



ACADEMIC POLICIES & COURSE CATALOG 2025-2026

Brooks School does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, color, sexual orientation, disability, or religion in the administration of its education policies, admission policies, employment policies, financial aid and loan programs, athletic programs, and other school-administered programs and activities.

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INTRODUCTION

The Brooks curriculum provides students with a broad-based academic experience in preparation for university. In addition, students develop skills and habits of the mind that will benefit them for the rest of their lives. Ideally, all students will enroll in courses in the five major disciplines for all four years of high school. Students are also encouraged to pursue their interests in the arts throughout their career at Brooks. Students should keep their future career options open as long as possible.

This course catalog will give you a sense of the depth and breadth of our curriculum. Requirements are considered the minimum needed to graduate from Brooks. Students should look beyond what they *must* take to what they *could* and *should* take to make themselves the most attractive candidates for college admission. For example, all students should complete courses in the three basic sciences (physics, chemistry and biology), even though those courses are not necessary for graduation. Most students graduate with transcripts that far exceed the school's requirements.

Brooks offers students the opportunity to choose academic programs appropriate for their abilities; many courses have multiple levels. Students have more choices as they progress through the curriculum. For example, sixth-formers may wish to double up and take two courses in a particular field of study. As always, consultation between students and parents, advisors, teachers, the college counselors and the academic dean is necessary to ensure students choose the most challenging courses within which they will do well.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Integrity

Introduction

Academic integrity is the basis of sound scholarship and is central to effective learning. Truthfulness and honesty should govern students' work at all times; cheating and plagiarism are considered major violations of school rules. One of the five major tenets of the Brooks School Community Pledge is, "You can trust me to conduct myself with academic integrity."

Expectations

At the beginning of every course and every semester, teachers inform students of their expectations regarding the proper role of collaboration, use of resources (both printed and electronic), citation practices, and other issues related to academic honesty. Students must realize their responsibility to do their work honestly and truthfully. Gray areas are inevitable. The appropriate use of calculators, for example, will be determined by the individual departments. When doubt exists, the burden is on the students seek clarification from their teachers before submitting work for evaluation. Students are expected to produce work that is original, and to attribute any ideas not their own to the appropriate people or organizations using proper citation practices. On tests, quizzes, and other assignments, students should write "This is my honest work" and sign their name.

The range of the school's responses to cheating and plagiarism is outlined below.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The umbrella term of generative artificial intelligence (“generative AI”) includes large language models such as ChatGPT, Google Bard, DALL-E, and many others. Though this software is relatively new, the policies for academic integrity surrounding this technology are similar to other technologies that are part of our everyday lives—like spell checkers, translation software and calculators. In the model of those other tools, newer tools powered by generative AI technology should be used in ways that support student learning—not in ways that replace student work. Use of generative AI tools by students on graded assignments is prohibited, except with the express permission of the teacher, in which case the use of generative AI must be cited by the student. The unauthorized and/or uncited use of generative AI on graded assignments will be treated as an academic integrity violation.

As this technology evolves, so, too, will Brooks School’s policies. Students should avoid generative AI tools except where explicitly invited by a teacher. When in doubt, as with other components of our academic integrity policies, students should seek clarification from their teacher.

These policies are adapted from the [Waunakee Community High School Student/Family Handbook](#), the [Global Online Academy Student and Family Handbook](#), and a [March 2023 statement by the International Baccalaureate](#).

Examples of Academic Integrity Violations

The following types of conduct are prohibited by the school, with Level 1 violations generally regarded as more significant violations of the school’s standards of academic honesty.

Some examples of Level 1 violations include:

- Buying or copying a significant portion of a paper from the Internet or any other source, including generative AI, and presenting it as one’s own.
- Stealing or otherwise obtaining a copy of a test or examination before its administration.
- Premeditated or spontaneous cheating on a quiz or test.
- Unacknowledged collaboration or assistance on a major assignment.
- Unauthorized use of work previously submitted in another course.
- Unauthorized use of a language translator or target language automated grammar tools in a world language class.

Some examples of Level 2 violations include:

- Reading a book in a language other than the one in which it is assigned.
- Unacknowledged collaboration or assistance on a minor assignment, such as a nightly homework assignment.
- Discussing an exercise, quiz or test with those who have already taken it.
- Using another student’s data on math or science assignments or someone else’s research for an essay or worksheet.

These examples are not an exhaustive or complete list. They are guidelines to help students recognize a wide spectrum of dishonest behavior. At any level, cheating and plagiarism are wrong and will not be tolerated. Equally, helping others to cheat or plagiarize is wrong and will not be tolerated.

Consequences of Academic Dishonesty

Academic integrity violations will be reported to the academic dean and associate head for academic affairs. Level 1 violations are likely to be referred to the discipline committee. Multiple Level 2 violations will be referred to the discipline committee. A first offense of a Level 2 violation is likely to be handled by the academic dean and associate

head for academic affairs, in consultation with the teacher. In general, the issue will be addressed with the student, and the student's family will be informed of the nature of the offense and the subsequent consequences. The school may, in its sole discretion, decide upon discipline, including but not limited to dismissal, suspension, deans' warning or loss of credit for an assignment or course based on the underlying conduct, regardless of whether the discipline committee is convened.

To honor our school mission, Brooks incorporates restorative justice when a student violates our academic integrity policies. The two central restorative justice elements are:

- Students must rewrite the assignment or retake the assessment in question to satisfy the original learning objective. The student may earn up to a failing grade of 59% for that assignment or assessment (see page 12, "Grading System and Progress Reports," for a full explanation of the grading system). Therefore, a teacher will not calculate a grade of zero into a semester average.
- Students receiving a consequence of deans' warning or suspension will be required to write a reflection that reaffirms their understanding of our academic integrity policies, the harm caused by their actions, and the steps they will take to avoid similar violations in their future work.

Students who are suspended will nearly always serve the suspension in-house. The student will then report to the academic dean or associate head for academic affairs at the conclusion of classes for a minimum of two afternoons. This will continue until expectations related to the discipline consequences and restorative justice have been fulfilled.

Community Covenant

Preamble

To achieve our school mission, students and faculty have collaborated in establishing shared expectations for teaching and learning. We believe that a meaningful educational experience is built on relationships, and we honor the spirit of these guiding principles in helping us to cultivate trust and respect in and outside of our classrooms.

The Covenant

Student Expectations	Faculty Expectations
Students should actively check OnBrooks and email daily for assignments/obligations. Enabling notifications from OnBrooks to your mobile device is highly encouraged.	Students should be made aware of their homework assignments by the end of each class period. All homework assignments should be posted by 4 p.m. to the OnBrooks Assignment Center (1 p.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays). Assessments and other obligations should be posted well in advance.
Students should complete all posted homework thoroughly and on time.	All assignments completed outside of class should be due at the start of a class period. With the exception of long-term projects and tests, teachers should not assign more than one night's homework after each class period, regardless of the amount of time between class meetings.

If the length of time needed to complete daily homework exceeds the time allotted, students should seek out their teachers for a conversation.	Daily homework should take up to 30 minutes per class meeting for third- and fourth form courses or 45 minutes per class meeting for fifth- and sixth-form courses. There should be no homework or extremely limited homework in minors such as Self in Community.
If there is a Head's Holiday, students should complete all work assigned prior to the announcement of the holiday.	If there is a Head's Holiday, teachers should not assign more work than what was originally assigned and should adjust assignment deadlines accordingly.
Students should be prepared for class when they return to school following vacations.	One night of homework may be assigned during school vacations, no matter how long the vacation (with the exception of AP classes, which may have additional work required).
Students should move from class to class with a sense of urgency in order to maximize time in the classroom. Students more than one minute late to class should expect to be marked tardy. When possible, students should provide a note from an adult on campus to explain the tardiness.	Teachers should mark students who are more than one minute late to class as tardy and should mark students more than 20 minutes late as absent. If teachers need to keep a student and it interferes with their next obligation, they will send a note with the student.
After 10 minutes of a teacher's unexplained absence, a student should go to the the Deans' Den to inform an adult, and should make an effort to contact the teacher. The rest of the class should remain in the classroom to wait for further instruction.	Teachers who are unable to arrive to class on time should immediately communicate with their direct supervisor to obtain coverage.
Students should understand that major assignments and assessments may take longer to grade.	Teachers should grade and return minor assignments in a timely fashion and communicate with their students if an assignment's grading is delayed. Teachers should not administer major tests or papers until the previous test or paper has been graded and returned.

Requirements

Diploma Requirements

The Brooks academic year consists of two semesters divided by a three-week winter term in January. The minimum number of credits required for a diploma is 90. Credit is assigned for each semester of successful completion of a course. Each course in the catalog lists the number of credits earned per semester, following these parameters:

- Major courses earn two credits per semester.
- Minor courses earn one credit or one-half credit per semester.
- Winter Term courses earn one credit per full-day course or one-half credit per half-day course.
- Completion of a Students on the Forefront internship earns one credit in the following semester.

Credits may be recognized for the successful completion of appropriate courses at previous schools, after review by the dean of academic affairs.

Departmental Graduation Requirements

Arts

Third-form entry: In their third-form year, the student will enroll in Arts Exploratory or a year-long music course. In their remaining three years, the student must take six additional credits (typically, three additional semester-long classes) satisfying the arts distribution requirement as laid out below.

Fourth-form entry: In their three years, the student must take ten total credits (typically, five semester-long classes) satisfying the arts distribution requirement laid out below. Credits may transfer in from a prior institution and may satisfy the arts distribution requirement at the discretion of the department and the academic office.

Fifth-form entry: In their two years, the student must take four credits (typically, two semester-long classes), satisfying the arts distribution requirement. Transfer credits may also satisfy the arts distribution requirement at the discretion of the department and the academic office.

Arts distribution requirement: Students must take courses in at least two of the three arts disciplines: performing arts, music, and visual arts. Courses in the catalog are categorized by discipline. Students who “specialize,” or study the same discipline beyond introductory levels for their entire time at Brooks, are exempt from the distribution requirement. Students who decide to cut short their specialization will be required to take an arts course in a different discipline. Arts Exploratory credits count toward a student’s total arts credits but do not satisfy the distribution requirement.

World Languages

One language through the third level.

English

Both semesters, every year, progressing through the department sequence.

History

The Global Humanities course or the Modern World History course, plus the U.S. History sequence, which must be taken no later than the fifth-form year unless a student receives an exemption.

Mathematics

Completion of the Algebra 2, Algebra 2 & Functions, or Honors Algebra 2 & Functions course.

Science

Two years of laboratory sciences, one of which must be a two-semester course.

Self in Community

Every semester in which a course is offered for the student’s form year.

The faculty will consider petitions from students who wish to be exempt from one or more of these requirements. Such exemptions will not be permitted if the student has failed to compile a satisfactory academic record. In the case a student wishes to enroll in two language courses simultaneously, that student should seek the counsel of the dean of academic affairs regarding an exemption in either history or science to accommodate the commitment to languages.

Course Load

The minimum required course load each semester is five major courses and one minor course each semester, for 11 total credits. Most Brooks students take six major courses, for 13 total credits. Third-form students are required to take six major courses each semester and must receive the permission of the dean of academic affairs to reduce that course load. These requests are considered extraordinary and a student's credit situation must be monitored closely to ensure that they are able to graduate on time.

The typical program of six major courses commonly includes five major courses outside the arts department and one major course in the arts department. Maintaining a balance of courses across departments is important to the strength of a student's transcript. Some upper-form students who are passionate about their work in the arts may choose to take four major courses outside the arts department and two major courses in the arts department in consultation with their advisor, the dean of academic affairs and the college counseling office.

A student taking six major courses is taking a full and rigorous program. In rare cases, a student may request to double up in courses in one department without dropping a course in another department, resulting in a course load of seven major courses. That requires the approval of the student's advisor and college counselor, the department head in the discipline in which the student is taking two courses, the dean of academic affairs and the Curriculum Committee.

Course Credit and Transfer Credit

Courses earn transcript credit for each completed semester. Year-long courses earn two semesters of credit, which are calculated independently into the student's grade point average.

Grade point averages are calculated based on semesters completed at Brooks, and are on a 100-point scale. Courses with Honors and AP designations in the course catalog receive 2.5 percentage point and 5 percentage point weighting, respectively. Typically, unweighted averages are used for internal purposes (for example, evening check-in eligibility) and weighted averages are used for external purpose (for example, Cum Laude Society membership).

The Brooks attendance policy determines whether a student can receive credit based on their attendance in class. We call this the 18% attendance rule. For a complete explanation of the 18% attendance rule, please see the Student Handbook section, "Attendance and Absences."

While a student is enrolled at Brooks, the school does not typically recognize credits taken during the academic year from other institutions. Exceptions include:

- One year or one semester for Brooks-affiliated exchanges with School Year Abroad.
- One quarter for other Brooks exchanges or off-campus sixth form projects.

Proposals toward undertaking any other academic work for credit must be approved by the academic dean, Curriculum Committee and the faculty before such work is undertaken.

A student separated from school (dismissed, suspended) may receive credit for courses taken that semester provided that they are not affected by the 18% attendance rule *and* they complete satisfactorily all major outstanding work, including exams when appropriate.

Teachers are not expected to teach students from afar. Instead, students should proceed through the syllabus on their own and submit the required assignments.

Course Changes

A student is allowed to change courses with approval of their advisor, their teacher, the relevant department chair and the dean of academic affairs during the first two weeks of each semester. Students should first consult their advisor and teacher before acquiring a course change form from the registrar. If students switch courses within or across departments during this time, the grade from their first course will not follow them to their next course; they receive a clean slate. The last days for student-initiated course changes are marked on the school calendar (listed as the Course Change Period).

Following the Course Change Period, course changes may only be initiated by a student's advisor. The only changes permitted are level changes, which are detailed below, and drops, which are only permitted in extreme circumstances by permission of the dean of academic affairs. Students who drop a course before the submission of midterm grades will not receive any transcript designation for that course. After midterm grades are submitted, students who drop a course at the initiation of their advisor will have a W ("withdrawn") recorded on their transcript.

If a level change (e.g. from honors to non-honors) should be initiated, the process must be completed by the end of the Level Change Period, approximately five weeks from the start of the semester. If a student moves down a level in the same course (e.g. AP United States History to Building the American Republic, or honors physics to physics), an upward adjustment of no more than 10 percentage points will be made to the student's course average in consultation with the teachers and the department chair. If a student moves up a level in the same course, the appropriate downward adjustment of no more than five percentage points will be made in consultation with the teacher and the department chair. If a student changes levels between Semester 1 and Semester 2, there will be no change to the Semester 1 transcript. The last day for advisor-initiated level changes is marked in the school calendar (listed as the Level Change Period).

Advanced Placement Courses & Exams

Advanced Placement (AP) courses are college-level courses based on a standardized curriculum approved by the College Board. The School recommends that students take no more than three AP courses in an academic year. All students enrolled in AP courses are expected to sit for the appropriate AP exams in May. As with other standardized tests administered at Brooks, parents and guardians are billed for the cost of the exams.

Students who wish to take AP exams for courses not offered by the school may do so by arrangement with the academic dean prior to spring break. Typically, students not enrolled in AP courses offered at Brooks will not be allowed to sit for those exams administered by the school (e.g., a student not enrolled in the AP Physics course will not be allowed to sit for the Brooks administration of the AP Physics exam).

Independent Study

Students who wish to engage in an independent study must contact the academic dean to discuss their independent study proposal. A form will be completed as part of the approval process. This form must be completed with a detailed description of the study, including texts and grade evaluation procedures, and permission of the advisor, department chair, college office and teacher overseeing the course.

Online Learning

Sixth-formers in good standing and in attendance at Brooks may supplement their Brooks education by taking an approved online course sponsored by the College Board or an institution of higher learning for college credit. The one- or two-semester course, to be supervised by a Brooks faculty member, must be one that is not taught at Brooks.

Students may take only one such course per year. Students should submit a detailed proposal to the advisor, academic dean, department head and the Curriculum Committee. This proposal will include a syllabus and all relevant information about the course and the program sponsor. Once approved, satisfactory completion will typically satisfy our independent study requirement and earn Brooks credit.

Students should be aware that they are responsible for assuming the entire cost of this optional course. Students enrolled in courses sponsored by another institution are bound by the policies, rules and procedures of that institution. Brooks has no control over the course requirements, instructor or grade earned. A failure in such an independent study course may mean a student does not graduate as scheduled.

Students may also take online courses for the purposes of placement or advanced standing. No credit is earned or awarded. No credit is earned or awarded in these instances. With approval of the academic dean and the department head, students may engage in scholarship that would allow them to prepare to take a Brooks exam in a particular course. The expectation is that a successful performance on the exam would enable the student to pass out of the course to enroll in a more advanced one.

Winter Term

Brooks takes pride in the Winter Term program, a required three-week term in January. All students are expected to successfully complete one full-day or two half-day Winter Term courses each year. Winter Term courses are graded pass/fail. Note that the 18% attendance rule applies during Winter Term. Students who fail to meet that standard will not receive credit for their Winter Term course.

Programs Outside of Brooks School

Though we believe the experience of attending Brooks School is an exciting and fulfilling adventure in its own right, occasionally a student may become interested in pursuing a semester-long course of study away from the Brooks campus. The Island School might be an example of this kind of program. Ideally, students need to be thinking about these options early in their Brooks career. Bearing in mind that many students complete graduation requirements and AP courses during their fifth-form year, and that these courses are usually not offered by these types of programs, it can be very challenging to accommodate a fifth-former being away for a semester. Spring of the fourth-form year tends to be the least disruptive time for such a program. Students and their parents interested in applying to these programs should be in touch with the academic office as early as possible.

Summer Coursework

Brooks does not customarily award credit for required or enrichment courses taken during the summer outside of Brooks. However, for a number of reasons, students may elect or be required to take essential courses during the summer. In order to do so, they must enroll in a summer course approved by the dean of academic affairs and the relevant instructor(s) and department chair(s), and/or take a special Brooks exam administered by the appropriate academic department. Arrangements and permissions should be secured well in advance.

Students may attempt to advance a level during the summer (i.e. from First-Year Algebra to Second-Year Algebra by taking Geometry). However, students (and their parents/guardians) should be aware that mastering a year's worth of coursework (four classes per week for 30+ weeks) during the summer is a difficult challenge, even for the most able student. Another consideration is that the University of California ("UC") system requires transcript evidence that a course has been successfully completed. It may be that other universities, unbeknownst to us, require this as well. If a UC school is even a possibility in a student's future, enrolling in formal coursework at another institution is probably a better option.

Students passing a summer course and/or exam equivalent to an academic major do not earn credit from Brooks, but successful completion may mean they have earned the right to advance to the next course in the Brooks curriculum.

Assignments & Assessments

As defined in the Community Covenant, students are expected to complete all properly posted assignments. "Incomplete" grades are granted only for medical reasons or in other emergency situations. An assignment will be counted as late if submitted after the start of the class in which it is due. A 10% deduction will be applied for the first week, 20% for the second week, and 30% for the third week. Beyond the third week, a student may earn up to a 55% if the assignment is submitted before the semester's close. A zero will be recorded for the assignment if no work is submitted.

Students should not have three major assessments due on the same day. A major assessment is a full class period evaluation of at least a week's worth of material, or a major paper. Students with three scheduled tests/papers due on the same day should consult with their advisor and ask one of the teachers, prior to test day, if a test may be postponed. Generally, students should not be assigned more than one typical night's homework during a vacation break. Students in AP courses are an exception. Also, this guideline is not meant to preclude a struggling student from doing significant make-up work or review if the situation requires it.

Exhibitions of Learning (EOLs) are the final assessments of each semester. Some EOLs are examinations, and others are project-based. Every major course has an EOL. These are required, and take place in special schedules during the last week of each semester. Sixth-formers do not commonly participate in Semester 2 EOLs.

Grading System & Progress Reports

Number grades are posted at the midterm and end of every semester for all major courses. Minor courses are graded pass/fail at the midterm and with a number grade at the semester's end. Certain performance-based courses in the arts are graded pass/fail. Sixth-formers may petition the academic office to have one elective course below the AP level graded pass/fail (see below). A brief explanation of the number grading system and the Brooks School Honor Roll follows:

100 - 92	Highest Honors
91 - 88	High Honors
87 - 85	Honors
84 - 80	Commendable
79 - 75	Satisfactory
74 - 70	Fair
69 - 60	Passing
59 - 55	Failing

Effort Marks

Effort marks are assigned at the end of each quarter. Teachers may award a first-class "outstanding" effort mark (I) or assign a third-class "poor" effort mark (III). For students who are meeting expectations, no effort mark will be assigned. They are internal grades only and do not appear on student transcripts. The criteria used in assessing effort include the following:

- Punctuality in class attendance and timely submission of assignments.
- Unexcused class absences.
- Satisfactory makeup of quizzes, tests, and examinations.

- Attendance at extra help sessions.
- Class preparation.
- Involvement in class discussion.
- Attitude and cooperation.

The grade and effort mark together attempt to make a clear statement of assessment. A student working hard in a challenging course who receives a 75 and a first-class effort is doing commendable work.

The school cannot make a convincing academic recommendation on behalf of students whose cumulative academic average is under 70.

Pass/Fail Status

Members of the sixth form may choose to take one non-required elective course below AP level on a pass/fail basis. Sixth-formers may take either a two-semester course or a one-semester course each semester pass/fail. All applications for pass/fail status for the year or fall semester must be submitted to the academic dean within 48 hours of the publication of fall midterm grades. Sixth-form students may apply for Semester 2 courses to be taken pass/fail within 48 hours of the publication of spring midterm grades. These applications are reviewed by the Curriculum Committee and are granted to students wanting to challenge themselves in disciplines in which they may expect to struggle.

Academic Honors

Honor Roll

Students may attain honor roll status at the end of any semester with the following grade point averages:

92–100 Highest Honors

88–91 High Honors

85–87 Honors

Cum Laude Society

The Cum Laude Society is a national organization that recognizes superior academic achievement. According to the Cum Laude constitution, the Brooks chapter may elect up to 20 percent of the members of the sixth form who have earned an honors record. Half may be elected upon the conclusion of their fifth-form year and the remainder in Semester 2 of their sixth-form year. Inductees must be completing at least their second year of high school at Brooks School at the time of induction.

Graduation

Brooks recognizes scholastic achievement at graduation with the following designations:

Summa Cum Laude Top 10% of graduating sixth-formers

Magna Cum Laude Next 20% of graduating sixth-formers

Cum Laude Next 20% of graduating sixth-formers

Additionally, students who exhibit exceptional performance in one or more academic departments receive the designation of Distinction or High Distinction. Distinction designations are based on a student's departmental grade average and a demonstration of increased engagement throughout their time at Brooks—for example, taking the highest-level courses available in the department. Each department elects the slate of students receiving Distinction or High Distinction.

Promotion Requirements

For promotion to the fourth form, a student must have:

- Passed the Literature & Composition: Literary Genres and Self in Community courses.
- Earned an overall average of at least 70 in Semester 2.
- Acquired a total of at least 23 credits.

For promotion to the fifth form, a student must have:

- Passed the Literature & Composition: Global Perspectives, First Year Algebra and Self in Community courses.
- Acquired four credits in a language other than English.
- Successfully completed one year of the history requirement, unless exempted or deferred by the academic dean and the history department.
- Earned an overall average of at least 70 in Semester 2.
- Acquired a total of at least 46 credits.

For promotion to the sixth form, a student must have:

- Passed the Literature & Composition: American Voices, Geometry, and Self in Community courses.
- Acquired eight credits in a language other than English.
- Completed one laboratory science.
- Earned an overall average of at least 70 in Semester 2.
- Acquired a total of at least 70 credits.

Students who fulfill the appropriate departmental and promotion requirements are in good academic standing and eligible for promotion or graduation. The academic dean and the faculty may recommend that students who do not earn the minimum requirements for promotion not be invited to return. If they do remain at Brooks, they will be considered special students until the promotion requirements are met.

Students with an "incomplete" (I) grade at the end of any semester will be granted one month from the submission of grades to make up the incomplete grade and therefore earn appropriate credit. Incomplete grades are normally granted only for medical reasons or in other emergency situations.

Sixth-formers failing with a third-class effort in Semester 1 must make up that failure in Semester 2 to be eligible for graduation. Sixth-formers failing any course in Semester 2 with a third-class effort will not participate in graduation and will not receive a diploma until they have made up the course.

After the conclusion of AP examinations, sixth-formers are generally exempt from spring EOLs. Exceptions include:

- Sixth-formers with an average below 70 in a course will be expected to take a final exam.
- Sixth-formers may have to take exams in required courses.

Academic Concern and Academic Warning

Introduction

Academic Concern and Academic Warning are our ways of denoting a student's academic standing at Brooks. These processes provide opportunities to check in about improving their performance and are intended to be restorative. The dean of academic affairs reviews the grades of all students at the end of each marking period.

Our all-school rubric has five levels: No Grade Earned (0-59), Beginning (60-72), Progressing (73-82), Accomplished (83-92), and Distinguished (93-100). Students earning grades in the "No Grade Earned" or "Beginning" levels need to focus on developing strategies to move their work to higher levels.

Conditions & Process: Academic Concern

A student will be placed on the Academic Concern list if they meet one or more of the following conditions in any marking period:

- Any course average below 73.
- Two or more third-class effort marks, or two MOL averages below 73.

Students on the Academic Concern list will receive a letter from the dean of academic affairs relaying the following:

- Students will be required to check into a place of study at 8 p.m. on Sunday through Friday.
- Attendance in at least two nights of structured study hall each week will be required. The student may instead attend the Learning Center study hall at the discretion of the director of the Learning Center. Occasionally, a student might work with their advisor to arrange an alternate structured study situation.
- The student must schedule and attend a meeting with a school counselor.

To be removed from the Academic Concern list, a student must earn grades of 73 or higher in every course in which they are enrolled. Students on Academic Concern who are unable to fulfill the minimum requirements by the end of the following marking period may move to Academic Warning.

Conditions & Process: Academic Warning

Academic Warning reflects a more precarious academic position. A student will be placed on Academic Warning if they meet one or more of the following conditions in a marking period:

- Any of the Academic Concern conditions for a second consecutive marking period.
- Overall midterm or semester average below 73.
- Failing grade in any course at the end of a marking period.

Students on Academic Warning will meet with the dean of academic affairs and receive a letter confirming that they will be:

- Placed on Academic Restriction to limit their opportunities to leave campus. (Restriction may be lifted before the end of the marking period at the discretion of the dean of academic affairs.) This includes 8 p.m. check-in.
- Required to attend four nights of structured study hall or Learning Center study hall each week (the student may instead attend the Learning Center study hall at the discretion of the director of the Learning Center). Occasionally, a student might work with their advisor to arrange an alternate structured study situation.
- Required to schedule and attend a meeting with a school counselor.

- Required to schedule at least two one-on-one meetings with their teacher(s) in the class in which they received the low course average.

To be returned to good standing, a student must earn course averages of 73 or higher in every course in which they are enrolled. Students who are unable to fulfill the minimum requirements by the end of the following marking period should expect to have a conversation with the dean of academic affairs about whether they may continue at Brooks. Students on Academic Concern or Academic Warning who are failing two courses, with third-class effort marks and/or failing MOL grades in those courses at the end of a semester, should expect to be dismissed from the school.

Class Attendance

Attendance & Absences

Attendance at classes and other Brooks commitments during the school year is of paramount importance. While acknowledging the occasional need for students to be absent from class for appointments, family obligations, personal reasons, and other planned or unforeseen reasons, the school does expect those absences to be undertaken only with careful consideration and, where possible, with some thought for maintaining the integrity of the school schedule. Please review carefully the following policies regarding attendance.

Class time is an extremely important and valuable component of the education at Brooks, and it should not be missed casually. Given increased pressure by families to have students out of school for extended periods of time or for personal reasons (medical/short leaves, athletic tournaments, family trips, etc.), the faculty has established a general academic attendance requirement. The faculty believes there is a point at which absences from school—excused or unexcused, for reasons of health, convenience or pleasure—so significantly curtail the learning necessary to meet course requirements that a student must forfeit credit in that course. As this policy relates to all absences from class time, it is intended to be clear, fair and liberal enough to allow for a reasonable/expected number of absences, some of which might actually be caused by the school itself (e.g., field trips).

This policy on academic attendance requires that students missing an inordinate amount of school consider carefully the consequences of the choices they are making. The school hopes that this policy will affect very few students, and that the typical student, faced with the typical life circumstances of illness, field trips, long weekends, etc., would not find themselves in any sort of credit jeopardy.

A student absent from approximately 18 percent of the meetings of a course per semester may forfeit credit in that course by being withdrawn from it. For reference, 18 percent corresponds roughly to 11 absences from a class meeting four times weekly, and six absences from a class meeting twice weekly. “Absent from” means “not physically present in,” regardless of the reason.

Unexcused Academic Absences

In addition to the general policy on absences from required activities, the academic dean keeps same-class records of class absences on a semester basis. Students with three or more unexcused absences from the same class in a semester may be required to attend a special discipline hearing that includes the advisor, the dean of students and the academic dean. If thereafter a student accumulates additional unexcused absences in that same course, that student may forfeit credit in the course by being withdrawn from it.

The Learning Center

Introduction

In order for Brooks to achieve its mission of providing “the most meaningful educational experience” for our students, we must do our best to help each student reach their full academic potential. A key part of a student’s success is the knowledge that they have the necessary skills to meet the expectations of their courses. Beyond curriculum content, students need to be empowered with the tools to reach this potential. Many students may need academic help at some point during their time at Brooks. The services available through the Learning Center provide this important complement to their classroom experience.

Services Offered

The Learning Center provides general academic counseling, study and organizational skills development, time management help, writing support and learning styles education. Although classroom teachers are the best source for content area help, some tutorial support is available in the Learning Center as well. The Learning Center is located within the main academic building and is open throughout the school day, Monday through Saturday. While some students seek support on a regularly scheduled basis, others prefer to drop in only when specific help is needed.

Advisors and classroom teachers may refer a student for Learning Center services. Additionally, the Learning Center offers an evening study option, staffed by faculty and peer tutors, four evenings per week.

Resources for Students with Disabilities

The Learning Center coordinates services and accommodations for students admitted to Brooks with learning disabilities. Students who have documented disabilities are guaranteed certain protections and rights to equal access to programs and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In order to be eligible for accommodations, students must present current (within the last three years) testing/documentation to the Learning Center prior to the school year in order to ensure these are in place when classes begin. In cases where students are tested during the school year, documentation should be submitted to the Learning Center as soon as it is available.

Learning profiles are written at the start of each semester. Based on the documentation, the Learning Center faculty will create a learning profile for the student, which includes a summary of a student’s disability/learning style, academic strengths and weaknesses, accommodations, recommendations and student responsibilities. This profile is confidential and is shared only with the student’s advisor and relevant faculty members. Brooks currently offers four academic accommodations: 50% extended time; small group setting; use of a computer for essay writing; and use of a four-function calculator.

Competency-Based Education

Competency-based education (CBE) is our academic vision in support of our school mission and core values. CBE is a framework to foster educational equity for all students.

CBE at Brooks includes:

- Creating meaningful assessment opportunities for students that focus on skill development and the application of knowledge.

- Using departmental skill rubrics in support of our school wide competencies for students and teachers to track their growth and progress.
- Communicating, clearly and consistently, to students how their grades are earned.

Our Six School-Wide Competencies

Communicate Effectively	The student can generate, develop, organize, and convey original ideas orally, using language, presentation skills, and/or other media (for example, digital texts, images, and graphs) to present those ideas clearly, confidently, and in a manner appropriate to different audiences.
Learning Agency	<p>The student recognizes they are part of a learning community, from which they seek help and to which they contribute by using their voice, knowledge, motivation, and ability to make choices to further their own learning and the learning of those around them.</p> <p>The student takes responsibility for managing their own learning by engaging fully with the learning process, setting goals and steps to meet those goals, and reflecting on their work with the aim of improving future work. The student engages in all areas of the community with an aim to connect with their own passions.</p>
Collaboration	Student acts with integrity to resolve conflict, assume responsibility for behavior, demonstrate diversity, tolerance, and empathy to help maintain a safe and supportive environment, individually and in a group contributing to one's school community and the world.
Creativity & Innovation	The student demonstrates the ability to generate new ideas, bodies of work, or novel business ventures that add to, connect, or create insight into existing contexts or content.
Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, & Analysis	The student demonstrates proficiency in using critical thinking, analysis, and logical methods to make good decisions and solve problems.
Social Justice Responsibility	The student recognizes that social justice responsibility is both an ongoing process and a goal, and understands the definitions and implications of systems of power, intersectional identities, and intercultural awareness. In their journey towards becoming an active change agent, the student understands how their actions impact various communities and advances equity, inclusion, and belonging for all.

COURSE CATALOG

The Arts

"Creativity is not a rare ability. It is not difficult to access. Creativity is a fundamental aspect of being human. It is our birthright. And it's for all of us."

*Rick Rubin, *The Creative Act**

Whether in the studio or on the stage, the arts are at the center of Brooks School students' experience. Our expansive programs in performing and visual arts are designed to promote and develop the critical skills of confidence, creativity, and curiosity. In the classroom, students choose from a wide range of courses from Arts Exploratory to AP Studio Art. Students are required to take five semesters of courses in the arts, and many Brooks students go beyond the requirement to include joyful creative expression in their day.

Required Third-Form Arts

All third-form students are enrolled in a first year of arts. Third-form students enroll in either Arts Exploratory or one of our year-long ensembles: Chamber Music, Concert Chorale, Festival Chorus, Jazz Band, or Rock Band, or Advanced Jazz or Rock Band by permission of the instructor.

Arts Exploratory. This year-long exploratory arts course, taught by a team of Arts faculty, provides access to our breadth of artistic disciplines within our Center for the Arts for all third-form students. Each student will spend several weeks in teams of students engaging, collaborating, communicating and creating in different disciplines within the arts. Topics include 2D and 3D visual art, digital media, theatre performance, technical theatre, instrumental music, and singing.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Third Form – Two semesters.

No prerequisites.

Music

The study and performance of music is a unique vehicle for creativity, emotional expression, and the development of self-discipline. Brooks encourages students to nurture their musical interests and abilities through group and solo performance, private study, and classes in music history and music theory. Through these activities, students can begin to understand music in its greater historical and social contexts and discover connections between music and other academic disciplines.

First-level music

Instrumental Ensemble. This course is open to all interested students regardless of prior experience. Each term focuses on a single instrument, and that instrument of choice may change from ensemble to ensemble. The students study the history of the instrument and perform at a recital at the end of each term, as well as in occasional informal performances. Emphasis is placed on reading, aural, rehearsal, performance, and blending skills, which apply to all music. Selected members of the ensemble are occasionally asked to rehearse and perform in collaboration with other ensembles.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Music Theory I (Reading and Keyboarding). This course is designed to help students develop basic analytical skills in reading and notating music. Attention is given to note recognition in all clefs, aural and rhythmic dictation, and building scales, keys and chords. Students will also develop rudimentary keyboard skills in order to assist in deepening their understanding of music theory.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Music Theory II (Composition and Creation). (NOT OFFERED IN 2024-2025.) Music Theory II is designed as the natural progression from Music Theory I. This course functions for the intermediate to advanced student musician in order to more thoroughly understand the elements of music theory, composition, and musicianship. Ear training and sight-reading are critical parts of this course. In addition to incorporating analysis of more complex musical works, students will also create music and understand the guidelines used in music written by others in order to better understand the inner workings of composition. Students taking this course must read music and it is preferred that students have been a member of one of our music ensembles before taking this course, but it is not required.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Modern Music Production. The Modern Music Production course is designed to help students understand the techniques and concepts used in the modern, digital recording studio. Students learn how those ideas were forged and study the development of each new technology to help them make informed decisions in the recording process. Basic concepts of acoustics and their application in the modern studio are included. Past and current technologies are observed and implemented in the classroom as well as in projects. By the end of the course, students will be proficient in using recording technology, navigating digital audio workstations, and producing/mixing music on the computer.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Upper-level music

AP Music Theory. This course is designed to be the equivalent of a first-year college course in music theory. Students prepare for the advanced placement examination in May. At least a basic familiarity with musical notation is important. It is also strongly recommended that the student will have acquired at least basic performance skills in voice or on an instrument.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Permission of the department.

Independent Study. This semester-long course allows students to study a project in music under the supervision of a member of the department.

Major (2 credits) or Minor (1 credit) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Written permission of the department head and instructor.

Instrumental and Vocal Lessons. Private instruction is available for most instruments and voice on a weekly basis and at an additional cost. Instruction is provided by some of the finest musicians in the greater Boston area. No academic credit is granted. Students enroll by completing the summer online form or by speaking directly with the Director of Music.

Music ensembles

Courses in this category, whether for major or minor credit, may be repeated for credit.

Brooks School Chorus. This is a non-audition, all-gender vocal ensemble designed to introduce students to ensemble singing at the high school level. Students learn basic vocal technique as it pertains to choral and solo singing, practice fundamental musicianship skills including music reading, solfege, and text interpretation, and perform music in multiple languages from various genres and musical eras. The chorus also collaborates with other Brooks instrumental ensembles each term, culminating in a large ensemble concert each in December and May. Each semester's major performances are a meaningful and compulsory component of this class.

*Major (2 credits per semester) or minor (1 credit per semester) – All forms – One semester.
No prerequisites.*

Advanced Chorus. This is an auditioned vocal ensemble for whose focus is on developing musical literacy; learning challenging choral repertoire spanning several genres, languages and time periods; understanding vocal production and performing for the community. Emphasis is placed on developing more advanced musicianship. Participation in this ensemble includes a variety of public performances that are a meaningful and compulsory component of this course.

*Major (2 credits per semester) – Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.
Prerequisite: Audition and permission of the instructor.*

Jazz Band. This is an ensemble that studies and performs music written for large ensembles in a variety of styles including swing, blues, Latin-American, and modern jazz/rock fusion. Members of the group work together to develop their skills in such areas as precision in performance, accuracy of style, and group awareness. Opportunities are provided for those who wish to explore the art of improvisation. This group performs at the winter and spring concerts, Family Weekend, and a variety of other events throughout the year.

*Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.
Prerequisite: Permission of the department.*

Advanced Jazz Band. This ensemble furthers the structure and intent of Jazz Band at a higher level and with a strong emphasis on improvisation and collaboration. This group performs at the winter and spring concerts, Family Weekend, Revisit Days, and a variety of other events throughout the year.

*Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.
Prerequisite: Audition and permission of the department.*

Brooks Chamber Orchestra (BCO). This is an intermediate-level orchestral ensemble whose repertoire spans from the Renaissance era to contemporary 21st-century music. With an emphasis on standard orchestral repertoire from the last three centuries, students build skills in music reading, intonation, interpretation, and group dynamics. The Chamber Orchestra regularly performs at school functions, final semester concerts, and outside venues both alone and in collaboration with the many ensembles at Brooks School.

*Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.
Prerequisite: Permission of the department.*

Rock Band. This band is designed for instrumentalists and vocalists interested in studying, composing, and performing music in the rock style. The group performs at school functions throughout the year. An emphasis is placed on musical fundamentals, note, rhythm, and chord reading, stage presence, and interpersonal collaboration.

*Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.
Prerequisite: Audition and permission of the department.*

Advanced Rock Band. This course builds upon the work established in Rock Band. The course is a small ensemble class that is geared towards preparing the group for a variety of live performances in the rock and pop genre. Students work as a group and individually to learn the material on their various instruments or voice and to study other aspects of live performance. The music in Advanced Rock Band uses more complex techniques, harmonies, and textures. Two major and one or more minor performances will be scheduled for the ensemble during the school year.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Audition and permission of the instructor.

Theater

The theater program provides novice and experienced stage performers with opportunities to study the art of the theater. Students examine a variety of theater styles, periods, and cultural traditions, enabling them to gain experience in all aspects of theater: acting, directing, playwriting, and technical theater design. Students develop and perform dramatic pieces based on original material and develop critical and analytical skills through script study and performance observations. In addition to the three full-scale productions that are performed annually, formal coursework and independent studies in acting and directing are available to all students. In addition, visits to performances in art festivals and workshop productions enrich the total theater program at the school.

First-level theater

Acting for Stage and Screen. From character analysis to combat techniques students discover and hone their unique performance style as they explore acting onstage and on camera. Students will collaborate on a historical range of text and technique from diverse playwrights to inform their performance work while participating in showcase performances and creating original short films. This is a differentiated classroom for first- and second-level acting students.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Acting: Character, Combat and Context. This course builds on the basics of performance through character analysis, movement/stage combat techniques, and scene work. Students work to discover and hone their unique performance style as they collaborate on a historical range of monologues and scenes while working on a production project for the end of the term. Students keep a detailed journal in addition to attending and analyzing professional theater productions. This course may be repeated if a student wishes to continue working on acting skills but does not intend to specialize by taking one of the advanced acting classes.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Stagecraft Carpentry. This hands-on class covers stage carpentry processes, including building and covering scenery, rigging and flying scenic pieces, and lofting and sawing techniques. Students learn the proper and safe operation of hand and power tools commonly used in scenic carpentry as they complete personal projects and collaborate on mainstage productions.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Theater Design and Production Lab. In this hands-on course, students will explore all aspects of technical design and theatrical direction including but not limited to constructing costumes, rigging scenery, programming lights/sound, and dramaturgy. Students in this course have the opportunity to assist with the design or direction of a mainstage production.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Page to Stage Lab. (NOT OFFERED IN 2024-2025.) Students engage in all aspects of stage direction and playwriting in this active, collaborative class. No experience? No problem! Through classroom exercises, script analysis, and staged readings, beginning to advanced students explore and expand upon the necessary techniques to create and direct theatrical works. This course culminates in an original play festival featuring staged readings of students' original work alongside historical and contemporary pieces. This course may be repeated if a student wishes to continue developing their skills but does not intend to specialize by taking an advanced acting class.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Upper-level theater

Advanced Performance Studio. This year-long course is designed for students who demonstrate strong performance techniques and have been recommended by the Arts Department. In this performance-based class, students undertake in-depth character analysis and explore sophisticated ways of expressing their character(s) as individuals and in an ensemble. Students engage in master classes, generate original material, explore a wide range of historical techniques, and hone their skill sets through showcase performances. There is also potential for collaboration with Advanced Open Studio. Because the course material and ensemble members shift yearly, students are able to repeat this course to continue advancing their skills.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Acting for Stage and Screen, or permission of the department.

Independent Study: Student Direction and Design. After choosing a concentration in stage direction or design, students collaborate with the Director of Theater and Technical Director to mount a student-led production on the mainstage.

Major (2 credits) or Minor (1 credit) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Written permission of the department.

Visual Arts

The visual arts curriculum is designed to provide students with the opportunity to expand their art consciousness and to allow gifted students a chance for serious study in the medium of choice. Through a variety of courses in studio art in which they may work on drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, photography and film, students strive for control after experimentation. Courses concentrate on the study of the artists' aims and means. Ample extracurricular opportunities enable students to continue the creative process outside the classroom.

First-level visual arts

2D Studio Art. Students work with a variety of media to explore processes, concepts and ideas to create drawings, paintings and collages. Students come away with a basic understanding of the principles and elements of art through the process of portraiture, still life, figure work, landscape, color theory and abstraction. Cultural art history and perspectives are shared in the bodies of the lessons.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Environmental Studio - 3D. In an exploration of the intersection between design, sculpture and environmental justice, the projects in this class will offer students a unique opportunity to explore various sculpting techniques, learning how to creatively manipulate materials like clay, wood, metal, glass and repurposed items to craft three-dimensional works of art. Projects and materials will provide an understanding of design elements and principles within an

environmental context. Participants will channel their newfound knowledge into crafting a final sculptural project centered on a chosen case study, strategically aiming to reshape public perception and foster imaginative discussions surrounding environmental justice. Contemporary challenges such as climate change, "natural" disasters, eco-cities, land and animal conservation will be addressed while students acquire skills in design thinking, collaborative design approaches, and sculptural processes like assemblage, additive, and subtractive and casting. Engaging in collective installations and public presentations, participants will enhance their ability to communicate and collaborate effectively.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Ceramics I. This course combines pottery wheel skills and hand-building methods to build sensory awareness, creative dexterity and self-expression. Elements and principles of design will inform the work while additive and subtractive methods will be used to create the work. Students will explore functional and sculptural construction using stoneware clay and a broad spectrum of surface finishes. There will be a final project of creating a complete, uniquely styled functional or sculptural collection.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Digital Art. The curriculum of Digital Art introduces students to a whole new world of cutting-edge digital tools, techniques, and conceptual skills for creating fine art that is personal, inspired and beautiful. The portfolio we create together will consist of composite paintings, digital illustrations, album covers, laser cuts, 3D renders, and animations. Concentration will be on the building of various technical skills and the refinement of aesthetic understandings of diverse contemporary digital art practices. A goal of this course is to prepare students for Advanced Open Studio.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Film. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) This hybrid studio and performance art course seeks to take the novice's interest as lifelong audience members of visual media to build a foundation in cinematic language and techniques. In this course, they become familiar with the visual language and vocabulary while learning the basics of pre-production (developing an idea, storyboarding and scripting), production (lighting, filming, acting, & recording) and post-production (editing). Students develop the skills of creativity, collaboration and communication through the process of visual storytelling with video production exercises, screenings, critiques and class discussions. A goal of this course is to prepare students for Advanced Open Studio.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Film Photography. The main goals of this course are to teach students how to use a camera to express themselves through film photography and hand printing as well as to prepare students for Advanced Open Studio. The focus of the semester is divided at the midterm: First, we focus on skill building; then, we photograph to express our creative voice. Foundations in the first half enable students to explore the outdoors with a keen photographic eye, intentionally capture and develop photos on film, mix chemistry, experiment with alternative processes, and hand-print photographs in the darkroom. At the midterm, students will identify a central theme in their work and use it as the basis for a series of 5 poetic images that demonstrate skillful composition, dynamic light and rich contrast. At the semester's end, a selection of each student's handmade photographs will be hung in a prominent campus location of their choice.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Digital Photography. The main goals of this course are to teach students how to use a camera to express themselves through image-making and to prepare students for Advanced Open Studio. The focus of the semester is divided at the midterm: First, we focus on skill building; then, we photograph to express our creative voice. During the first half of the semester, students learn the skills required to light, capture and digitally develop a photograph while also exploring portraiture, narrative, landscape, still life, macro, and sports. Through hands-on games, projects, and collaborative challenges, students will learn the fundamentals of camera operation and how to control light in unique and beautiful ways. After the midterm, we'll shift into open ended prompts aimed at helping students explore their vision and voice. Finally, at the end of the semester, a selection of each student's work will be printed and displayed in a prominent campus location.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Woodworking. (NOT OFFERED IN 2024-2025.) This course is designed to teach students the basics of woodworking in a step-by-step and machine-by-machine process building a collaboratively designed project that lays the foundation for good woodworking technique. Our emphasis will be on the achievement of a solid foundation in the skill and process of the woodworker's craft, rather than on the size and complexity of the product. The proper use of machinery with an emphasis on shop safety will be reviewed. Students will be expected to learn about and safely use hand tools, power tools, and woodworking machinery. Students will expand their knowledge and experience through various projects, lessons, exposure to diverse woodworking artists and practices and technical vocabulary. The course will culminate with a capstone project that the student will build and exhibit.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Sculpture. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) This course offers an in-depth exploration of 3-D forms of sculpture. While students will continue to use the basic elements and principles of design to create and inform their work, they will be asked to interpret selected subjects in multiple mediums and styles with a personal point of view. Students will explore additive and subtractive methods in clay, wood, plaster, fabric and found objects until they discover one they will work with in-depth for the final quarter of the semester. Students will choose to work in degrees of realism and abstraction of different subjects such as the figure, landscape, portraiture and design while also maintaining a sketchbook of developing ideas. A final project will be done in a series of three works based on the student's preference of subject and medium.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Drawing. Students will delve deeply into line quality, tone, shade, mood, effective use of color and narrative in this class. Students will learn and practice strong critique and presentation techniques in order to effectively communicate their work and ideas; they will be charged with creating a series of works that address specific challenges. Students will be required to work in a sketchbook and create and maintain a portfolio, along with their in-class project work.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Painting. In this course, students will explore the fundamentals of painting in watercolor, gouache, acrylic, and possibly oil. This class will be broken into two distinct series of workshops in which we will explore various artistic approaches and techniques utilized in these mediums. We will also learn how to look critically at paintings (both historical and contemporary) and understand the elements of art and principles of design that various artists employ. Critiques will be incorporated into the course as well, providing us with the opportunity to articulate the strengths and areas for improvement within each other's work. This course will culminate with a final portfolio project and a final critique.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Upper-level visual arts

Ceramics II. Students will begin the semester by combining functional pottery and sculptural forms using the hand-building and pottery wheel methods. Students will have an ongoing journal and research component, studying ideas that interest them, and will share their learning with the class weekly. As the semester progresses, they will choose a direction to either combine or isolate these methods to develop their personal point of view in either functional or sculptural work. In the final quarter, they will create a cohesive body of work that will include surface finishing methods. Throughout the course, the students will also be learning and assisting in the firing processes.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Advanced Open Studio: Media Arts. This course provides an opportunity for experienced New Media artists to build a portfolio in photography, cinematography, animation or digital art. A goal of this course is to prepare students for AP Studio. The open studio format mirrors that of AP and allows for considerable individual attention and the freedom to narrow one's focus. Combining advanced artists and passion-driven independent inquiry within the same space establishes an environment that fosters experimentation, collaboration, risk-taking, and the systematic analysis of one's own work. Through critiques, guided inquiry, self-discipline, and collaboration, students will build portfolios that focus on concept and exploration. Students will further develop their unique visual language and implement it with purpose. The portfolio created in this course will highlight their voice by showcasing their depth, breadth, and mastery. The students in this class will curate and produce a Student Art Exhibition in the Center for the Arts or the Robert Lehman Art Gallery.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Film Photography, Digital Photography, Digital Art, or Film and permission of the department.

AP Studio Art. This course provides an opportunity for experienced visual artists to build a portfolio in either Drawing/Painting, 2D Design (photo/film) or 3D Design with a body of work that demonstrates breadth and depth. Students will submit a portfolio to the College Board in May, in addition to helping curate two Student Art Exhibitions in the Robert Lehman Art Gallery.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Portfolio review and departmental and instructor permission.

Independent Study. This semester-long course allows students to study a project in art under the supervision of a member of the department.

Major or Minor – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Written permission of the department head and instructor.

World Languages

Language learning unites cumulative content knowledge with a multitude of skills that challenge students to make connections and comparisons, understand linguistic patterns, and express themselves. The acquisition of vocabulary and grammar is inextricably linked to the cultures, both ancient and modern, in which they are used. Active use of language as well as competency in cultural literacy are the goals of the World Languages Department.

In addition, students are encouraged to study abroad to further increase their linguistic and cultural knowledge. Through the Brooks School Exchange Program, School Year Abroad programs, or independent travel programs, students have a variety of opportunities to immerse themselves in another language and culture.

All incoming students are asked to complete a placement evaluation in any language offered at Brooks in which the student has prior knowledge or experience. A student whose proficiency and command of Latin, Mandarin Chinese, French, and/or Spanish demonstrate that they place higher than our third level of instruction is strongly recommended either to continue the study of that language in our upper-level courses or to enroll in one of the other languages offered at Brooks.

If a student's prior language experience is in a language other than Latin, Mandarin Chinese, French, or Spanish, that student is required to study a World Language offered at Brooks. The modern languages, in addition to English, are four of the six official languages of the United Nations and are among the most widely used globally. The study of classical languages continues to be a valuable pursuit as these offer unique insight into the structure of the English language as well as the impact of the ancient world on the modern one.

Members of the World Languages Department may teach independent studies in other aspects of language and culture and introductory conversational classes in other tongues as their ability and interest dictate. Examples of this may be in languages such as Ancient Greek, Arabic or German.

Classical Languages

What defines heroism? What are the limits of power? The study of Latin applies intellectual curiosity and reason to such questions as these. Students consider these issues in their own lives as they read and interpret at a deep level. Ultimately all students actively participate in their own education, think and write analytically, and consider carefully the large issues of ancient and current culture.

Latin First Level. This course introduces the Latin language through the *Wheelock's Latin* textbook, which emphasizes the rapid acquisition of complex grammatical structures, and has students reading and translating right away. Through the readings, students will explore the history, art, and literature of the Roman world, including the tremendous merging of cultures as the Roman empire expanded. Latin First Level is for students with no previous study of Latin or whose placement test indicates that they are not prepared to take Latin Second Level.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

No prerequisites.

Latin Second Level. Students continue the study of Latin grammar and vocabulary using *Fabulae Graecae* and *Fabulae Romanae* while improving their reading and analytical skills.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Latin First Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

The following courses are Latin Reading courses. Latin courses at this level are offered in a three-year cycle. Each year considers a different theme and the students read different texts. Thus, students often enroll at this level for two or three years.

Latin Third Level. Latin Third Level will introduce students to authentic Latin poetry and prose through the chapters of *Ecce Romani III* after completing the *Ecce Romani II* textbook. Students will use the grammar and vocabulary learned in previous courses, as well as encounter new vocabulary and grammatical constructions, to translate unadapted (and slightly adapted) Latin prose. Through the study of these authentic works of Classical prose authors, students deeply will explore Roman history, culture, and government in a way that makes the “dead” language come alive and become relevant to 21st-century students. An exploration and analysis of ancient Roman history will be especially prevalent in this course. Additionally, students will engage in a variety of spoken, active Latin activities that will further their understanding of the language.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Latin Second Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Latin Fourth Level. Latin Fourth Level will introduce students to authentic Latin poetry through the chapters of *Ecce Romani III* and other materials. Students will use the grammar and vocabulary learned in previous courses, as well as encounter new vocabulary and grammatical constructions, to read unadapted Latin, particularly the works of Vergil, Ovid, Catullus, Sulpicia, Horace, and others. Students will explore not only the grammar and vocabulary, but also the literary devices and poetic meter used and the historical context of these works. Additionally, students will engage in a variety of active Latin activities that will further their understanding of the language. An exploration and analysis of ancient Roman culture and history, as well as Greco-Roman mythology will be especially prevalent in this course.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth or Sixth Form – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Latin Third Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Latin Reading: Love and Friendship. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) Students define and discuss Roman views on love and friendship in a variety of genres: philosophy, myth and lyric poetry. The class reads Latin selections from authors such as Cicero, Apuleius, Catullus, Ovid and Vergil. Some of these texts may be read entirely in English. Students consider cultural and historical influences, success and failure, and actively participate in discussions. Students translate both prose and poetry, learn stylistic analysis, and write cumulative analytical essays.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth or Sixth Form – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Latin Second Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Honors Latin. Students read unadapted texts such as Catullus, Cicero, Caesar, Vergil and Ovid at an advanced level and pace. They consider genre conventions and thematic connections between the texts. They also write analytical essays of varying scope and increasing depth, consider historical and cultural influences, and read ancillary texts in English. This course can be taken before or after AP Latin.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth or Sixth Form – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Permission of the department.

Independent Study. This semester-long course allows students to study a project of their own design under the supervision of a member of the department.

Major (2 credits) or Minor (1 credit) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor and department.

Modern Languages

Through the study of Mandarin Chinese, French, and Spanish, students develop linguistic and cross-cultural skills in order to prepare for engagement in a global society. Courses are taught in the target language in order to best develop the four basic linguistic skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Advanced courses develop analytical skills for understanding literature, investigating current events, and researching important issues in various cultures around the world. Many courses use our language laboratory and incorporate technology into daily lessons. Above all, teachers and students work together in order to examine beliefs and practices and to develop an appreciation for cultures that differ from their own.

Mandarin Chinese

Mandarin Chinese First Level. In this introductory course, students learn the Pinyin Romanization system and use acquired language skills in a variety of classroom activities. While the focus is primarily on oral proficiency and aural comprehension including the mastery of tones, students are introduced to important grammar structures and learn to read and write simplified Chinese characters and recognize them in context. At the end of this level, students will have acquired the skills to ask and answer questions; narrate events; describe likes and dislikes; make short oral presentations in Chinese; and engage in short reading and writing activities that show a mastery of approximately 300 characters. These skills are employed within the framework of familiar contexts such as family, leisure activities, and school life, and are enriched through the introduction of Chinese culture.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

No prerequisites.

Mandarin Chinese Second Level. This intermediate course continues to build on the language skills of Mandarin Chinese First Level: oral proficiency, aural comprehension, reading, and character formation. Consistent practice develops students' ability to express themselves using more advanced vocabulary, expressions, and grammar structures. Primary emphasis on conversational fluency is complemented by an increasing focus on reading and writing skills. Students will master approximately 400 additional characters and will be able to recognize significantly more in context. Language study is enriched with China's history and culture through guest speakers and audio, visual, and online sources. An honors section of this course may be offered.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Mandarin Chinese First Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Mandarin Chinese Third Level. This upper-intermediate course continues to build the language skills of Mandarin Chinese Second Level: oral proficiency, listening comprehension, reading, writing, and character formation. Consistent practice develops students' ability to express themselves using more advanced vocabulary, expressions and grammatical structures. The primary emphasis on conversational fluency is complemented by an increasing focus on reading and writing skills. Students will master approximately 400 additional characters and be able to recognize significantly more in context. Some modern literature is introduced. Language study is enriched with China's history and culture through guest speakers and audio, visual, and online sources. An honors section of this course may be offered.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Mandarin Chinese Second Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Mandarin Chinese Fourth Level. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) This course continues to build the language skills of Mandarin Chinese Third Level: oral proficiency, aural comprehension, reading, and writing. Consistent practice develops students' ability to express themselves using more advanced vocabulary, expressions and grammar structures. Students explore more sophisticated aspects of the language and culture as increased use of authentic materials is employed. The primary emphasis shifts from conversational fluency to formal language usage such as the

language used in newspapers, modern literature and poetry. Longer texts covering social issues are introduced. Audio, visual and online sources as well as films are used to enhance students' understanding of the modern Chinese language and culture. An honors section of this course may be offered.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Chinese Third Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

AP Chinese Language and Culture. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) This course prepares students for the College Board's Advanced Placement Chinese Language and Culture exam. Students improve their level of Chinese proficiency across the three communicative modes (interpersonal, interpretive and presentational) and the five goal areas (communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities) as outlined in the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) standards. Student work focuses on language proficiency as well as cultural knowledge.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Mandarin Chinese Third or Fourth Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

The following courses are Advanced Mandarin Chinese courses. Mandarin Chinese courses at this level are offered in a three-year cycle. Each year considers a different theme and the students read different texts. Thus, students often enroll at this level for two or three years.

Advanced Mandarin Chinese: Society and Social Life. (OFFERED IN 2027-2028.) This course focuses on deciphering a changing society in contemporary China and will build reading and writing proficiency using essays on China's rapidly changing socio-cultural landscape. Students will explore complex issues like China's population boom, the challenges of finding love, financial hurdles, and more. The course emphasizes reading comprehension strategies and language acquisition techniques, teaching students to skim texts for main ideas, scan for details, and identify different types of prose. Students will study the nuances of formal written Chinese and be encouraged to implement newly learned literary forms in their writing. Writing development will also benefit from mastering the usage of high-level vocabulary and increasingly challenging sentence patterns. Speaking skills will be strengthened by group discussion and individual presentation topics about complex social issues in contemporary China. This course will prepare students for studying abroad in China and enable them to participate in any Chinese-speaking communities or organizations.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Mandarin Chinese Third or Fourth Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Advanced Mandarin Chinese: Literature. (OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) This course invites students to investigate the rich textures of traditional and contemporary Chinese culture while sharpening their reading skills. This course will reinforce students' grasp of Chinese vocabulary and grammar while also strengthening their understanding of Chinese culture and literature. Students will be introduced to important Chinese authors/poets and their popular works. This course will grow students' interest in reading and their capacity for language appreciation. By taking this course, students' vocabulary will increase and they will enhance their logical thinking in the target language while deepening their understanding of the Chinese language at the linguistics level. This course will prepare students for studying abroad in China and enable them to participate in any Chinese-speaking communities or organizations.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Mandarin Chinese Third or Fourth Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Advanced Mandarin Chinese: Integrated Language Skills. (OFFERED IN 2026-2027.) In this course, students will be introduced to a higher level of vocabulary, grammar, and language structures using the *Huanying* textbook V2 and workbook V2/P2 as the main texts. Students will increase their vocabulary and improve their reading comprehension, conversation skills, and writing ability. Besides learning more Chinese idioms, students will enhance their knowledge

of Chinese culture and modern society throughout the year. Students will engage in interactive and integrated language practice through fun and meaningful activities centered on current events and contemporary topics such as education and the environment. Their learning experience will be continuously intertwined with communication, culture, connections, comparisons, and communities. This course will prepare students for studying abroad in China and enable them to participate in any Chinese-speaking communities or organizations.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Mandarin Chinese Third or Fourth Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Independent Study. This semester-long course allows students to study a project in Chinese language, literature or culture under the supervision of a member of the department.

Major (2 credits) or Minor (1 credit) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisites: Permission of the instructor and the department.

French

French First Level. This course introduces the French language through reading, writing, speaking and listening exercises. Fundamentals of sentence structure and other grammatical concepts are introduced. Students explore French and Francophone cultures in Europe, Africa, America, and Asia. French First Level offers an immersion-based curriculum using French in Action texts and videos. The class is augmented with authentic materials and conducted in French. French First Level is for students with no previous study of French or whose placement test indicates that they are not prepared to take French Second Level.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

No prerequisites.

French Second Level. This course builds on the foundations of grammar and vocabulary acquired in French First Level to improve reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Students review past grammar and learn new material through gradual exposure to more abstract concepts. Varied literary genres are explored to increase understanding of the French and Francophone cultures. French Second Level offers an immersion-based curriculum using *French in Action* texts and videos. The class is augmented with authentic materials and conducted in French.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: French First Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Honors section(s) by department invitation.

French Third Level. This course increases listening, reading, and writing proficiency while building vocabulary. Students learn more complex grammatical structures and begin an introduction to literary analysis. Students also continue to develop oral skills through discussions of more advanced works by French and francophone authors. French Third Level offers an immersion-based curriculum using *French in Action* texts and videos. The class is augmented with authentic materials and conducted in French.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: French Second Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Honors section(s) by department invitation.

French Fourth Level: Francophone Cultures. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) Students continue to grow their speaking, writing, and conversation skills in order to deepen their understanding of the French language. Through study of the francophone world, and with special attention paid to critique and questioning of cultural differences, students will grow their comfort and abilities with both written and spoken French. Grammar is treated as needed, though the focus is on improving communication fluency and fluidity.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: French Third Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Advanced French: The Changing Face of “French” Through Film. (OFFERED IN 2027-2028.) This course offers an overview of the French-speaking world and current events and issues in an immersive French environment. The emphasis of this course is on francophone cultures and comparison with the students’ personal experiences. This course uses Francophone filmography and authentic materials to deepen the exploration of many topics. There is an emphasis on listening comprehension and oral production. Students should expect to challenge their opinions of what “French” is and to increase their cultural awareness.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: French Third Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Advanced French: From Hexagon to Globe – Cultural Expansion Through French Literature. (OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) This course offers an overview of French history from prehistory through the Crusades, the Renaissance, the French Revolution and ending in modern France. Students will read an assortment of literary styles, both ancient and modern, as well as augment this study with authentic visual and audio materials. Students read and discuss selected articles on social, economic and political topics in the Francophone world. This course examines important themes in Francophone literature such as negritude in Aime Cesaire and the philosophy of the absurd in Camus, as well as other authors such as Fanon, Damas, Ben Jelloun, and Dao. They will continue to grow their understanding of historical and global issues and learn to express and compare their opinions thoughtfully and persuasively in an immersive French environment. There is an emphasis on improving written expression and reading comprehension as well as deepening grammatical understanding.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: French Third Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Advanced French: Language and Culture. (OFFERED IN 2026-2027.) Students continue to grow their speaking, writing, and conversation skills in order to deepen their understanding of the French language. The study of the literature of the 19th and 20th centuries, grammar review, and vocabulary development complements oral presentations, discussion of literature, French Internet news broadcasts, and written assignments develop reading, writing, listening and speaking. This course runs in a differentiated classroom alongside the AP French Language and Culture course.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: French Third Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

AP French Language and Culture. This course prepares students for the College Board’s Advanced Placement French Language and Culture examination through the study of the literature of the 19th and 20th centuries, grammar review, and vocabulary development. Oral presentations, discussion of literature, French Internet news broadcasts, and written assignments develop reading, writing, listening and speaking in preparation for the examination in May.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: French Third Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Independent Study. This semester-long course allows students to study a project in French language, literature or culture under the supervision of a member of the department.

Major – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisites: French Fourth Level or Advanced French, and department approval.

Spanish

Spanish First Level. This course introduces the Spanish language through reading, writing, speaking and listening exercises. Fundamentals of sentence structure and other grammatical concepts are introduced. Students explore diverse topics in the Spanish-speaking world such as art, history, and traditions. Spanish First Level is for students with no previous study of Spanish or whose placement test indicates that they are not prepared to take Spanish Second Level.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

No prerequisites.

Spanish Second Level. This course builds upon the foundations of grammar and vocabulary acquired in Spanish First Level to improve reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Students review previous grammar and learn new material through a gradual exposure to more abstract concepts. This class explores the customs and traditions, history, geography, music and selected pieces of literature from a variety of cultures.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Spanish First Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Honors section(s) by department invitation.

Spanish Third Level. This course increases proficiency in listening and speaking in Spanish while building vocabulary. Students learn complex grammatical structures and writing skills in addition to the history, literature and culture of the Spanish-speaking world. Selected short stories are used as an introduction to literary analysis.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Spanish Second Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Honors section(s) by department invitation.

Spanish Fourth Level: Culture and Community. “Little Cuba?” Is Puerto Rico part of the U.S.? What is Hispanic Heritage Month? These questions and more are discussed through a big-picture approach to understanding the actions and policies of the United States in historic and current interactions with the Mexican-American, Cuban-American and Puerto Rican communities in this country. We spend time investigating current events and themes like quality of life, politics and government, art, and travel and transportation in the context of Spanish-speaking countries. Students will reflect on their own cultural values and traditions as they examine these communities through the lenses of film, music, intermediate literature, poetry and history, while building on their language-learning skills. This curriculum allows students to practice social justice and advocacy by strengthening their cultural competence and promoting global citizenship in the target language.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Spanish Third Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

Honors Spanish Fourth Level. In this course our students will continue to develop the four domains of language proficiency (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in the three modes of communication: interpersonal, interpretive and presentational. Students will strengthen their knowledge of the language through a deeper understanding of the grammar material covered in class. They will learn more about the culture of the Spanish speaking communities, through the study of geography, literature, history, music and film. Students will read selections from novels, modern short stories and poetry, and discuss films that enhance their understanding of Hispanic culture. By the end of the year the students will be aptly prepared to take AP Spanish Language and Culture Course.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Spanish Third Level and/or placement by assessment and department approval.

AP Spanish Language and Culture. This course prepares students for the College Board’s Advanced Placement Spanish Language and Culture exam. Students develop and master proficiency in the four basic linguistic skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students expand their vocabulary through weekly assignments and reading selections from Hispanic and Spanish literature. In addition, students prepare presentations on relevant topics. An intensive review of grammar, guided compositions, class discussions and oral exposés reinforces skills in preparation for the AP examination.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Honors Spanish Third Level and department approval.

AP Spanish Literature and Culture. This course prepares students for the College Board’s Advanced Placement Spanish Literature and Culture exam. Students participate in literary discussions, read literary texts in all genres, and prepare critical analysis using appropriate terminology.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: AP Spanish Language and Culture and department approval.

Advanced Spanish. Advanced Spanish exposes students to the various avenues through which Hispanic and Latinx identity, society and culture are studied, manifested, and experienced. This course allows students to discover the complexity of the Spanish-speaking world through examination of history, literature, and art from the Pre-Columbian through Post-Modern eras. It also emphasizes the importance of language skill acquisition, retention and application through a number of creative projects—including (but not limited to) art and film analyses, poetry writing, and research projects. The course provides opportunities to develop and demonstrate language proficiency and cultural competency.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Honors Spanish Third Level and department approval.

Independent Study. This semester-long course allows students to study a project in Hispanic language, literature or civilization under the supervision of a member of the department.

Major or Minor – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: AP Spanish Language and Culture, AP Spanish Literature and Literature and Culture, or Advanced Spanish, and department approval.

School Year Abroad (SYA)

Brooks School is a member of the School Year Abroad (SYA) program. Students may apply to spend all or part of their fifth form year in France, Italy or Spain. Participants study in SYA schools and live with local families. All credits earned abroad count toward the Brooks School diploma. Students considering SYA should communicate with their advisor and the academic office during the course request process in the spring of their fourth-form year. For further information, see the SYA coordinator at Brooks and visit the SYA website at <http://www.sya.org>.

English

The principal goals of the English Department are to teach reading and writing in the various forms in which they appear, and to foster interest in and appreciation for the written word. We encourage students to participate in class discussion and to arrive at ideas independently, evaluate them thoughtfully, and share them with their peers with confidence. Classes favor a student-centered approach in which speaking and listening skills can be developed. In teaching reading, we supply the tools and require their use, but believe that students should approach a text on their own terms, for comprehension, analysis, and synthesis. Mostly we want to cultivate an appetite for reading, and to make the discovery—of genres, writers, themes, and characters—a source of inspiration and excitement. In choosing texts we recognize our pluralistic society and increasingly international environment.

In teaching writing, we encourage students to write for real audiences, about real subjects, and to develop, recognize, and nurture their own voices. Students learn to write through practice—drafting, revising, and proofreading—and by talking about their work with teachers and sharing it with peers. Grammar and usage as well as vocabulary are taught functionally, in context, with occasional formal instruction. Students have an opportunity for additional challenges in Advanced Placement English or in independent projects.

Required English Sequence

Literature & Composition: Literary Genres. The goal of Literary Genres is to develop the fundamental skills necessary to read accurately and write clearly. Drawing on the foundational works of western literature, students study the human journey as depicted in canonical and contemporary texts. Students learn the techniques of reading and analyzing texts, focusing on conflict, character development and theme, while introducing grammar as necessary. As readers they analyze the questions raised by the texts; as writers, they express how those ideas may influence their sense of self. Throughout the year students collect their best essays into a portfolio, which they take with them into the fourth form. Texts are chosen from the following: *The Kite Runner*, *The Odyssey*, *Beowulf*, *Grendel*, *Macbeth*, *Frankenstein*, and *The Color Purple*.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Third Form – Two semesters.

No prerequisites.

Literature & Composition: Global Perspectives. “We read to live other lives, to experience that which we can't experience at Brooks, so that we can better understand cultural differences, how we can become part of another community and yet remain ourselves.” Global Perspectives exposes students to canonical and contemporary writers of non-Western cultures, emphasizing the universality of the human experience. Organized thematically, the course utilizes novels, short stories, poetry and drama; students develop critical skills that allow them to explore new cultures with sensitivity. By encountering the unfamiliar through literature, students not only become better readers and writers but also begin to develop the skills required of a global citizen.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth Form – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: Literary Genres or placement by the department.

Global Humanities: English. At the core of this class, students will explore the question, “what does it mean to be human?” This course, taught jointly by the History and English departments, is intended for new fourth-form and new repeat third-form NCAA students to help them meet the standards expected of the comparable English and History courses. The history sequence is a comparative study of political, economic, social and cultural history. Students learn to analyze source materials and construct historical arguments based on those sources. Concurrently, the English sequence of the course employs novels, short stories, poetry and drama; students develop critical skills that allow them to explore new cultures with sensitivity. This course exposes students to canonical and contemporary figures, both real and fictional, of non-western cultures to emphasize the universality of the human experience. This course will meet during two course blocks and students will receive credit in both History and English. In the first semester,

we will work to understand how cultural diffusion shaped the world through the spread of religion, ideas, arts, and technology. The second semester includes an examination of justice and reconciliation in the 20th century through a study of revolutions, the World Wars and the Holocaust, decolonization, and the Cold War. Current events are interwoven in each unit of study. Global Humanities: English takes the place of Literature & Composition: Global Perspectives.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Third or Fourth Form – Two semesters.

Prerequisite for English: Literature & Composition: Literary Genres or permission of the department.

Literature & Composition: American Voices. This course offers an exploration through literature of three deeply rooted themes in American culture. In the first semester, we examine all sides of the American Dream and what it means for the many diverse segments of the American population, from the Dream's gleaming potential to its dark underbelly. In addition to F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, we read works from authors such as T.C. Bambara, Toni Morrison, James Baldwin, Andre Dubus, Amy Tan, Denis Lehane, Rudolfo Anaya, Langston Hughes, Arthur Miller and Sherman Alexie. In the second semester, we study Americans' fascination with exploring this vast continent, diving into works from authors like William Least Heat-Moon, Jack Kerouac, William Faulkner, Zora Neale Hurston, Annie Proulx, John Steinbeck, Gloria Naylor and John Howard Griffin. We conclude the year by looking forward, as a culture with such a short collective history is wont to do. Works from writers such as Thomas More, Jennifer Egan, Gary Shteyngart, Edward Bellamy, Cormac McCarthy, Margaret Atwood, Ayn Rand, Tocqueville, Ray Bradbury, Kurt Vonnegut and others present a variety of views about America's possible utopian or dystopian futures. Throughout the year, students engage with multiple genres—fiction, poetry, non-fiction and drama—as well as the different movements in American literature, and with a diverse and multicultural panorama of authors. American Voices is committed to student writing in many forms, from journaling to poetry, from memoir and fiction to current digital forms. Building on the Global Perspectives emphasis on paragraph structure, American Voices focuses primarily on the organization of the essay and the ability to gather multiple ideas and opinions into a coherent piece, using textual evidence to support an argument.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth Form – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: Global Perspectives or placement by the department.

English Electives

The following elective courses are intended to follow the required sequence outlined above.

African-American Studies. Grounded in reading, writing, critical thinking, and discussion, students in this course will explore the rich tapestry of African American history and literary roots. This course intends to reframe how African-American literature and history are taught by emphasizing joy, activism, and resistance instead of highlighting trauma. Through literature, we cover the four great migrations, the black Renaissances, Pan-Africanism, and pop culture and art. Authors may include Adichie, Baldwin, Coates, Gyasi, Lansberry, Wright, and more, deepening the understanding of the Africana diasporic experience through social, economic, political and artistic lenses.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

The Bible as Literature. (NEWLY ADDED for 2025-2026; expected to run in 2026-2027.) In this class, students explore the Bible as a work of literature, examining the themes, genres, and literary techniques and devices embedded in the Old and New Testaments. Some of the examples of the genres we will look at include but are not limited to narrative, poetry, prophecy, and gospels. We will also examine the historical and cultural contexts in which these texts are written to help us analyze the text from the authors' point of view. Students will engage with texts from the Old and New Testaments, including portions of Genesis, Exodus, and the four gospels, and analyze various literary forms to enhance their understanding of the central theme of the Bible and its usage in more contemporary Western literature.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

The Contemporary Novel. Too often, literature courses labeled “contemporary” refer only to the post-World War II or even post-colonial eras. Though these are legitimate and fascinating approaches to studying literature, they can stretch the boundaries of what we consider contemporary. This course is based on the premise that the strength of great literature is its direct commentary and reflection on issues faced by today’s society—by the readers themselves. The novels studied in this course were all written in the twenty-first century and shed light on contemporary social, political, and cultural topics. In addition to digging into the novels’ themes, we will explore how the contemporary novel breaks from the traditional boundaries of genre, narrative structure, character development, point of view, and more. Students will be called upon to reflect regularly in writing, through both literary analysis and personal reflection, and they will be expected to participate in regular classroom discussions about the novels.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

The Contemporary Short Story. (NOT OFFERED in 2025-2026.) One of the best things about a short story is that it is, well, short. Observers often make the mistake of assuming that short means simple, or even easy to write. Short stories present worlds, characters, and themes that rival the best novels in their complexity and nuance. The short story writer is every bit as talented as a writer of novels; in fact, it could be argued that the challenge of creating depth and intricate narratives in such a small space is the greater task. Just like novels, short stories shed light on the important issues facing our society and culture today. Students in this course will read stand-alone stories as well as complete collections. Students will be called upon to reflect regularly in writing, through both literary analysis and personal reflection, and they will be expected to participate in regular classroom discussions about the stories.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Creative Writing: Poetry and Short Fiction. (NOT OFFERED in 2025-2026.) The focus of this course is on the students’ own creative writing, and the semester will be broken down into three phases. In the first few weeks of the course, students will be exposed to a wide variety of voices and mentor texts such as *Flash Fiction Forward* (ed. James Thomas/Robert Shapard), *Jesus’ Son* (Denis Johnson), *First, Body* (Melanie Rae Thon) and *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice* (Charles Johnson), among others, as well as poets such as William Carlos Williams, Allen Ginsberg, Mary Oliver, Nikki Giovanni, Ekiwah Adler Belendez, Saul Williams, Gary Snyder, Han-Shan, Audre Lorde, and many more. Students will delve into the elements that make up what is considered good short fiction and poetry. During this time, students will undertake a variety of poetry and fiction writing exercises to put these elements into practice. During the second phase of the course, using the skills developed in phase one, students will produce their own complete pieces in both poetry and short fiction. During the final phase of the course, students will complete a comprehensive and well-thought-out collection of works in the genre of their choice. The course will culminate in a public reading of student work.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Dystopian Literature. While not an entirely new genre, we have recently witnessed an explosion in dystopian literature. What is it about contemporary society that has given rise to such books as *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent*? Why is much of this popularity focused on YA literature? In this course, we will explore this fascinating phenomenon by reading works such as Tom Perotta’s *The Leftovers*, Justin Cronin’s *The Passage*, Anthony Burgess’ *A Clockwork Orange*, Margaret Atwood’s *Oryx and Crake*, Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road* and Octavia Butler’s *The Parable of the Sower*, among others.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Fiction Writing. In this class students present and perfect their own original fiction (short stories or novel excerpts) in a workshop setting. Students should expect an intensive writing experience as well as the preparation of a series of portfolios for presentation throughout the semester.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Finding Meaning in Other Worlds: Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature. The science fiction and fantasy genres have historically been overlooked by grand prizes and educational institutions in favor of more “relevant” realistic fiction, but journeying to fantastical worlds allows us to form a better understanding of our own. In these other worlds, we can find commonality with dragons, be inspired by aliens, and discover new ways of living in the potential futures of our own world. Through the works of authors such as N. K. Jemisin, Ursula K. LeGuin, Jeff Vandermeer, and more, students will explore the ways world-building can help us examine ourselves. Students will pay particular attention to form and genre conventions in their analytical and creative writing. Beyond the written word, students will examine how illustrations, maps, and other media contribute to these genres. By the end of the semester, students will have built their own worlds through character sketches, poems, maps, etc., culminating in a fully-formed short story.

Major – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

The Hero in Literature. (NOT OFFERED 2025-2026.) The focus of this course is literary heroes and their journeys and transformations. Though each hero exists in a unique time and place, students discover the one archetypal hero in them all. The reading list for this course may include, among other works, Joseph Campbell’s *The Hero With A Thousand Faces*, Charles Frazier’s *Cold Mountain*, Cormac McCarthy’s *All The Pretty Horses*, Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, and James Dickey’s *Deliverance*.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Immigrant Voices. Though America’s identity and literature have evolved significantly since its founding, at some level we remain a nation of immigrants, and their voices lend important perspectives on the American experience. From stories of immigration (simply making it here; living day to day as someone viewed as “different”; carving out a new identity) to new Americans’ views of their adoptive land (how can one nation honor both diversity and assimilation?), students of immigrant literature stand to gain significantly in their understanding of our ever-evolving nation through reading, research, class discussion and writing. Students also spend time crafting their own family’s immigrant story, where applicable. Works studied may include *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* (Alvarez), *The Woman Warrior* (Hong Kingston), *The Joy Luck Club* (Tan) and *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (Diaz).

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Journalism. (NOT OFFERED in 2025-2026.) Students will learn all aspects of publishing a newspaper, *The Brooks Shield*. The course entails news writing, in-class writing assignments, and journalism ethics discussions. Students will learn about various forms of journalistic styles by reading from texts that will include *In Cold Blood*, *The Right Stuff*, *Consider the Lobster*, and a variety of current news stories from publications such as *The New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, and *Wall Street Journal*. Skills students will master include interview techniques, news writing, and editing. There will also be an opportunity to lead the decision-making process for what gets included in *The Brooks Shield*—and what doesn’t.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Medicine and Literature. In a world beset by a global pandemic and widespread inequities in health care, it is more important than ever to consider the roles that medicine plays in our lives and the stories we tell. This course will ask

students to bring their critical and interpretive skills to bear on various aspects of medicine—from the ways that clinicians communicate with their patients and write about their experiences, to the ways that patients experience their health, their bodies, and their caregivers. Students will read short stories, poems, letters, and essays by Atul Gawande, Jasmine Brown, William Carlos Williams, Katherine Anne Porter, Anton Chekhov, Mary Seacole, John Keats, Anne Sexton, and others. These writers, many of whom were doctors, explore the difficulties of medical school and the painful realities of medical practice. Others are patients whose feelings, values, and lived experiences are too often neglected in the stories we tell about medicine. As we read, we will discuss these questions together: What does it feel like to be a doctor or a medical student? What does it feel like to be a patient? What does ethical, empathetic care look like? What happens to those who don't receive that care or cannot access health care at all? What can we learn by reading literature and medicine together, as citizens who care about the health and well-being of our families, our communities, and ourselves?

Major – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Medieval English Literature. (NOT OFFERED in 2025-2026.) This elective course delves into the evolution of English literature, spanning from its medieval origins to its relevance in today's globalized society. Students will follow the transition of English literature—from the heroic themes of Old English epics to the symbolism of Arthurian romances and the social critiques of Chaucer—tracing linguistic developments and cultural influences that have shaped the language over time. Readings will include works by anonymous poets, Chaucer, Bede, and others, allowing students to unpack the complexities of texts derived from oral and written traditions, often at the intersections of diverse religious and cultural traditions. The course will conclude with an exploration of the legacies left by colonialism, examining how English has impacted the world and how this has led to a further diversification of the language and its literature.

Major – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Memoir Writing. (NOT OFFERED in 2025-2026.) Writing about yourself—what could be easier? Doing it well enough to really benefit from the process of telling the stories of your life, though, requires deep honesty and reflection. It can be challenging, even painful, to write about formative moments in your life transparently, but doing so helps you derive meaning from them, and is thus incredibly valuable. This course will use a combination of journaling, prompted autobiographical writing, reflective free-writes and other exercises to develop the technical skill of effective memoir writing. Students will also sharpen their ability to learn from their own (and their classmates') experiences and delve into the emotions elicited by and through writing, with the hope that they leave the class with a clearer understanding of themselves and their place in the world.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Nature Writing. This course focuses on our connection with nature as expressed through literature. Students learn to blend observation with reflection and to build metaphors so that observations carry meaning beyond themselves. Drafting, revising and editing are emphasized. We examine fiction, nonfiction, memoir and poetry. Sample texts include works by Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, MacLean, Abbey and Williams. A component of the course is an introduction to Native American literature by writers such as Momaday, Welch and Silko, in order to understand the strong connection Native peoples have to the land. Students write in a nature journal, compose descriptive essays and respond in writing to the texts covered. A final project addresses each student's sense of belonging.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Oratory. In this course, students read and analyze the texts of speeches throughout history through a rhetorical lens as we examine the foundational elements of a great speech. Throughout the semester, students write both analytically and creatively and engage in an extensive revision process that develops and sharpens their writing skills. Visual literacy is also explored and expanded through an examination of video recordings. Our goal is to enhance the skill and confidence our students have in written and oral communication. The class provides innovative instruction to help students refine their speech writing and delivery styles in small groups and in a classroom setting. The capstone project centers on writing, developing, and delivering a ten-minute-long speech to the Brooks School community. Students engage in a thorough analysis of historical speeches while receiving meaningful personal speaking instruction, which helps students to organize their thoughts, capture them on paper, and then deliver their speeches (and themselves) with purpose and confidence.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Picture This: Graphic Novels, Comics, and Zines. Images, like words, have long been used for storytelling. In this course, students will learn about the graphic novel: a genre of literature that employs both writing and visual art to create rich narrative tapestries. Texts covered include Art Spiegelman's *MAUS*, Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*, Charles Burns's *Black Hole*, and Joe Sacco's *Footnotes in Gaza*, among others. Each of these graphic novels offers a different voice, perspective, and artistic style. Visual literacy, creativity, cultural competency, and critical thinking will be key skills honed in this class. The course will culminate in a final project for which students will create short graphic novels of their own.

Major – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Public Voice: Mass Media and Journalism. (NEW for 2025-2026.) The role of independent media is more pertinent than ever. In this multidimensional course, students will have the opportunity to explore and apply the principles of civic journalism across a variety of media platforms. Citizen-centered reporting and reputable news is the cornerstone of a strong democracy. As these institutions are threatened by social media, political turbulence, and fake news, it will be young people's responsibility to preserve the ways in which people get their information. Public Voice will empower students to use media as a means for informed public engagement, meaningful conversation and constructive debate in an increasingly polarized world, and as tools to hold leaders and institutions accountable. Through hands-on experience, students will collaborate to produce some combination of media projects, including: a Brooks School newspaper (online & print), a podcast series, and programming and video broadcasts for school meetings. By the end of the course, students will have a comprehensive introduction to the challenges of modern journalism, media literacy, communication and critical thinking skills, and the power of storytelling, all within the context of a fast-paced, real world environment.

Major – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Racial Literacy and Advocacy: Fostering Social Justice at Brooks and Beyond. (NOT OFFERED in 2025-2026.) This course is designed to engage sixth-form students in critical discussions and analyses of social justice, with a particular focus on racial literacy. Through a blend of theoretical understanding and practical application, students will develop a nuanced perspective on social justice and the skills to analyze and address racial issues in their communities. A unique aspect of this class will be reviewing text through the lens of "endarkened storywork." The term "endarkened" refers to a conscious shift away from Eurocentric, colonized perspectives, moving towards a more inclusive and holistic understanding that values the perspectives, histories, and knowledge systems of non-dominant groups. The two key components of endarkened story work are *Collaboration & Community* (collaborative processes of developing written and oral storytelling in a community of inquiry and support; emphasizing the importance of relationship-building and collective wisdom in the pursuit of understanding and change) and *Narrative Analysis* (highlighting the importance of

narrative analysis of nonfiction and fictional works, particularly futurist narrative as a tool for empowerment, understanding, and change). This course fosters critical thinking, builds empathy and belonging, and prepares students for global citizenship.

Major – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices and Building the American Republic.

Shakespeare. In this seminar-styled, interdisciplinary course, students will examine three Shakespearean plays from a variety of genres. Through reading and watching films of the plays, students will consider how productions shift the meaning of the original material. Class members will also design some of their own productions in order to update the plays for the 21st century.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Women in Literature. This course examines myriad representations of women in texts by female-identifying authors. Students look at shifting representations of women in literature from the 18th century to the present, focusing on the portrayal of women as daughters, sisters, friends, wives, mothers, and alone in society through a variety of genres. Particular attention will be given to women who subvert societal norms or expectations of their time. Course texts may include *Mrs. Dalloway*, *Passing*, *The Bell Jar*, *Beloved*, *Fun Home*, *Little Fires Everywhere*, and selected short stories from *Interpreter of Maladies*. Essays and student-led discussions focus more particularly on specific writers and themes and stress the skills of close reading, annotation, research, and uses of multimedia.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

Poetry Seminar. Students in this course study examples, write original works and compile a final portfolio. Students use as a text *Visions and Voices*, a poetry anthology by Mark J. Shovan based on James Moffet's *Theory of Discourse*. Literary terminology, elements of prosody and a variety of poetic forms are examined and employed.

Major – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices.

AP English. This course in literary analysis prepares students for the Advanced Placement examination in English Literature. Texts for this course vary, and usually include works by Shakespeare and Faulkner.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Sixth Form – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Literature & Composition: American Voices and permission of the department.

Independent Study. This course is ordinarily open only to sixth formers and then by permission of the department, after approving a formal proposal submitted by the student. Meeting times are arranged in consultation between the student and the instructor.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Permission of the instructor and department.

History

In teaching history, Brooks School trains students to think for themselves. The role of a secondary school in a democratic republic is to prepare students for citizenship. Students must know how to ask questions, seek answers, and communicate their findings. That is, they must be their own historians. Our curriculum is built on the notion of steadily increasing responsibility and skill so students can take charge of their own education. The history department believes in the writing of research papers and encourages students to embark on independent study.

The sequence of required courses constitutes world history from late antiquity to the present. However, once students have demonstrated the ability to ask, seek, and communicate on a sophisticated level, they are encouraged to step up to the challenge of an advanced course or to explore another culture, preferably in a non-Western tradition.

All students are expected to follow the sequence of Pre-Modern World History, Global Humanities/Modern World History, and U.S. History unless exempted by the department. To qualify for an exemption, students must present evidence that they have mastered both the skills and the material covered in the specific course. The history department recommends that third-form students take one or both of the Pre-Modern World History elective courses before taking the required sequence starting in the fourth-form year. Unless a student is taking two languages (see General Policies), Global Humanities or Modern World History is required in the fourth form. Students entering the fifth form who have not completed a U.S. History course must take a Two semesters or secure department permission to be exempt.

Required History Sequence

Pre-Modern World History I and Pre-Modern World History II

In Pre-Modern World History, students learn how to read and annotate both primary and secondary history texts for understanding, and how to take effective notes. They learn to work collaboratively and practice presentation skills through different mediums. Students receive instruction on information literacy and scholarly reliability in cooperation with the school librarians. They learn how to craft thesis statements, topic sentences and body paragraphs. They work on multi-paragraph essays and familiarize themselves with citation practices from the Chicago Manual of Style before transitioning into a larger research paper project process. In this process, students learn to draft topic proposals, annotated bibliographies and outlines before completing a six-to-seven-page research paper in the spring semester. The descriptions below are of the topic areas covered; each description corresponds to one semester of Pre-Modern World History.

*Major (2 credits per semester) – Third Form – Two semesters.
No prerequisites.*

Death and Disease in the Ancient World. Did you know cat fat and fly droppings were remedies in Ancient Egypt? Or that Babylonian doctors thought sleeping next to a human skull for a week would end nightly teeth grinding? In this course, students examine how people of the ancient world came to view sickness and health. Studying doctors such as Hippocrates and Galen, students gain an understanding of the changing role of both physician and patient. This course also examines the roots of various medical methods, including the four humors of Western medicine and the importance of Yin and Yang in Chinese medicine. Ultimately, the course uses death and disease as a lens through which to better understand ancient culture.

Discovering Women of the Ancient World. Empires have been ruled by them, cults have idolized them and mythological wars have been fought over them: women in the ancient world. The veneration of fertility and the importance of motherhood has long provided for the recognition and celebration of half the world's population. However, patriarchal societies have also marginalized women in the public sphere and limited

their legal rights and ability to wield power. This course examines the lives and legacies of women across a number of early civilizations, both eastern and western, such as ancient China, India and Mesopotamia.

Explorers in the Ancient World. Before planes, trains and automobiles, people navigated the world by foot, horseback and boat. This course focuses on the travels of people from centuries BCE and considers geography, trade and the concept of globalization as students gain a window into ancient multicultural interactions. Students examine the motives for exploration, the means of transportation, and the challenges posed by ancient travel. The legacies of explorers, such as Pytheas of Greece and Nehsi of Egypt, are debated as their discoveries led to both prosperity and conflict. Students connect the past and present as they understand the impact that exploration, innovation and imperialism have had on the world.

Heroes and Villains of the Ancient Mediterranean. From Odysseus to Caesar, from Hannibal to Attila the Hun, the period from 1500 BCE to 500 CE was filled with warriors, thinkers and leaders who would go on to represent both the best and the worst of the worlds from which they came. In this course, students examine the civilizations that gave birth to some of the most infamous historical figures of the Ancient Mediterranean world and debate whether they should be remembered as heroes or villains. By examining the political, cultural and economic legacy of key individuals, students gain a greater understanding of the interplay between individuals and their larger civilizations.

Journeying the Silk Roads. Spanning more than 5,000 miles from China to the Mediterranean world, the Silk Roads linked pre-modern Eurasia for more than two millennia. This course focuses on the movement of trade, religions, cultural practices, art, technology, disease and people along the Silk Roads and considers how the natural environment shaped these exchanges. We explore Eurasia both through ancient travel narratives and the accounts of contemporary travelers. Along the way, we virtually visit great Silk Roads cities like Chang An, the oases of the Taklamakan, Samarkand, Baghdad, Damascus and Constantinople. So pack your bag, grab a map and put on your traveling shoes.

Making of the Muslim World. The 7th century saw the prophet Muhammad give voice to what would become a dominant world religion: Islam. His word, and that of Allah, extended into Asia, Africa and Europe and exerted significant social, political and cultural influence across continents. Spanning five hundred years, this course considers the life and work of Muhammad, the Islamic caliphate and the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties, the Sunni and Shia schism, and the Crusades in the 11th and 12th centuries.

Uncovering Ancient Africa. The Nile River gave birth to one of the earliest, longest-lasting and most influential civilizations on earth: Ancient Egypt. This course examines the power of the Nile, Egypt's emergence, unification and history under pharaonic rule, and its trade and conquest with, or at the hands of, Nubians, Hyksos and Assyrians. Sleuthing mummy mysteries, examining ancient engineering and deciphering hieroglyphs help us to understand Egyptians' henotheistic worship and fixation with the afterlife. We progress beyond the New Kingdom to investigate Greek, Roman and Arab occupation of Egypt during the early Common Era.

Unlocking Ancient Mesoamerica and South America. How important were ritual human sacrifices to the Aztecs, Mayans, and Incas? Why did the Mayans believe the world was going to end in 2012? What was the cultural significance of Machu Picchu for the Incas? Ancient Mesoamerican and South American civilizations were some of the most developed and complex in the ancient world; however, much history has been lost due to European conquest. Using current findings from archaeologists, anthropologists and historians, this course rebuilds the histories of these complex civilizations. We examine the political, cultural, and economic

developments of Mesoamerica and South America and also uncover the latest discoveries to help understand the long-term significance of these ancient cultures.

Modern World History & Global Humanities

Global Humanities: History. At the core of this class, students will explore the question, “what does it mean to be human?” This course, taught jointly by the History and English departments, is intended for new fourth-form and new repeat third-form NCAA students to help them meet the standards expected of the comparable English and History courses. The history sequence is a comparative study of political, economic, social and cultural history. Students learn to analyze source materials and construct historical arguments based on those sources. Concurrently, the English sequence of the course utilizes novels, short stories, poetry and drama; students develop critical skills that allow them to explore new cultures with sensitivity. This course exposes students to canonical and contemporary figures, both real and fictional, of non-western cultures to emphasize the universality of the human experience. This course will meet during two course blocks and students will receive credit in both History and English. In the first semester, we will work to understand how cultural diffusion shaped the world through the spread of religion, ideas, arts, and technology. The second semester includes an examination of justice and reconciliation in the 20th century through a study of revolutions, the World Wars and the Holocaust, decolonization, and the Cold War. Current events are interwoven in each unit of study.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth Form – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Placement evaluation and/or permission of the department.

Modern World History I: Foundations of Modern World History. This course explores the foundational events and themes that have shaped world history from 1350-1911 while simultaneously exploring the necessary historical thinking, analysis, and writing skills needed for success in the Brooks history curriculum. We begin in 1350, a time of upheaval as the Bubonic Plague has just swept through Eurasia. The plague left destruction throughout Asia and Europe and led to the creation of the Ming Dynasty in 1368 and the beginnings of the Renaissance in Europe. We end around 1911, with the colonial system through which Europe controls the world about to fall apart during World War I and the dynastic system in China shattered with the fall of the Qing Dynasty. In between, we will look at themes of trade, revolution, and colonization as the world grows into a unified globe.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth Form (Fifth Form by permission) – One semester.

Prerequisite: Pre-Modern World History sequence or permission of the department.

Modern World History II: Making of the Modern World. In Making of the Modern World, students will explore the themes of the modern world with a focus on a particular region. Students will work on projects relating to worldwide events as they further develop their writing, discussion, primary source analysis, and research skills. Students will share their regional projects with one another to gain a deeper understanding of the interconnectedness of the modern world. Key unifying events to be covered in this course include World War I, the Great Depression, World War II, the Cold War, and post-colonialism. The course focuses primarily on 1911 to the present, though for context, individual courses may delve further back in time to provide a foundation for events in their region. The descriptions below are of the topic areas covered; each corresponds to a section of Making of the Modern World.

Major (2 credits) – Fourth Form (Fifth Form by permission) – One semester.

Prerequisite: Pre-Modern World History sequence & Modern World History I or permission of the department.

Making of the Modern World: China and Japan

In 1911, China overthrew its centuries-old dynastic system and was embroiled in warfare between opposing groups struggling for power. Japan was beginning its slow rise from isolated island to imperialist power. Yet, today China is once again a global superpower and Japan is a technological giant with minimal military. What caused these dramatic changes of fortune? This course will examine the successes and struggles of these two

East Asia powerhouses and the conflicts between them that defined much of 20th-century Asia and led to their current standing in the world.

Making of the Modern World: The Middle East

The region commonly referred to as the Middle East has a beautiful and complex history. This course develops an understanding of major political, economic, religious, and cultural events, issues and conflicts dating from colonization and imperialism to the present. We will examine the impacts and consequences of colonization in Saudi Arabia, Palestine/Israel, and Iran as well as the cultural and religious histories in this region. This course concludes with a student-driven research project on a current event/topic.

Making of the Modern World: Modern India

India, one of the fastest-growing nations in the world, is rapidly changing and modernizing. Yet this subcontinent is divided with over 19,000 languages and dialects spoken, 9 major faiths practiced, and over 1.3 billion people. How did India become an independent nation? How has India modernized so quickly? This course will start with a consideration of the British East India Company and the British Raj. We will then study the road to independence, partition, and present-day. We explore the history, culture, politics and economy of this subcontinent. We will delve into the impacts of colonialism, nationalism, partition, and the modern state as well as interactions with key religious identities and regions within India and Asia.

Making of the Modern World: Sub-Saharan Africa

Modern Africa returns to the advent of the transatlantic trade to look at how the African Diaspora has shaped various regions differently. The course will examine the distinct differences between the regions of Africa starting with West Africa and the slave trade, East Africa during decolonization post World War, South Africa for development of Apartheid, returning to West Africa for the Cold War and Kwame Nkrumah. Throughout the exploration, we will examine how the European definition of race, the African Diaspora, and Imperialism have shaped the countries of Africa and how Africa has sought to decolonize politically, economically, and socially in recent years. Students will leave with a greater understanding of contemporary issues in Africa and the history behind these ideas.

Making of the Modern World: Understanding the Americas

This course will explore the developments during the twentieth century to the present in the Americas, with a focus on events occurring in Latin America, the Caribbean, and South America. Beginning with a grounding in the rationales for the Haitian and Latin American revolutions of the early 19th century and their long-term effects on their neighbors, specific attention will be paid to the unique experiences of different nations in these regions as they emerged as independent nations and maneuvered their own unique paths in their postcolonial periods. The cultural heritage of each nation studied will be explored including pertinent issues of race, ethnicity, class, and gender.

Honors Modern World History. The honors level of Modern World History I & II will cover the same basic course content, but will focus more deeply on development of the college-level reading and in-class essay writing that students will need if they choose to take AP U.S. History. Students will be recommended by the department, but any student who wishes to take on the added challenge will be accepted. The course descriptions above will still apply. One or two regional areas will be selected to be the honors section(s) each year.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth Form (Fifth Form by permission) – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Pre-Modern World History sequence or permission of the department.

United States History

Building the American Republic. This course is a survey of U.S. history from the colonial period to Reconstruction. The focus is on the political and economic development of the American Republic. Major topics include colonial America, the American Revolution, the Constitution, slavery, the Civil War, and Reconstruction.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth Form (Fourth Form by permission) – One semester.

Prerequisite: Modern World History or permission of the department.

The American Century. This is a continuation of U.S. history from the Gilded Age to the present. Political and economic development and the modernization of the United States are emphasized. Major topics include industrialization, imperialism, progressivism, the Great Depression, the World Wars; the Cold War; and the Civil Rights Movement. The required sequence of the two electives prepares students for the SAT subject test in United States history.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth Form (Fourth Form by permission) – One semester.

Prerequisite: Building the American Republic or permission of the department.

AP United States History. This course is taught as an introductory-level college course. Students are challenged to read and write intensively, with understanding and skill. They must be facile with both facts and ideas. Much self-discipline and dedication are required to stay abreast of the daily assignments, review regularly and prepare a substantial research paper. Students take this course to prepare for the Advanced Placement examination in United States History.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Modern World History, Global Humanities, or equivalent, and permission of the department.

History Electives

Semester-long history electives

African-American Studies. Grounded in discussion, reading, and research, students in this course will explore the historical roots of African-American culture. Co-taught by two Black women, this course intends to reframe how African-American history is taught by emphasizing joy and lifting stories, instead of highlighting trauma. This course will begin with the four great migrations that made “African” America, move into the Harlem Renaissance, and end with the influence of Pan-Africanism. Students will deepen their understanding of the African-American experience through social, economic, political and artistic lenses. Guests and speakers in class and the wider Brooks school community will be part of the experience. Students will also explore literary works by Berlin, Hughes, Hurston, Faucet, Adichie, and more. This course will be complemented by a second part in the Semester 2 for English credit that will discuss Black voice in government, activism and resistance, and pop culture.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

Civics: Elections and Campaigning. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) Who runs for political office and what leads to their success? This course will examine United States political campaigns and elections. Specific attention will be given to the role of money, the media, interest groups, political parties, voter demographics, and how voters make decisions through the course of a campaign cycle. Students will learn about campaign finance and the Supreme Court decisions that have shaped our campaigns and elections. History and current events will be discussed, as students debate issues ranging from the merits of the electoral college to the viability of a third-party candidate.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

Civics: Federalism and Local Politics. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) In this course, students will think about the challenges presented to the Founders of the nation as they balanced local interests with those of the nation. As the United States has grown, this balance has shifted over time and federalism has shaped the nation's past, present and future. This course examines political issues and institutions at municipal, state and national levels. Students will discuss political culture, demographics, state elections, political parties and public policies. Regional values and corresponding governmental policies vary greatly across America. Studying Massachusetts's legislation on marriage equality, marijuana legalization and healthcare provide case studies to better understand how decisions made at the state level can affect national discourse.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

Civics: The Supreme Court, Justice, and Society. This course will explore the evolution of the interpretation of rights by the Supreme Court. We will explore landmark court cases. This will include minority rights, women's rights, rights of the accused, property rights, LGBTQ+ rights and reproductive rights. We will explore these cases through an in-depth look at the Court and its rulings including written court opinions, amicus curiae briefs, and oral arguments.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

Civics: The Supreme Court and the First Amendment. This course will explore the evolution of the interpretation of first amendment rights by the Supreme Court. This will include a number of first amendment topics. What is permissible and non-permissible speech? Is flag burning beyond first amendment protection? How has the Court balanced a free press with national security and censorship? Why are libel, slander, incitement to crime and violence, and obscenity outside of first amendment protection? We will explore these cases through an in-depth look at the court and its rulings including written court opinions, amicus curiae briefs, and oral arguments.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

Criminal Justice. The course examines how crime and punishment have been defined, represented, and constituted in the United States. The course will begin with an overview of the historical development of criminal law and legal institutions such as law enforcement, the courts, and the correctional system, followed by a consideration of contemporary practices of policing, surveillance, and incarceration. Topics to be studied include historical and contemporary expressions of race, class, gender, sexuality, and national identity in and around the criminal justice system, as well as philosophies of punishment and alternatives to punishment. By the end of the course, students will be able to explain and interrogate aspects of criminal law and legal institutions and experiment with quantitative and qualitative research methods.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

Economic History I: Colonialism to World War II. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) This class is about the history of our modern economic world. What were the technological, social and political developments that turned a society of home producers and merchants into a world of consumers and corporations? We will examine the history of merchant trading and how it developed into laissez-faire capitalism with the first industrial revolution. We will learn about the effects of wealth accumulation and the changing division of labor on owning and working classes. We will study the origins of the Lowell system and its subsequent transformations with steam power and the second industrial revolution. We will learn about how laissez-faire economic philosophy in the gilded age led to boom-bust business cycles, accelerating attempts to organize labor, and the culture of conspicuous consumption. Throughout this history, we will study how the class structure influenced and was changed by these economic developments. We will draw on

historical and economic scholarship, historical documents and artifacts, in-class simulations and games, and cultural products like novels, movies and art.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

Economic History II: The Cold War to the Present. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) This is a class in the political economy of the United States since the Great Depression. Topics include economic growth trends from the 1920s onward and the technological, societal and geopolitical forces that accompany them. We will study the history of banking, taxation, market regulation and infrastructure investment. We will learn about macroeconomic models of economic growth and development as well as fiscal and monetary policy in order to explain the world as we live in it now and the trends that will take us forward. We will learn tools for doing social and economic history and we will examine the history of economic thought and policy as it shaped and was shaped by historical events. Topics of study may also include the histories of inequality, economic development, war and peace, and international trade; the history of change in labor force composition and participation; and historical debates about the ethics of redistribution and economic justice. We will draw on historical and economic scholarship, historical documents and artifacts, in-class simulations and games, and cultural products like novels, movies and art.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

Environmental History. (NOT OFFERED in 2025-2026.) Wildfires. Sea level rise. Species extinction. Pollution. Plastic everywhere. Environmental inequality. Climate change. We live today in a world filled with huge environmental problems. We also inhabit a place and time of great ecological possibility. How did we get to this moment? As an answer to this question, this course will provide an overview of the field of environmental history, which looks at ideas about nature, actual ecology and ecosystems, and political fights and movements such as environmentalism itself. Nearly all history is environmental history, as we are and have always been part of nature. We will explore topics and issues such as foodways, food systems and agriculture; non-human animals; disease; climate and climate change; energy and energy systems, including nuclear power, and also nuclear weapons and the larger Atomic Age; conservationism, preservationism, environmentalism, and environmental activism; environmental racism and environmental justice; environmental economics, law, and policy; and many others. Through readings, discussions, and research, we will gain a better understanding of the ways in which the natural world (including us) has been and very much still is a key part of events on this planet. We'll get a better sense of how we got to today, and where we might go from here.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

History of Human Rights. This course explores the history of human rights at both the national and international levels. This course begins by discussing what it means to be a human and considers what rights should be universal and inalienable. Using case studies, students also explore violations of human rights where discrimination has been based on stereotypes, race, minority groups, gender, disability, and ethnicity. Within these case studies, we discuss the development of human rights theories and practices, early efforts at an international response, and the creation of a modern human rights agenda. Students examine humanitarian interventions in Rwanda, South Africa (Apartheid), Darfur, Nazi Germany (Holocaust/Nuremberg Trials), and the United States (Civil Rights). Each of these places has undergone a violation of human rights with regard to either wars of aggression, war crimes, or crimes against humanity. In addition, students examine globalization, terrorism, and the role of the United States and the United Nations in the current human rights debate.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

Introduction to Psychology. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) This course will introduce students to the various branches within this social science including social psychology, health psychology, abnormal psychology, and developmental psychology. Students will become familiar with the most significant figures behind major findings in the field of psychology. While this interdisciplinary course will unravel the science behind human behavior, students will also be challenged to strengthen their research and writing skills and engage in critical discourse. Each unit will include critical analysis of research which will address ethical guidelines and the role of limitations and the level of inclusivity of the participants in overall findings. As we explore aspects of social psychology, the course will address how innate bias and prejudice play a role in human-to-human interaction. Moreover, through topics of clinical psychology, students will become familiar with how socioeconomic status often determines one's access to appropriate mental health care and education.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

Middle Eastern Studies. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) This course examines the history of the Middle East and develops an understanding of major political, economic, religious, and cultural events, issues and conflicts from the post-colonial era to the present. We focus on five countries/case studies including women's rights in Saudi Arabia, the Palestine/Israel conflict, the causes and consequences of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the rise of ISIS and recent developments in the region. The course will culminate in independent student research.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement and permission of the department.

More Than a Game: The History of Sports and Culture. This course will examine the influence sports has had on social and political change, highlighting individuals, countries, and organizational movements. The course will begin with the first Olympic games and will move through world history, with a focus on athletic turning points leading to the present day. Some topics that will be included are the history of the Olympic games, the fight for racial and gender equality, and individual activism. Students will have the opportunity to read a wide range of primary documents, examine videos about athletes, and read oral histories.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

Native American Studies. (NOT OFFERED in 2025-2026.) Native Americans are the focus of two major, conflicting myths in the United States. The first myth is that they are gone, no longer here. The second myth is that they are everywhere, all over the place, in movies, on TV, selling butter, representing sports teams. The field of Native American Studies developed in part as a response to myths like these. Native Americans are still here—and just about everywhere else, too—but just not in forms that many Americans encounter or recognize. Native American Studies corrects these misperceptions by focusing on the real stories of past and present Native peoples. In this course we will look at the long and diverse histories of Native Americans on this continent. We will explore the ongoing richness of Native life, as well as political fights for Native rights. We will engage with popular culture, art, music, history, and memory as ways to recognize and see true experiences of Native peoples. We will even return to some of the myths about Native Americans, using the voices, ideas, and thinking of Native peoples to both show how and why these myths are inaccurate, and also why they have been so pervasive and powerful. Through readings, discussions, and research, we will gain a better understanding of Native America.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

Race, Gender and Class in America. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) In this course, students will use historical case studies to explore the gap between American ideals and the reality of inequality and discrimination based on race, gender, and class. Topics of reading and discussion include the O.J. Simpson case, Leonard Peltier, the death penalty,

the coeducation movement, busing, and Title IX. Students are required to write a substantial research paper and make an oral presentation of their work.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement and permission of the department.

21st-Century United States History. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) This course examines important social, political, cultural, and economic events in U.S. History since the year 2000 through the lenses of power, race, gender, and class. In addition, students will look at issues facing historians and teachers of U.S. History today. Thus, we seek to understand both the state of the country and the state of the profession. What role should history and historians play in guiding citizens and leaders? What can we learn from the past to change the present? Is there hope for the United States? Among the topics discussed: white supremacy, the 2000 election, the Supreme Court, the war on terror, poverty, Presidents Obama & Trump, the Great Recession, climate change, the status of Native Americans, protest movements, higher education, *The 1619 Project*, the Flint water crisis, immigration, American foreign policy, higher education, gender inequality, and the COVID pandemic.

Major (2 credits) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement.

Full-year history electives

Advanced History Capstone Seminar. Designed for students who wish to pursue history at a collegiate level of excellence, this course will teach students the methods of a historian and allow them to use those techniques to pursue advanced research in a subject of their choosing. For this year-long course, students will submit an area of interest the spring before the class. The instructor will use student interests to shape the contents of the readings each year. In the fall, readings will be taken from academic-level history journals such as the *American Historical Review*. Students will learn to write abstracts, article and book reviews, and literature reviews to aid them in acquiring the methods of a historian and the background research they will need to produce an advanced college-level history paper. In the winter and spring, students will then research and write their own original primary source research paper and learn to critique and provide feedback to their fellow students on their work. The course will culminate with a defense before the faculty and a presentation of these papers to the school community. When appropriate students will also pursue venues to have their papers published in an appropriate academic journal. Because the intensity and depth of this class will go beyond the AP, this course will receive AP weighting.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Sixth Form – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Prior AP history coursework or permission of the department.

AP Art History. (NOT OFFERED in 2025-2026.) This course is an introduction to the development of painting, sculpture and architecture from the ancient world to the modern period. With visits to local museums, students will learn to analyze works of art within their historical context, considering the ways that such factors as politics, religion, patronage, economics, gender, race, and ethnicity impact artists and the work they make. As students gain a foundational knowledge about artmaking around the globe, the conversation broadens further. Contemplating such themes as definitions of beauty, humanity's relationship to nature, narratives about the afterlife, and images of power, for example, the course will explore differences and similarities across cultures and time. Students who take this course also prepare for the Advanced Placement examination in Art History.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Sixth Form – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement and permission of the department.

AP United States Government and Politics. This course introduces students to the institutions and procedures of the American political system, the roles of the three branches of the federal government, the operation of state and local systems and the interrelationship of government at its various levels. Students take this course to prepare for the Advanced Placement examination in United States Government and Politics. This course will also use supplemental

material beyond the AP curriculum to address how equity, inclusion and resistance influence our governmental systems.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Sixth Form – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement and permission of the department.

Independent Study. Students may propose projects at or away from the school under the supervision of a member of the department.

Major (2 credits) – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history requirement and permission of the instructor and department.

Exchange Program

Exchange Program. This course is the academic component of the Exchange Program. The purpose of the course is to prepare students to participate as active, informed and inquisitive ambassadors, and upon their return, to constructively reflect upon their experiences with the Brooks community. Students apply in November for six- to nine-week stays in the spring at our sister schools in Botswana, France, Hungary, Scotland, and Spain; or in the summer at our sister school in Peru. Selection is competitive. The course is required for those selected.

Minor (1 credit) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Application and acceptance to the Brooks School Exchange Program.

Mathematics

Mathematics is a combination of science, language and art. The math department strongly believes that it is only through early discipline that creativity is possible. Students learn formulas, translate words into symbols, and finally graph the results. Introductory courses teach the fundamentals, enabling students to manipulate numbers and formulas with confidence. Intermediate courses reiterate previously learned concepts while building upon definitions and terminology. In the process, students develop models, turning data into equations, defining their meanings, and depicting them on graphs. From this, a larger picture appears in which individual topics merge into a coherent whole. At the upper level, the study of calculus provides the backdrop for the use of statistical measures, derivations, rigorous proof, and real-world applications.

A note on calculators: The Brooks School mathematics department uses the Texas Instruments TI-83 or TI-84 graphing calculator and overhead in all levels of mathematics. By allowing the calculator to do the tedious arithmetic, students have a greater opportunity to more thoroughly understand the concepts involved, to find more than one solution method, and to recognize relationships between the algebraic and graphical solutions. The mathematics department requires that all students have a TI-83 or TI-84 graphing calculator. The TI-89 is a very different kind of calculator and is useful in the upper-level mathematics courses. A departmental statement on calculator use is introduced to all students at the start of the school year.

Required Mathematics Sequence

First Year Algebra. The first semester introduces the language of algebra and functions while emphasizing reading, writing, and evaluating algebraic expressions. In addition, it deals with the fundamental operations of polynomials, linear equations, and linear inequalities. The second semester covers linear systems, quadratic equations, factoring, fractional equations, radicals, and radical equations.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Third or Fourth Form – Two semesters.

No prerequisites.

Geometry. The first semester introduces students to the terms, definitions, postulates, and theorems that form the basis of Euclidean geometry. It also explores the notion of formal proofs. Topics covered include parallel lines, congruent triangles, similar triangles, right triangles, and polygons. The second semester covers right triangle trigonometry, oblique triangle trigonometry, circles, area of planar figures, surface areas and volumes of three-dimensional objects, and an introduction to vectors and/or matrices. In both semesters, students utilize Geometer Sketchpad.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Third, Fourth, or Fifth Form – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: First Year Algebra or placement test by permission of the department.

Honors section(s) by department invitation.

Algebra 2 and Functions. (REVISED for 2025-2026.) The first semester reviews, reinforces, and explores more deeply the concepts of a first-year algebra course. The concept of functions, particularly linear and quadratic functions, is more fully developed. The second semester explores the logarithmic, exponential, rational, irrational, and variation functions. The study of sequences, series, and probability completes the course. There is an emphasis on modeling realistic examples from life and using the full capabilities of the graphing calculator.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: First Year Algebra and Geometry, or placement test by permission of the department.

Honors section(s) by department invitation.

Algebra 2. (REVISED for 2025-2026.) This course reviews, reinforces, and explores more deeply the concepts of a first-year algebra course, with a heavy focus on building arithmetic and pre-algebra skills. The course reaches back, as necessary, to simultaneously firm up students' foundation and push forward with new concepts. Students will be introduced to linear, quadratic, polynomial, radical, rational, exponential, and logarithmic functions.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: First Year Algebra and Geometry, or placement test by permission of the department.

Honors section(s) by department invitation.

Further Mathematics Study

Pre-Calculus. This two-semester course serves as an introduction to the elements of Pre-Calculus. It is designed for students who have not been recommended for the Advanced Pre-Calculus course. It is also designed for those who may be interested in pursuing the non-Advanced Placement Calculus course or math electives during the following year. Topics include the study of polynomial, exponential, logarithmic and trigonometric functions. The graphing calculator is used extensively, and students create mathematical models to solve realistic problems. The syllabus also includes some preparation for the SAT subject tests.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Second Year Algebra, Algebra 2, or Algebra 2 and Functions.

Advanced Pre-Calculus. The first semester of this course continues the study begun in Second Year Algebra of the modeling of linear, quadratic, logarithmic, exponential, and variation functions. Composite and inverse functions are also examined. The trigonometric and circular functions are also introduced in this course. The second semester studies trigonometric equations and identities; non-right triangle trigonometry; conic sections; complex numbers; polar numbers, equations and graphs; parametric equations and graphs; sequences and series; probability; and vectors.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Second Year Algebra or Algebra 2 and Functions and permission of the department.

Honors Advanced Pre-Calculus and Differential Calculus. This full-year course is a fast-paced and rigorous introduction to Pre-Calculus. It is designed to be the first year of a two-year program that concludes with the study of AP Calculus (BC). This course is open only to students who have been invited by the mathematics department.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Honors Second Year Algebra or Honors Algebra 2 and Functions and permission of the department.

Calculus. This is a full-year course that introduces students to the elements of calculus. It is designed for students who do not elect to study the Advanced Placement curriculum. A thorough understanding of pre-calculus is required.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Pre-Calculus or Advanced Pre-Calculus and permission of the department.

Applied Mathematics. (NEWLY ADDED for 2025-2026; expected to run in 2026-2027.) This course addresses a number of areas of life in which math appears. Topics may vary from year to year based on the interests of the class and at the discretion of the instructor. Appropriate topics for the course include the mathematics of financial decision making, probability and the likelihood of possible events in life, the fair division of resources, Fibonacci and sequences in nature, and voting methods. The pedagogical approach is more hands-on and students will engage in more projects than in earlier, more theoretical math classes.

Major (2 credits per semester) – All forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Second Year Algebra, Algebra 2, or Algebra 2 and Functions.

Probability and Statistics. Students develop the skills to collect, analyze and interpret data, as well as develop proficiency in the use of spreadsheets. We are inundated by numbers that communicate powerful messages. As a citizen in today's society, one must be able to interpret the real story behind the numbers. Likewise, given the overwhelming amount of data available to us, we must be able to make sense of the data – to tell its story. This is not a math-intensive course, but rather a class focused on building analytic skills and writing stories about data. Students complete several projects, at least one of which is based on data of the student's own choosing.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters (may be taken separately)

Prerequisite: Second Year Algebra, Algebra 2, or Algebra 2 and Functions.

AP Statistics. This year-long course introduces students to the major concepts and tools for collecting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from data. There are four themes in the AP Statistics course: exploring data, sampling and experimentation, anticipating patterns, and statistical inference. Students use technology, investigations, problem-solving, and writing as they build conceptual understanding. All students are required to take the Advanced Placement examination.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Pre-Calculus or Advanced Pre-Calculus and permission of the department.

AP Microeconomics. This year-long course offers the equivalent of a one-semester college-level introductory microeconomics curriculum. The course will prepare students for the Advanced Placement Microeconomics examination. Beyond the AP Microeconomics curriculum, students will be exposed to utility theories driving consumer choice, game theory as it applies to the strategic actions of firms, and econometric methods. The goal of the course is to present and test through experimentation the basic theories explaining consumer behavior, resource allocation and organizational decision-making.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Advanced Pre-Calculus and permission of the department.

AP Calculus (AB). This course follows closely the syllabus as outlined by the Advanced Placement program of The College Board. The first semester includes the topics of limits and derivatives with attention given to the concept of rate of change, optimization and graphing techniques. The second semester continues with work in trigonometric, exponential and logarithmic functions. It also explores the concept of the integral and all of its applications including the fundamental theorem of calculus. Students need to have done honors-level work in Pre-Calculus and must have departmental permission to gain entrance to this course. All students are required to take the Advanced Placement examination.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Honors grade in Advanced Pre-Calculus and permission of the department.

AP Calculus (BC). This course continues the study of calculus begun in the second semester of Honors Advanced Pre-Calculus and Differential Calculus. After completing the course work as defined in AP Calculus (AB), students proceed to the more advanced topics for the AP Calculus (BC) examination. These topics include infinite series, Taylor series, differential equations, delta-epsilon proofs, vector analysis, length of curves, surface area, advanced integration techniques, and parametric functions.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms (Fourth by permission) – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Honors Advanced Pre-Calculus and permission of the department.

Multivariable Calculus. The first semester of this full-year course includes vector algebra and geometry, cylindrical and spherical coordinates, three-dimensional surfaces, vector functions, velocity and acceleration, speed, tangent and normal vectors, arc length and curvature. The second semester covers functions of several variables, partial

differentiation, grad, div, curl, tangent plane, normal line, level curves/surfaces, extrema and Lagrange's method, multiple integrals, change of variables, Jacobian applications, vector analysis, and more complex differential equations.

Major – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: AP Calculus (BC) and permission of the department.

Engineering: Product Design. Students have a hands-on introduction to the product design process from conceptualization to prototype construction through 3D printing and testing. Students learn many skills including engineering graphics communications, technical sketching, and CAD (Computer-Aided Design). Students work in groups and learn to function effectively in a team.

Major – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Permission of the department.

Prospective DI/II athletes, please note that this course is not NCAA-approved. Contact the academic office or the college counseling office with questions.

Engineering: Digital Design. Students have a hands-on introduction to the principles and practices of digital design, one of the first core courses in the discipline of electrical and computer engineering in college. Students study topics such as analog vs. digital, different number systems, Boolean algebra, transistor network design, combinational circuits, sequential circuits and more. Design methodology using both discrete components (using breadboard) and hardware description languages (using FPGA) is implemented in the laboratory portion of the course.

Major – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Permission of the department.

Prospective DI/II athletes, please note that this course is not NCAA-approved. Contact the academic office or the college counseling office with questions.

Independent Study: Topics. This semester-long course allows a student to propose to study a topic in mathematics. Ideally, the topic will be of mutual interest with a member of the department.

Major or Minor – Sixth Form – One semester.

Prerequisite: Written permission of the department head and instructor.

Computer Science

Introduction to Computer Science. This hands-on, semester-long course gives students a foundation in the theory and practice of computer programming and also how the Internet works. We will explore concepts that are common to almost all programming languages including algorithms, functions, parameters, debugging, and abstraction. Simulations are used to understand how the Internet works and scales. This course can be taken as a stand-alone semester or as a prerequisite to AP Computer Science Principles.

Major – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – One semester.

No prerequisites.

Creative Coding. In this highly visual semester-long course, students explore concepts in computer programming by creating art and real-world simulations using a JavaScript framework called p5js. Topics include generative art, arrays, object-oriented programming, physical simulations, and more. The results are stunning visual renderings that appear in the browser, and the possibilities are endless. This is a project-based course that combines technical proficiency with creative freedom.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Introduction to Computer Science or AP Computer Science Principles and Algebra 1.

Web Development. This course introduces the student to modern web development. While using the latest industry tools, you will learn about the technologies that deliver web applications to users: HTML/CSS, object-oriented Javascript, server-side programming, SQL databases, GitHub, and other topics. In the process, real-world practices of modern development teams will be employed. The course is project-based and allows for creative freedom.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Introduction to Computer Science or placement test and permission of the instructor.

Data Science. In this semester-long course, students use computer code to store, extract, and analyze data in order to derive information and insight. Topics include Python language basics, exploratory data analysis, data visualization and machine learning. In particular, machine learning (ML) is an emergent field that solves problems that were virtually impossible a generation ago. The course uses real data from a variety of sources and uses the latest technologies to handle these data.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Second Year Algebra and two semesters of Computer Science courses, or permission of the department.

AP Computer Science A. This year-long course introduces students to computer science through programming. Fundamental topics include the design of solutions to problems, the use of data structures to organize large sets of data, the development and implementation of algorithms to process data and discover new information, the analysis of potential solutions, and the ethical and social implications of computing systems. The course emphasizes object-oriented programming and design using the Java programming language. Students should have a foundation of mathematical reasoning including basic linear functions, composition of functions, and problem-solving strategies that require multiple approaches and collaborative efforts. All students are required to take the Advanced Placement examination in May.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Second Year Algebra, AP Computer Science Principles, and/or permission of the department.

Science

Living in a highly technological society requires that all students have some background in the sciences. Thus the major objectives of the Science Department are:

- To create an interest in and help students understand a body of useful scientific knowledge of the organic and inorganic worlds.
- To train students in the scientific approach – critical thought, inductive and deductive reasoning to solve problems.
- To give the student sufficient background in a specific science to continue study at a higher level.
- To help the student prepare for Advanced Placement examinations in science.
- To develop skills in scientific writing.

In Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Anatomy & Physiology, there are honors sections that are so designated on a student's transcript. Students enter honors sections by invitation of the Department.

Foundational Laboratory Science Sequence

Physics. This foundational course delves into the key subjects of physics and engineering, placing a strong emphasis on the conceptual understanding and mathematical applications of general concepts. With an aim to improve problem-solving abilities, students will learn the application of physics concepts using engineering principles and hands-on projects. Computers play a significant role in this course and will be used for data collection, analysis, simulations, research, and practice exams. Topics covered include but are not limited to mechanics, the characteristics of matter, waves and optics, and electricity and magnetism. Upon completion of the course, students will have a solid foundation to move on to more advanced science courses, including engineering, chemistry, and biology.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Third, Fourth and Fifth Forms – Two semesters.

No prerequisites.

Honors section(s) by department invitation.

Advanced section(s) by department invitation and with prerequisites of 1st Year Algebra & Geometry

Chemistry. This foundational course in the natural sciences covers the properties and behavior of matter and the principles of chemical reactions. Topics include the periodic table, chemical formulas and equations, acid-base reactions, thermochemistry, and chemical bonding. Students learn through a combination of lectures, laboratory experiments, and problem-solving exercises, developing critical thinking and analytical skills that are essential for future studies in science and engineering. The course also provides a basis for further studies in related fields, including biology, environmental science and biochemistry.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Physics or equivalent.

Honors section(s) by department invitation.

Biology. This biology course adopts an analytical perspective and focuses on four main areas: cell biology, molecular biology, evolution, and ecology. Through lectures, labs and projects, students will explore important topics such as cell structure and function, the cell cycle, genetics, DNA, biodiversity and ecosystems. The course is designed to promote critical thinking and encourage students to form their own conclusions through the application of the scientific method. Students will participate in hands-on investigative work, including asking questions, conducting experiments, and documenting their findings within the scientific field.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Physics and Chemistry or permission of the department.

Honors section(s) by department invitation.

Further Science Study

AP Biology. This course is designed to provide an experience equivalent to a two-semester college introductory biology sequence. Students will develop analytical skills and a conceptual and factual framework appropriate to a beginning biology undergraduate major. Preparation for this class is rigorous as the content covers topics including biochemistry, cellular biology, molecular biology, genetics, evolution and ecology. At the end of the course, students will have an awareness of the integration of other sciences in the study of biology, understand how the species to which we belong is similar to, yet different from, other species, and be knowledgeable and responsible citizens in understanding biological issues that could potentially impact their lives. All students take the Advanced Placement examination which may lead to credit and/or advanced placement in college.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Physics, Chemistry, Honors Biology and permission of the department.

AP Chemistry. This advanced placement course covers topics introduced in Honors Chemistry in greater depth, and is the equivalent of a first-year college chemistry course. As such, students study college texts and laboratory experiments and gain valuable preparation for any further science courses. All students take the Advanced Placement Chemistry examination, which may lead to college credit and/or advanced placement. Topics covered include atomic and molecular structure, chemical equilibria, chemical kinetics, thermodynamics and electrochemistry. Laboratory work is a key component of this course.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Honors Chemistry, Second Year Algebra and permission of the department.

AP Physics 2. (NEW for 2025-2026.) This two-semester, college-level physics course covers topics beyond mechanics. Presuming a foundation of mechanics typically learned through a prior full-year physics course, AP Physics 2 begins with thermodynamics and proceeds through electricity, magnetism, and optics before moving on to modern physics topics including radioactive decay, mass-energy equivalence, and the properties of waves and particles. The mathematics used in this course requires a solid foundation in algebra and may include trigonometry and differentiation. AP Physics 2 is a two-semester, college-level physics course covering topics beyond mechanics. Students will also explore supplementary concepts like systems, fields, force interactions, change, conservation, and probability. At the end of the course, students will be prepared to take the AP Physics 2: Algebra-Based examination. Students who have completed a calculus course may choose to also prepare individually for the calculus-based AP Physics C: Mechanics or AP Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism exams.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Physics, completion of the science requirement, and permission of the department.

AP Environmental Science. This college-level course provides a framework for understanding the complex interactions between the physical environment and human populations globally and locally, long-term and short-term. The fast-paced, demanding class covers topics including ecology, population growth, chemistry of the atmosphere, water quality, energy resources, agricultural productivity, biodiversity and environmental ethics. Self-motivated and curious students will find opportunities for independent research and projects in addition to the laboratory work required in the class. All students take the Advanced Placement Environmental Science examination.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Completion of the science requirement and permission of the department.

AP Psychology. (NEW for 2025-2026.) This course introduces students to the systematic and scientific study of human behavior and mental processes. While considering the studies that have shaped the field, students explore and apply psychological theories, key concepts, and phenomena associated with major units of study, including biological bases of behavior, cognition, development, learning, social psychology, personality, and mental and physical health.

Throughout the course, students apply psychological concepts and employ psychological research methods and data interpretation to evaluate claims, consider evidence, and effectively communicate ideas.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Completion of the science requirement and permission of the department.

AP Physics C: Mechanics. (NOT OFFERED IN 2025-2026.) This course is designed for the student wishing to specialize in a physical science or any of the engineering disciplines including civil, mechanical, electrical or biomedical engineering. All students take the Advanced Placement Physics C-Mechanics examination. Students explore topics in the six following content areas: kinematics, Newton's laws of motion, work, power and energy systems, circular motion and rotation, oscillations, and gravitation. The course focuses on the application of introductory differential and integral calculus to solve problems related to the topics above. The course utilizes guided inquiry and student-centered learning to foster the development of critical-thinking skills through problem-solving and independent lab work.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Physics, Chemistry and Biology, as well as Calculus (may be taken concurrently).

AP Physics C: Electricity & Magnetism. (NOT OFFERED in 2025-2026.) This precalculus/calculus-based, college-level physics course is especially appropriate for students planning to specialize or major in one of the physical sciences or engineering. Topics beyond the AP curriculum allow students to get a more complete background in physics. Students cultivate their understanding of physics through classroom study and activities as well as hands-on laboratory work as they explore concepts like change, force interactions, fields, and conservation. This cultivation is done through the content concepts of fluids, electricity and magnetism, circuits, optics, and modern physics. Students will also explore supplementary concepts like systems, fields, force interactions, change, conservation, waves, and probability. At the end of the course, students are expected to take the AP Physics C: Electricity & Magnetism exam.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisites: Physics, Chemistry and Biology, as well as Calculus (may be taken concurrently).

Anatomy and Physiology. This full-year course surveys the structure and function of the major systems of the human body including skeletal, muscular, nervous, endocrine, immune, cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive, and excretory. Laboratory work and dissections plus case studies, student presentations, and projects are an integral part of this course. Students also have an opportunity to learn more about careers in medicine and health through partnerships with health professionals who work in the Merrimack Valley and Boston. The final project of the course is the completion of a rabbit dissection.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – Two semesters.

Prerequisite: Physics, Chemistry and Biology, and permission of the department.

Honors section(s) by department invitation.

Animal Behavior and Zoology. This semester-long course explores the tremendous diversity of animal life and the interconnectedness of different animal species with each other and with humans. The first part of the course explores the classification and characteristics of all the animal phyla, with an emphasis on the evolution of animals and the adaptations that have allowed such diversity to flourish. The second part of the course focuses on many different animal behaviors (including human behavior). We will learn about different types of behaviors – from innate (genetic) behaviors to learned behaviors. The social interactions between animals will be covered in depth as we study courtship, aggression, altruism, and parental behaviors in animals. The course will utilize a number of interesting articles, discussions, activities, videos, and projects to give a wider perspective of the animal kingdom and animal behavior.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisites: Physics, Chemistry and Biology, and permission of the department.

Design Thinking. Design thinking is a way of thinking, acting, and interacting that utilizes an innovation-driven scientific approach to problem-solving which, similar to scientific education, tests a hypothesis to achieve findings. Design thinking is unique in its use of Human Centered Design to develop and test innovative and diverse solutions to an array of problems. During this class, students will use these principles to complete a wide array of projects and Design Challenges with themes ranging from architectural and aesthetic design, to redesigning social systems and mechanical engineering. This course presents an introduction to the design thinking approach and mindset using highly interactive exercises that give students a flavor for some of the techniques and methods of design thinking that awaken the innovative and problem-solving abilities within each of us.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the laboratory science requirement.

Honors Biotechnology. There is no doubt that conceptual leaps, new ideas, and paradigm shifts have led to great advances in scientific knowledge. Have you ever wondered if these would have had the same impact without the technological advances that make them possible? The discovery of DNA, increasingly sophisticated microscopes, and the development of in vitro assays that faithfully reproduce cellular functions are just a few examples of technological advances that have spurred on many areas of cell biology. This semester-long course will provide students with a comprehensive introduction to the scientific concepts and laboratory research techniques utilized in the field of biotechnology. Students will explore topics of microbiology, immunology, genetics, genomics, bioinformatics, and bioethics, and perform a series of extensive laboratory projects aimed to provide an introductory understanding of biotechnology.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Physics, Honors Chemistry and Honors Biology, and permission of the department.

Human Health and Disease. This course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of the intricate relationship between the human body and factors influencing health and disease. Covering fundamental biological principles, disease etiology, epidemiology and treatment, diagnostic techniques, and health promotion, the course equips students with knowledge essential for careers in medicine, healthcare, public health, and biology. Emphasis is placed on ethical considerations, social determinants of health, and staying abreast of emerging trends. Students will have the opportunity to execute several hands-on activities designed to examine human nature at its core. Assessment methods include practical examinations, research projects, and class participation, fostering problem-solving and critical thinking skills. This course prepares students to contribute to the improvement of human health on a global scale.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Completion of the history and science requirements.

Human Impact on the Environment. This semester-long course will examine the many ways in which humans impact the environment. The aim of the course is to increase scientific literacy regarding the environmental impacts of our actions so students can make informed decisions in the future. Students will learn to assess the validity of information and will acquire the skills needed to address and identify misinformation. Major topics covered in the course include climate change, pollution, waste production, land use, and fossil fuel consumption.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Physics, Chemistry and Biology, and permission of the department.

Honors Neuroscience. This semester-long course examines the function and structure of the human nervous system. Beginning with a detailed study of the brain and neurochemistry, the focus will be on the biological basis for learning, memory, emotion, addiction, and behavior. Additional topics will include the role of the nervous system in sensation,

hunger, movement, and various neurological and psychiatric disorders. Students will demonstrate their knowledge through a variety of assessments including projects, case studies, papers and traditional examinations.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Physics, Honors Chemistry and Honors Biology, and permission of the department.

Introduction to Electromechanical Engineering. (NOT OFFERED in 2025-2026.) This course will cover the engineering design process and its real-world applications. Students will study classic engineering designs and learn how to apply engineering principles to solve problems, improve designs, and innovate. Topics covered include energy conservation, mechanical energy, electrical energy, electromagnetism (electric motors), and the internal combustion engine and its history. A focus on electric vehicles and their science and engineering will also be included. Throughout the semester, students will work on a project that involves identifying a problem, improving a design, or creating something new. The engineering cycle (research, brainstorming, prototyping, and building) will be followed and students will present their final project. Upon completion, students will have a strong understanding of engineering and will have developed problem-solving, mechanical, and collaboration skills.

Major (2 credits per semester) – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Physics, Chemistry and Biology, and permission of the department.

Royce Independent Research Project. Students may propose projects at or away from the school under the supervision of a member of the department. Expenses for such projects are financed by the generous support of the Robert Royce Fund.

Major or Minor – Fifth and Sixth Forms – One semester.

Prerequisite: Permission of the teacher and department.

Self in Community

Self in Community is a comprehensive four-year program designed to provide discussion-based learning opportunities for students throughout their careers at Brooks. Students will have the opportunity to explore and develop their understanding of self, expectations and responsibilities of a citizen within the Brooks community and beyond, and their understanding of relationships with others. The curriculum seeks to explore developmentally appropriate aspects of wellness such as identity development, physical, emotional, and spiritual health, diversity and ethics, as well as leadership and transition after Brooks.

Classes in the Self in Community series will be held annually for all grades. They are automatically scheduled for students. Third- and fourth-form Self in Community classes meet twice per week. Fifth- and sixth-form classes meet once per week.

Third Form SIC. The third form curriculum establishes a strong educational foundation to ensure students are prepared to be the best version of themselves as they onboard as new students. The content of this course is focused on health and wellness, cultural competency, and gender and sexual identity. The goal of this curriculum is for students to better understand themselves and for them to become more comfortable with discussion-based learning.

Minor (1 credit per semester) – Third Form (required for all) – Two semesters.

No prerequisites.

Fourth Form SIC. The fourth form curriculum builds upon many of the threads from the third form year. It provides further education on the topics of healthy relationships and boundaries, sexual health, wellness and well-being, and cultural competency. This curriculum also pushes students to take more ownership of their learning and day-to-day lives as Brooks students.

Minor (1 credit per semester) – Fourth Form (required for all) – Two semesters.

No prerequisites.

Fifth Form SIC. The fifth form curriculum seeks to deepen students' cultural competency, refine their awareness of social dynamics, and clarify personal values while equipping them with opportunities for smaller and larger action, increasing their capacity for leadership in preparation for leadership opportunities in their sixth form year.

Minor (½ credit per semester) – Fifth Form (required for all) – Two semesters.

No prerequisites.

Sixth Form SIC: The sixth form curriculum further builds upon the leadership education from the fifth form year and challenges students to take tack action and responsibility. The hope is that the students further develop life skills and a better understanding of ethical decision-making so that they are better-equipped citizens of the world.

Minor (½ credit per semester) – Sixth Form (required for all) – Two semesters.

No prerequisites.