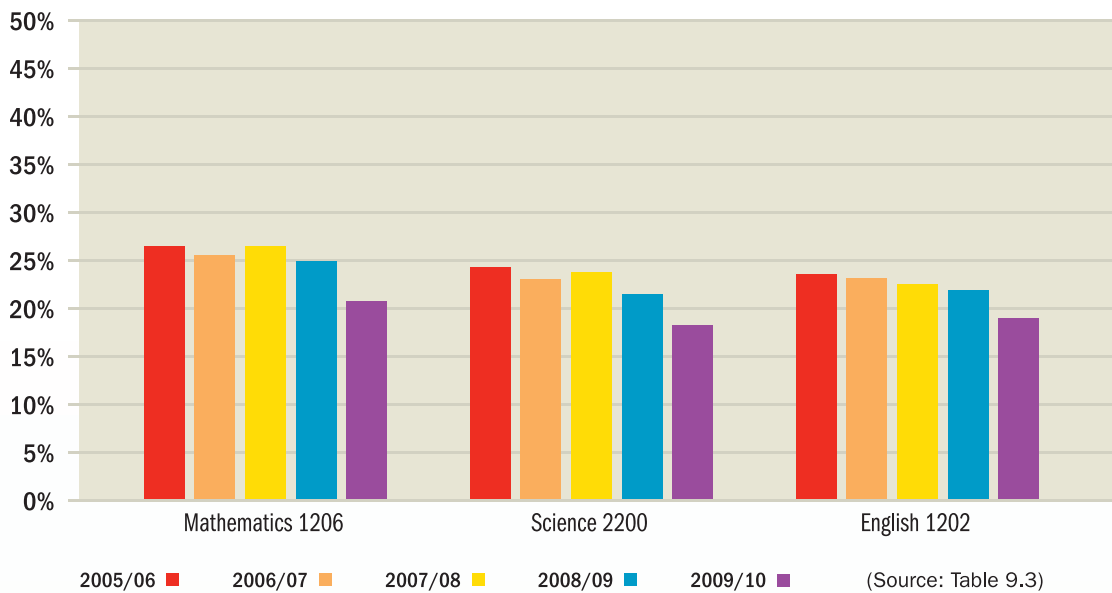


(Source: Table 9.2)

Enrolment trends in general level courses (2005/06-2009/10)

The percentage of students enrolled in general level courses decreased by approximately 5.0% between 2005/06 and 2009/10. As shown in Figure 9.3, the largest year to year decrease occurred between 2008/09 and 2009/10 where it declined by between 3.0% and 4.0%.

Figure 9.3: Percentage of high school students in general level courses (2005/06-2009/10)



Gender differences

Over the past five years, general classes were consistently made up of a higher percentage of male students. This is true for each subject (i.e., mathematics, science and English) between 2005/06 and 2009/10. These percentages were very stable for both males and females during this time with less than 4.0% separating the high and low percentages in each subject for each year (see Figure 9.4).

Figure 9.4: Gender differences in enrolment in general level courses (2005/06-2009/10)

