

# Brooks School Distance Learning Plan

## Student & Family Guidelines for Spring 2020

### Introduction

While we feel the most meaningful educational experience we can provide our students happens on the Brooks School campus, and by extension, our programs, we also believe that impactful learning can happen remotely when designed and facilitated by our faculty. We acknowledge that not all distance learning experiences are created equal as Brooks families navigate unique sets of challenges related to health, employment, geography and more. This spring, we will partner with you in providing an excellent education for your children, built on the strength of our community and the dedication and resourcefulness of our teachers. Above all, student well-being is paramount. Our goal is to stay connected and draw inspiration from each other in uncertain times. We are all beginners at distance learning- teachers, students, and parents- and we will proceed with goodwill, growth mindset, and a healthy dose of humor!

Distance learning will begin on **Monday March 30th**. Daily and weekly schedules, as illustrated in this document, are viewable in OnBrooks for each student under My Day.

### Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning

Synchronous	Asynchronous
Learning happens at the same time, but not in the same place. It can include video conferencing, webinars, and online chat-based discussions that happen between teachers and students in real time, but not in person.	Learning occurs both at different times and in different locations. It can include recordings of lessons, posts to an online discussion board, or self-directed learning plans provided by a teacher to students.

The Brooks schedule provides a balance between synchronous and asynchronous experiences. We aim to foster strong communication between teachers and students, advisors and advisees, thereby nurturing our sense of community. While structure and connectedness are important, Brooks also acknowledges the need for flexibility and the merits of time spent unplugged.

Students will connect synchronously with teachers and peers online in Google Meet and use other GSuite tools like Google Docs, Slides and Sheets to collaborate remotely. All instructions for both synchronous and asynchronous learning will be posted on the OnBrooks page associated with each course. More details can be found under the Technology section.

### Engagement time

Each major course will continue to honor four class meetings per week. One meeting will occur in a synchronous fashion using Google Meet, and three meetings will be based on asynchronous self-directed learning plans posted in OnBrooks. The normal four nights of homework as assigned per each class meeting will continue. There will be no Self in Community during distance learning. Independent courses will be evaluated case-by-case; if a student is currently enrolled in an independent study, please be in touch with the instructor. There are three designated schedule times for office hours. While not required, the hope is that students will connect with teachers synchronously outside of the virtual class meeting once per week. This can be 1:1 or in small groups.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:30-9:30	Flex*	Flex	Clubs & Orgs	Flex	Flex
9:30-11:30 AM	D	E	G	C	A
11:30-12:30 PM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:30-2:30 PM	F	Office Hours	B	Office Hours	H
2:30-3:30* PM	Office Hours	Flex	Flex	Advisory	Communication
Touchpoints	BAGEC	CDBGH	AFDE	FEDHA	GFCB

School runs from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm each day. Wednesday will be a full day. There will not be any school on Saturdays. When looking at the schedule above, please note that each course meets once per week- these are slots for synchronous Google Meets. The meeting times for each block were determined by when that block normally meets. Each day features “touchpoints.” These will appear in OnBrooks and represent the courses

that convene when school is in session on campus. This is to provide pacing for work that is due through the Assignment Center.

In consultation with the Athletic Department, afternoon activity supervisors may provide their students with optional work out plans or related opportunities for remote engagement. Please check with the coach or instructor for details related to each activity.

If a community member is not scheduled with a meeting, class, office hour or advisory, that person does not have to be online. In fact, get offline! Boundaries will be important and we do not wish to create a feeling that everyone is always available. Understanding we are in the habit of being a residential school, if a student wishes to reach out to a teacher during evening hours, they may do so per usual. The teacher will communicate their availability.

**Guidance for students:**

<b>Class</b>	Each teacher will send their class a Google Meet invitation for a specific 50-minute window of time within a two hour synchronous allotment (eg. D block course might meet 10:10-11:00 am on Monday). The upward limit of that meeting may extend to 75 minutes, but there is no expectation to create an extended block. The two hour window is intended to provide time zone flexibility- a teacher may survey a class about what time works best, collectively. Teachers will send an invite or post the synchronous class time by 4 pm the day prior in OnBrooks.
<b>Touchpoints</b>	These touchpoints represent blocks that would normally meet on this day (most Saturday blocks appear on Wednesday). By keeping these in OnBrooks, it will help our community to pace our learning as we normally would.
<b>Office Hours</b>	Every teacher will communicate their availability during one, two or all three office hour slots in an effort to connect with each of their students. Students carry half the responsibility in making the connection work- be communicative!
<b>Advisory</b>	Advisories will gather for a Google Meet on Thursday afternoons. Your advisor may also use this time to schedule individual appointments with you.

<b>Clubs &amp; Organizations</b>	Students should feel encouraged to schedule student-led meetings on Wednesday mornings.
<b>Flex time</b>	Flex can be used for College Counseling meetings, Learning Center appointments, counseling appointments, extra help, or any other school business. (The Flex times in yellow may be harder to access adults due to faculty, department, and other committee meetings taking place.)
<b>Communication</b>	On Friday, there will be an asynchronous weekly wrap-up and “look ahead to next week” communication that goes out in the afternoon (eg. letter/recording). We hope to celebrate the student progress that is happening around our virtual campus!

**Special Schedule Notes**

**Monday 3/30 we will start with advisory.** This is to launch students on synchronous technology and answer any questions they may have before getting started

**Monday 4/13 will still be a school holiday.** D block will meet during Tuesday, and F block on Thursday, during office hours. Flex time on Tues/Wed will become office hours.

**Note on time zones.** If it works better to schedule a synchronous advisor meeting during the morning flex block 8:30-9:30, please communicate that information!

**Attendance**

Teachers will enter attendance in OnBrooks for synchronous class meetings like they normally would. If a student cannot be present in class due to illness or another commitment, a parent or guardian should fill out this [Student Absence Form](#), also available in OnBrooks in the Community and Parent Information groups. The student will be placed on the list for that day and their attendance counted for accordingly. We aim to track student engagement. Therefore, the absence will be excused and there will not be a penalty associated with it. If a student resides in a time zone that does not make attending a synchronous class possible, please inform Academic Dean Susanna Waters. A one-time communication of this information is sufficient and will cover all absences from synchronous classes and meetings. See below under Technology for information on access to recordings of synchronous classes.

## **International Students & Time Zones**

Brooks deeply values the contributions of our international community members. Students will attend school virtually from all over the US, Asia, Europe and Africa. Whether a student is connecting from 13 hours ahead in Seoul or three hours behind in California, Brooks faculty will strive to be available, by appointment, for students who wish to connect in real time. All synchronous classes will be recorded and archived in OnBrooks for students to access on demand. Students who may feel hindered academically or otherwise disconnected from the virtual school community are encouraged to inform their advisor, who will partner with our Student Resource Team.

## **Technology and Internet Accessibility**

Students who are concerned that their access to technology or internet connection will not be sufficient to participate in school online, should fill out this [Access to Technology Form](#). The Information Technology department will be in touch with that student about helping to meet their needs. This survey link is also posted on the school FAQ website. Remembering that Brooks is a GSuite school, IT is aware that GSuite products aren't readily available in China. Faculty have been taught how to make recorded Google Meets available through Youku, or to use Zoom. All synchronous classes will be recorded and archived in OnBrooks in a folder made accessible to students of that particular course.

## **Consent to be Recorded**

We should make sure all community members consent to being recorded. In reading this letter, please be aware it serves as a notice that you consent to the recording of any synchronous virtual meetings you partake in at Brooks. If you object, please make that known to IT, HR, and the facilitator of each meeting or class.

## **Student Handbook and Community Pledge**

Brooks School students are bound to our community tenets as outlined in the Student Handbook, including the Community Pledge. We trust each other to contribute to safe and productive learning environments and to conduct ourselves with academic integrity as we engage in home-based learning. Students should continue to write or type "This is my honest work" on any assignments submitted online, and include the names of any peer and/or adult who took part in their creative process. Expectations associated with the Brooks acceptable use policy and best online practices apply at all times.

## Acceptable Use Policy, Network Etiquette & Best Online Practices

Please consult pp. 42-46 of the Student Handbook to become reacquainted with Brooks School's acceptable use policy and network etiquette. Here are guidelines for best practices as related to participating in synchronous class meetings:

<b>Dresscode</b>	Casual but appropriate dress for virtual spaces. No pajamas, tank tops, or inappropriate slogans.
<b>Background</b>	Please be seated at a table, in a quiet, low traffic area. Sit opposite a window or lamp so your face can be clearly seen. Choose a plain background to minimize distractions.
<b>Behavior</b>	Do not consume food during class. Please put your phones away for the duration. No screenshots. Remember that classes will be recorded, so behave accordingly.

## OnBrooks & Assignment Center

All archived recordings, lesson plans and assignments will be posted in OnBrooks. All assignments, and notice of synchronous class times, will be posted by 4 pm, per usual.

<b>What will you find in the Assignment Center?</b>	<b>What will you find in a topic folder labeled Academic Continuity?</b>	<b>How do I access archived recordings of class?</b>
All classes across all forms will use the Assignment Center. This is to help students keep track of the pacing and submission of work from afar. Notifications of all work that should be submitted, associated with the class block (or touchpoint) it is due, will be posted.	Lesson plans will appear in a clearly labeled topic folder. Documents posted to this folder can help students learn what will be expected of them week to week.	Teachers may find it easiest to incorporate links into Google Doc lesson plans, or they might start a new folder. Each teacher will instruct students where to find the recordings.

## **Textbooks and Learning Materials**

If students are without their necessary textbooks or learning materials, teachers will assist them by providing the etext (many textbook companies making these available for free), PDF, or partnering a student with a peer to provide screenshots.

## **Grades and Assessment**

Teachers will continue to design both formative and summative assessments. However, Brooks will not be administering any quizzes or tests in the traditional sense due to reasons of academic integrity (*AP practice* tests may proceed). Exhibitions of learning, such as papers, portfolios and presentations will be more commonplace. Presently, teachers will continue to assign grades for assignments and assessments per usual and keep up-to-date gradebooks. The Arts will grade on a pass/fail basis, whereas other academic majors will proceed with numeric grading. If our institutional position on grading changes for other academic departments, we will communicate that to the community.

## **AP Courses**

Please check in with the College Board for updates to [Advanced Placement Exams](#). Students have the opportunity to proceed with an assessment in May, or can opt out of testing without penalty. Brooks will take the same position and let students decide how they wish to proceed regarding an AP exam. We expect all students enrolled in an AP course to complete their Brooks coursework as outlined by their teachers. The Academic Office will still assign an AP designation and weight to AP courses on Brooks transcripts regardless of whether or not a student sits for the AP exam; that is an exception unique to this spring.

## **Learning Center**

As ever, the work of the Learning Center will be important in supporting Brooks students. Students with regularly scheduled appointments will continue to meet in the same style as has been described for classes. Please reach out to Moira Goodman, Director of the Learning Center, with any questions.

## **Counseling & Wellness**

Emotional support and resources will be provided by the school counselors, starting with this document: [Brooks School Counseling Support During COVID-19](#). Students will be able to schedule individual appointments. Contact Judy Werner, Director of Psychological Counseling or Steph Holmes, Director of Student Wellness, with any questions, concerns or counseling needs.

## **Luce Library Resources**

Library resources are still accessible through OnBrooks> Groups> Luce Library. The off campus passwords to databases can be found under Downloads on the Bulletin Board.

## **College Counseling Office**

The CCO will continue to relay information about university, national or testing policy changes to students and families. Programming for fourth, fifth and sixth form classes will continue, as will individual counselor meetings during free blocks. The CCO will request deliverables from students and families as needed.

## **Supporting Resources and Documents**

The Academic Team has prepared two additional documents to assist students and families in understanding how to best navigate distance learning from home. In [Distance Learning Guidance for the Community](#), families can find a breakdown of communication channels and the roles and responsibilities of different school constituencies. In [Student Tips for Distance Learning & Planning Template](#), students will find a user friendly guide outlining best practices and tools to help plan out a school day.

Please feel encouraged to also check in with the [Coronavirus Updates page](#) on the external website for the latest communication to the greater community, specifically the [FAQ page](#).

## **Questions?**

Thank you for reading through our Distance Learning Plan. If you have questions about the new schedule or accompanying policies, please be in touch with Academic Dean Susanna Waters at [swaters@brooksschool.org](mailto:swaters@brooksschool.org).