



Graduate Studies Handbook

Brown University

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Table of Contents

Information for Both Programs and Students1

Introduction.....	1
Shared Governance of Graduate Education: The Graduate Council	1
Graduate Council Review of Graduate Programs.....	2
Doctoral Degree Programs.....	2
Financial Support for Graduate Study	3
Doctoral Student Support Models and Appointment Types	4
Teaching Appointments	4
Teaching Assistants	5
Teaching Assistant II	5
Teaching Fellows	5
Teaching While Receiving Support from External Funding	5
Research Assistants.....	6
Proctors	6
Fellowships	7
External Funding Information.....	7
External Funding Incentive Policy.....	7
Scholarships	7
Advanced Status.....	7
Summer Support	8
Non-Performance or Disciplinary Action.....	8
Funding Beyond Brown’s Support Guarantee	8
Master’s Degree Programs.....	9
Terminal Master’s Degrees – Program Structure and Matriculation.....	9
5 th Year Master’s Degrees.....	10
Master’s Degrees en route to the PhD (Transitional Master’s)	10
Concurrent PhD/Master’s Degree.....	10
Concurrent Bachelor’s/Master’s Degree.....	11
Integrative Studies	12
PhD in Integrative Studies	12
Master’s in Integrative Studies	12
Directors of Graduate Study	12

Program Handbooks.....	13
Changes in Status	13
Academic Standing and Warning Policy	13
Academic Standing	13
Deadlines for Evaluation and Notification	14
Warning Letters	15
Actions and Deadlines for Withdrawing a Student.....	15
Deadlines for Alerting Students on Warning Status by Term	15
Evaluation of Students with TA or RA Appointments Outside of their Home Program	16
Implications of Enrollment Status for Financial Aid and Student Loan Deferral	16
Enrollment Satisfied, Requirements Pending (ESRP) Status	16
Visiting Research Fellows and Non-Degree Students	17
Visiting Research Fellows	17
Visiting Fellow Processing Table	19
Non-Degree Graduate Students	19
Non-Degree (Visiting) Students	20
Non-Degree (Postdoctoral) Students	20
Non-Degree Graduate Student Processing Table	21
Non-Degree Student Information Table	23

Information Primarily for Programs24

Admissions.....	24
Guiding Principles	24
Admission Committees.....	24
Recruiting.....	24
Limits on Recruiting	25
Applications	26
Graduate Record Exam (GRE)	26
Privacy of Applications.....	26
Early Matriculants.....	26
Advisors and Advising.....	26
Selection of Advisor/Mentor.....	26
First-Year Advising	27
Student Records	27
Changes to the Curriculum	27

New or Revised Graduate Programs	28
New Graduate Courses	28
Guidelines for New Course Syllabi	28
Financial Support for Doctoral Students: The Brown Guarantee	29
Student and Alumni Achievement Awards.....	29

Information for All Graduate Students30

Coursework	30
Tuition Unit versus Academic Credit	30
Grading Standards.....	31
Grade Options	31
Graduate Credit.....	31
Brown Summer and Continuing Studies Program.....	31
Deadlines.....	32
Grades of INC (Incompletes).....	32
Conference and Research Travel Funds	32
Language Requirements.....	32
English Language Proficiency	33
Foreign Language Requirements	33
Application of Prior Graduate-Level Coursework.....	33
Limits	33
Transfer for Credit or Research	34
Applying for Transfer Credit	34
Registration at Other Universities.....	34
Cross-Registration.....	34
Steps for Cross Registering at Harvard.....	35
Steps for Cross Registering at RISD.....	35
International Mobility Programs.....	35
Employment, Health Insurance, and Loans	36
Outside Employment: Students on a Stipend-Based or Research Appointments.....	36
Outside Employment: Students Not on a Stipend-Based Appointment	36
Student Health and Dental Insurance.....	36
Student Loans.....	37
Leaves of Absence	37
Categories of Leave	40

Family Leave of Absence	40
Medical Leave of Absence.....	41
Professional Development Leave of Absence	42
Probationary Leave of Absence	42
Personal Leave of Absence	43
Leaves and Progress in the Program	43
Filing a Dissertation or Thesis While on Leave.....	43
Readmission from Leave	44
Accommodations	44
Short Term Medical Accommodation	44
Support for Student Parents	45
Parental Relief Support	46
Part-Time Status.....	47
PhD	47
Master's.....	47
Financial and Legal Implications of Part-Time Status	48
Codes of Student Conduct	48
Academic and Student Conduct Codes.....	48
Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment	48
Grievance Procedures	48
Commencement	49
Prizes and Awards.....	49
Procession and Ceremony.....	49
Post-Graduation	49
Student Privileges	49
Alumni Relations	50
Student Records	50

Information Primarily for Doctoral Students51

Dissertation Advisor and Committee.....	51
The Dissertation Committee	51
Policy on Advisors Who Have Left Brown	51
Policy on Emeriti Faculty	51
Admission to Candidacy	52
Extension of Candidacy	52

Conducting Research Away from Brown	53
Conducting Research and Travelling Abroad.....	53
Exchange Scholar Program.....	54
Submission of Dissertations and Theses.....	54
Filing of Dissertations and Policy on Public Access to Dissertations	54
Deadlines.....	55
Formatting Guidelines	55

Information Primarily for Master’s Students.....55

Master’s Theses: Policy on Emeriti Faculty	55
Financial Aid.....	55

*Information for Programs and Students***Information for Both Programs and Students*****Introduction***

This handbook contains policies, procedures, and rules applicable to graduate education at Brown University. Individual graduate programs often have additional or complementary policies, procedures, and rules. In the event of a conflict between the policies, procedures, and rules of an individual graduate program and this handbook, this handbook will take precedence. This handbook supersedes any conflicting information that may appear elsewhere on the websites of the Graduate School and the School of Professional Studies. The information contained in this handbook is subject to revision and change by the Graduate School at any time.

Please remember that every official step in a graduate student's career, such as passing preliminary exams, completing a thesis, or changing advisors requires written notification of the Graduate School, and/or Registrar. If you are unsure about which steps in a graduate student's career requires written notification, please write to graduate_dean@brown.edu.

Shared Governance of Graduate Education: The Graduate Council

Brown University's Faculty Rules and Regulations delegate certain powers with respect to graduate education to the Graduate Council. They specify that the Graduate Council shall consist of the Dean of the Graduate School, who chairs the council; the Dean of Medicine and Biological Sciences or their designee; the Dean of Engineering or their designee; the Dean of Public Health or their designee; the Dean of the School of Professional Studies or their designee; the University Librarian; and eight other members of the Faculty chosen by the Dean of the Faculty and four graduate students chosen by the Graduate Student Council. The University Registrar, the Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning are invited as ex-officio, non-voting guests. Assistant and associate deans of the Graduate School and School of Professional studies may be invited as non-voting, ex-officio members.

The Graduate Council's duties are to set policy for graduate education at Brown, subject to the approval of the faculty and the Corporation. Such policy includes the conditions for admission and the procedures for the award of graduate fellowships and scholarships. The Graduate Council also supervises degree requirements, approves new courses and other modifications of existing degree programs, and approves and recommends new degree programs to the faculty .

The Graduate Council also regularly reviews graduate programs in consultation with the departments and makes annual reports to the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC) and the faculty of its activities during the preceding year.

*Information for Programs and Students***Graduate Council Review of Graduate Programs**

As part of its regular review of graduate programs, the Graduate Council review is tied to the external review schedule. The Graduate Council normally conducts its review of doctoral programs two to three years after a program's most recent external review; reviews of master's programs will generally take place in advance of external reviews of those programs.

The goal of the doctoral review is to provide a forward-looking opportunity for reflection and assessment as programs approach the mid-point between external reviews. The Graduate Council asks programs to summarize the external review report, the departmental response to the report, and the impact of their efforts to address points of concern from the review. In collaboration with the program, the Graduate Council reviews the steps taken by the program in response to the review as well as further actions that might be taken in the remaining years until the next external review to more fully address the areas for improvement highlighted by the previous review.

Doctoral Degree Programs

Brown University has over 50 PhD programs and awards more than 200 doctor of philosophy degrees annually. (A full listing of all PhD programs can be found [here](#) on the Graduate School website.) The Brown PhD is primarily a research degree, though teaching is an important part of many doctoral programs, and most departments require candidates for the PhD to develop teaching experience.

Students admitted to any PhD program at Brown University are guaranteed at least five academic years of support that includes a stipend, full tuition scholarship, health insurance, dental insurance, and coverage of the University health services fee. Students admitted to any PhD program in the social sciences or humanities are guaranteed a sixth year of funding. All University-based student support is subject to a student's remaining in "good standing" in their graduate degree program, as well as fulfilling the responsibilities associated with their appointment.

There are four general requirements for the doctor of philosophy:

1. **Admission.** The candidate must be formally admitted to a degree program.
2. **Residence.** The normal residency requirement is the equivalent of three academic years of full-time study beyond the bachelor's degree. Students who enter a PhD program at Brown already holding a Master's degree in a related field have a residency requirement equivalent to two academic years of full-time study upon entering the PhD program at Brown. Use of a previously earned Master's degree to reduce PhD residency requirements is contingent upon approval of the program's Director of Graduate Study.

Graduate work conducted at other institutions not used in fulfillment of the requirements for any

Information for Programs and Students

doctoral degree elsewhere may, on the approval of the program's Director of Graduate Study, be counted in fulfillment of up to, but not more than, one year of the residency requirement. A student who desires credit for work conducted elsewhere should file a timely application with their program's Director of Graduate Study. Transfer credit forms are available through the [Office of the Registrar](#).

Some graduate student appointments, such as Teaching Assistant, Research Assistant, Proctor, and Teaching Fellow typically require being on campus regularly. In order to be employed by the University when an appointment does not require being on campus regularly, the student holding the appointment must nevertheless reside in a location where Brown is registered to do business.

3. **Advancement to Candidacy.** A student is advanced to candidacy for the PhD upon satisfactorily completing all the requirements, departmental and general, requisite to beginning work on the dissertation. Requirements for candidacy are determined by the department or program of study. Most departments require the completion of specified coursework plus passage of a preliminary examination or examinations or a qualifying paper before advancing any student to candidacy.

4. **Dissertation.** The candidate must present a dissertation on a topic related to their area of specialization that presents the results of original research and gives evidence of excellent scholarship. The dissertation must be approved by the supervising faculty under whose direction it is written.

Financial Support for Graduate Study

The Graduate School at Brown University guarantees incoming doctoral students five academic years (six in the case of students in the Humanities and Social Sciences) of support that includes a stipend, full tuition scholarship, health insurance, dental insurance, and coverage of the University health services fee subject to their remaining in "good academic standing" in their graduate degree program, as well as fulfilling the responsibilities associated with their appointment. The support may take the form of a Teaching Assistantship, Research Assistantship, Fellowship or Proctorship. All such assignments form part of the student's professional training and are viewed as integral to the student's academic development.

The guarantee of financial support only refers to the first five years of study (six in the case of students in the Humanities and Social Sciences) in the Graduate School; it does not refer to years of support that can be used at any time, or that can be used in addition to external support. This support includes a stipend, tuition, health insurance, dental insurance, and the health services fee.

The Director of Graduate Study (DGS), in consultation with students and other faculty in the program, and the deans in the Graduate School, decides the most appropriate form of support (e.g., fellowship, teaching assistantship, research assistantship, etc.) for each doctoral student in a given year. All such appointments are made by virtue of the student's status as a graduate student at Brown and are seen as an integral part of the student's academic training. The flexibility of this approach helps to ensure that, within the constraints of other departmental needs, doctoral

Information for Programs and Students

students receive the type of appointment that is most appropriate for their current level of professional development and that will support their progress through the program. The Graduate School coordinates with those programs that support many of their students on external grants in order to determine exactly how to integrate the needs of graduate students with those of the faculty securing those grants, and the conditions of the grants themselves.

Students must maintain eligibility for the type(s) of appointments utilized in their doctoral program. Students may not engage in activities that would render them ineligible for such appointments, which may include but are not limited to participation in a Malign Foreign Talent Recruitment Program (see Brown University's [Malign Foreign Talent Recruitment Program Policy](#)) or concurrent external employment with a federal agency. Students should consult with their DGS, the Graduate School, and the Office of Research Integrity, as appropriate, with any questions regarding eligibility for appointments.

Doctoral Student Support Models and Appointment Types

The diversity of funding resources for doctoral education implies that funding models for supporting doctoral students vary by discipline. Even within a single graduate program, support models are flexibly defined to accommodate the needs of individual students as well as external fellowships and grants. Note that some forms of external funding enable students to take Advanced Status or Professional Leaves, which “stop the clock” for the University funding; see below for details. In most cases, Graduate School support will be in the form of a teaching assistantship, a teaching fellowship, a research assistantship or an approved proctorship. Appointments are made on an annual or semester basis on the recommendation of the department. Double work appointments are not allowed. In some areas, students may also receive one, or at most two, years of fellowship support through the Graduate School. Please consult with your program about typical funding models for its students.

Teaching Appointments

Teaching is an integral part of doctoral training at Brown. Students are expected to teach as part of their professional training and scholarly apprenticeship. Teaching assistantships and teaching fellowships are awards made by programs to students in good standing. In some cases, a student whose academic standing is “satisfactory” or “warning,” as opposed to “good,” may be appointed as a teaching assistant or teaching fellow, but academic standing may be a reason for not making such an appointment. A violation of the Academic Code, Code of Student Conduct, or any other University policies, rules, or procedures may also be a reason for not appointing a student as a teaching assistant or teaching fellow. Appointments are made by the Graduate School on the basis of departmental recommendations. Double appointments are not allowed.

Students whose primary language is not English must pass an evaluation of their English proficiency shortly after arrival and before teaching. Evaluations are conducted by the program in English for International Teaching Assistants. Students whose English language skills require further support will be enrolled in an English-language training course during the first semester.

Information for Programs and Students

Students in a Teaching Assistantship should consult with the faculty member teaching the course for which they are a teaching assistant, their DGS, and the staff of the [Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning](#) in developing teaching strategies. Students experiencing difficulty in the performance of their teaching duties may be referred to the [Sheridan Center](#), but teaching assistants should not wait until there are difficulties to seek guidance.

Teaching Assistants

A Teaching Assistant (TA) assists a faculty member both inside and outside the classroom with activities related to the teaching of a particular course. The nature of the tasks may vary depending on the teaching needs of the individual department. TAs are supervised by a faculty member and do not have primary responsibility for the design or implementation of a course. Appointments are made in the sole discretion of the Graduate School on the basis of departmental recommendations.

The duties of a TA vary across courses and departments. Examples of standard duties may include some classroom teaching, the presentation of occasional lectures, leading discussion sections, preparing and supervising labs, conducting tutorials, holding office hours, grading papers, problem sets, quizzes, and examinations, and other programmatic duties for a course.

Programs often assign graduate students to courses according to their interests and areas of expertise, broadly defined; however, a student's teaching experience is greatly expanded by teaching assignments outside of their immediate area of expertise. A full appointment should not exceed an average of 20 hours per week over the course of the semester. Doctoral students who serve as TAs (or TA II's, see below) receive tuition, health insurance, dental insurance, the health services fee, and a stipend.

Teaching Assistant II

A Teaching Assistant II (TA II) is a TA who has primary responsibility for instruction and grading of a particular course. This does not include guest lecturing or irregular and infrequent instruction of a course section. Appointments are made at the sole discretion of the Graduate School on the basis of departmental recommendations.

Teaching Fellows

A Teaching Fellow (TF) is an advanced student with teaching experience who is responsible for the design and teaching of their own course. Teaching Fellows bear primary responsibility for the gradable component of a course and serve as the instructor of record. Eligibility for appointment as a Teaching Fellow varies across departments. Appointments are made at the sole discretion of the Graduate School on the basis of departmental recommendations.

A Doctoral Student who serves as a Teaching Fellow receives the same support as a Teaching Assistant but with a slightly higher stipend. As with a teaching assistantship, the time required for the appointment should not exceed an average of 20 hours per week over the course of the semester.

*Information for Programs and Students**Teaching While Receiving Support from External Funding*

Teaching is an important part of the academic training students receive while at Brown. Therefore, students supported by external funding sources can be Teaching Assistants or Teaching Fellows in certain instances. Students who are appointed as TAs, TA IIs, or TFs while receiving external funding will not receive an additional stipend for the teaching assistantship, but the regular incentive funding policy applies. Details of [the External Funding Incentive Policy](#) can be found on the Graduate School website.

Research Assistants

A research assistant (RA) works with faculty on the faculty member's academic and research projects, both at the University and in the field. RA research duties vary across departments and projects and are thus administered independently by each department and/or investigator. The University and the Union acknowledge that due to the nature of research and education in the sciences, the research being conducted by an RA on behalf of a principal investigator may also be, in whole or in part, in furtherance of the graduate student's thesis or dissertation. Normally, the time devoted to being an RA should not exceed a maximum of 20 hours per week, unless the research being conducted is integral to the RA's academic research. Doctoral students who serve as Research Assistants receive a stipend, tuition, health insurance, dental insurance, and the health services fee.

Proctors

Graduate students assigned as Proctors serve in non-instructional positions with an academic department, degree program, or through another research, academic, or administrative office. Proctors perform work (research, program development, projects, etc.) that is pre-defined and relevant to the appointing department or office's academic objectives. Proctorships involve appointing a departmental faculty or staff as a mentor to supervise the proctorship. These positions are intended to foster the professional development and/or research interests of graduate students. Under no circumstances are proctors to be used for general administrative work. Appointments are made in the sole discretion of the Graduate School on the basis of departmental recommendations and programmatic need.

Proctors appointed outside of academic departments either provide assistance in the implementation of the appointing office's ongoing programs, or they engage in other activity (research, program development, projects, etc.) that is pre-approved and relevant to the appointing office's academic objectives.

Proposals from nonacademic departments for extra-departmental proctorships that are relevant to students' professional development or research interests may be made to the Graduate School at any time. Ideally, such proposals will originate as the result of a consultation between a particular campus office and the Graduate School. Funding for extra-departmental proctorships are determined on a case-by-case basis.

Information for Programs and Students

All proctorship appointments must be proposed by the originating department or office and the Director of Graduate Study in the student's home department, and must be approved by the Graduate School. For details on this process, please see the [Graduate School's page on Proctorships](#).

Fellowships

Doctoral students appointed to fellowships receive tuition, health insurance, dental insurance, the health services fee, and a stipend. During semesters in which their primary appointment is a University-funded fellowship, they are not normally expected to serve as teaching assistants or research assistants. Regarding fellowships funded by external grants, see above.

External Funding Information

The Graduate School strongly encourages students to seek external funding independently. Receiving a fellowship award is a sign of distinction, and writing grant applications is an important part of all students' professional development. For information on funding opportunities, please consult the [Graduate School's webpage](#).

External Funding Incentive Policy

It is vitally important that graduate students gain the recognition and the experience entailed in applying for, and winning, competitive grant funding. This experience will be a central part of post-graduate life, whether inside or outside of the academy. In order to encourage graduate students to gain this experience as part of their professional development and educational experiences at Brown, the Graduate School has created a policy to reward students who secure funding from sources outside the University. Details of this policy may be found on the [Graduate School's webpage](#).

Scholarships

Students who would otherwise be supported with a stipend may apply to the Graduate School to retain their tuition, health services fee, and health insurance scholarships in instances when, with permission of their graduate program, they are opting out of a stipended appointment. Such circumstances may include students opting to study out of residence, when they would otherwise have a residence-based appointment, or seeking an alternative to a professional development leave. In exceptional circumstances, students may request, with the approval of the Graduate School, to defer funding commitments for the duration of a scholarship semester.

Advanced Status

Students within the five-year guarantee who have completed their residency (24 tuition-unit) requirement and plan to be away from Brown for a semester or the academic year conducting dissertation research and who choose to defer Brown stipend support may apply for Advanced Status. Students approved for advanced student status are considered full-time students and

Information for Programs and Students

receive full tuition coverage, as well as coverage of the annual health and dental insurance subsidy.

Students who are interested in Advanced Status must write to their DGS to express their interest. The DGS will then communicate this to the Graduate School. Receipt of tuition and health/dental insurance scholarship does not count toward the years of Graduate School guaranteed support.

Summer Support

Doctoral students are guaranteed summer support for the first four summers in the program (five in the case of students in the Humanities and Social Sciences). Summer support is provided specifically to enable students to make progress toward the successful and timely completion of the degree. This may include conducting research, preparing for preliminary exams, and working on the dissertation. The most appropriate use of this time will vary by program, and programs have some flexibility in determining the activity most appropriate while students are supported in this manner. Students should consult with the Director of Graduate Study or the research advisor about projects for the summer months.

Students in the Life and Physical Sciences are typically supported during the summers on grant and department-based funding. Students in the Humanities and Social Sciences are typically supported by the Graduate School during these summers.

Non-Performance or Disciplinary Action

Students should be mindful of the fact that teaching, research, and proctorship appointments are part of their professional training. Such appointments establish a student's responsibility to the faculty and students within the academic unit. Performance in these appointments is also a component of a student's academic review and standing. Students who fail to perform in their funded Graduate School appointments (as RAs, TAs, TFs, or Proctors) may be withdrawn from the University and/or have their funding suspended under the following conditions:

- negligence or intentional misconduct,
- failure to appear for activities required by the appointment,
- failure to complete work by deadlines,
- inappropriate behavior in the classroom or laboratory, or
- violations of the University's policies, rules, and procedures, including but not limited to the Academic Code and Code of Student Conduct.

Grounds for termination must be presented in writing to the Dean of the Graduate School, who shall make the final determination.

Funding Beyond Brown's Support Guarantee

In some cases, the completion of the dissertation will require more than five years for students in the Life and Physical Sciences and more than six years for students in the Humanities and Social

Information for Programs and Students

Sciences. Students needing to continue their studies beyond Brown's support guarantee can find support opportunities through specific research projects and various fellowships.

Additionally, the Graduate School has made support available for students in the Humanities beyond their funding guarantee. Those Graduate School funds are pooled with departmental resources and provide full and partial tuition scholarships and, when budget allows, grant health insurance. Details about Dissertation Extension Proposal (DEP), for students beyond year 6, can be found on the [Graduate School website](#).

Master's Degree Programs

The Graduate School awards Master's degrees as terminal degrees or during ordinary progress toward a PhD. Master's degrees awarded at Brown are the Artium Magistri (AM degree), commonly referred to as the Master of Arts degree, the Scientiae Magistri (ScM), commonly referred to as the Master of Science degree, Master of Engineering (MEng), Master of Fine Arts (MFA), Master of Public Affairs (MPA), Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), Master of Business Administration (MBA), and Master of Public Health (MPH).

The minimum requirements for a Master's degree are admission to a program and successful completion of eight graduate-level courses. Individual departments and programs may have additional requirements regarding the number of required courses, proficiency in languages other than English, special examinations, consultancies, capstones, and theses. All work to be used in fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's degree must be completed within a period of five years.

Graduate work conducted in graduate residence at other institutions may be offered in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a terminal Master's degree. This coursework should be approved prior to the first semester of registration in courses by the Director of Graduate Study or Program Director and by the Registrar's Office. One post-graduate course may be transferred to an 8-course Master's program from another institution. (Brown courses taken for credit elsewhere may not be transferred for credit toward Brown degrees.). Students in programs that require more than 8 classes should confirm with the Registrar's Office the number of courses taken at other institutions that may be transferred toward their Brown degree, pending approval of the program.

Students who have been admitted into graduate programs that also offer a PhD may apply to the PhD program while they are enrolled as Master's students. These applications will be evaluated in the context of all applicants to the PhD program during that admissions cycle.

Terminal Master's Degrees - Program Structure and Matriculation

Every program has a predetermined structure and pattern of matriculation. Deviation from the program structure and standard matriculation pattern by a student can affect the time to completion and tuition cost. There can also be visa implications for international students who deviate from the standard pattern of matriculation. Examples of deviation include adding an extra

Information for Programs and Students

course, dropping a course, or changing a course for credit to audit. **Any student contemplating a deviation from the set program structure should first seek approval from the Director of Graduate Study or Program Director. Once approved, the program's administrator will send a request for approval to the School of Professional Studies or, in the case of MFAs, the Graduate School.** Additional information can be found on the [Registrar's website](#).

[For the table of standard matriculation patterns by program, please see here.](#)

5th-Year Master's Degrees

The 5th-year Master's degree program (additional information found on the [Graduate School website](#)) allows Brown undergraduates to continue at Brown for a Master's degree after completing their bachelor's degree. With the approval of the Master's program, up to two courses taken as an undergraduate but not counted toward the undergraduate concentration may be counted toward the Master's degree. Students who use two undergraduate courses to count toward the Master's degree cannot transfer a graduate course taken at another school.

Students must apply for the 5th-year Master's program before they complete their undergraduate degree. Admission must be approved by the department in which the Master's degree is sought and by the School of Professional Studies. While a student must be enrolled as an active undergraduate student at the time of application, admission to the graduate program can be deferred for up to two years with approval of the program.

Students apply using the online application and selecting the 5th-year Master's program. They should work with the department or program to complete the associated paperwork.

Master's Degrees en route to the PhD (Transitional Master's)

Students enrolled in doctoral programs can, with the approval of their graduate program, earn the Master's degree en route to the PhD, as long as they do not already hold a Master's degree in the same field of study. Please note that receipt of a Transitional MA means that a student cannot later request an ScM in the same field, or vice versa where available.

Sometimes a student enrolled for the PhD leaves the program and completes the Master's instead. In that case, the student should log on to [UFunds](#) to fill out a Withdrawal form, indicating the withdrawal from the PhD and a request to receive the Master's.

International students should be sure to consult with OISSS about the transitional Master's degree and the most appropriate time for obtaining it.

Concurrent PhD/Master's Degree

In addition to obtaining a Master's degree in the field of the PhD on the way to the doctoral degree, it is possible, with approval of the Directors of Graduate Study and the Graduate School, for doctoral students to earn a concurrent, terminal Master's degree from Brown in a program

Information for Programs and Students

different from the PhD program. Degree requirements for a transitional Master's degree in the field of the PhD and terminal Master's degree in a second field must be separately met; no courses or theses may be counted for more than one Master's degree.

Work on a concurrent Master's degree should be part of an integrated plan of study that leads to the PhD in the student's doctoral program. Approval of the plan of study for the concurrent Master's degree must be obtained from the Directors of Graduate Study in both graduate programs. Students seeking approval for pursuing a Concurrent Secondary Master's Degree while they are in a PhD program must complete the Application for a Second Master's Degree Outside of the PhD Program via [UFunds](#).

Concurrent Bachelor's/Master's Degree

In some exceptional circumstances students may combine their last year or two years of undergraduate study with graduate study to complete both a bachelor's degree and a Master's degree in eight or nine semesters. More information on this concurrent degree can be found on the [Graduate School website](#).

Integrative Studies

Brown University has a long tradition of creating, encouraging and fostering interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary programs. Students who propose scholarly work that crosses disciplinary boundaries and cannot be accommodated within an existing program are eligible to file an application for a degree in Integrative Studies.

PhD in Integrative Studies

To pursue an Integrative Studies PhD, students must have already been admitted to an existing doctoral program. After completing one semester of full-time graduate study, students may apply for permission to enroll as a doctoral student pursuing integrative graduate study. Only current PhD students enrolled in one of the existing PhD programs may apply for the PhD in Integrative Studies. Students who are approved for the PhD in Integrative Studies must designate a home program for administrative purposes. Students are encouraged to contact the relevant dean in the Graduate School to discuss the program and for advice about the application process.

The application is submitted to the Graduate Council and includes, at a minimum, the following components:

- A proposal detailing a plan of study. This should be reviewed and approved by the Director of Graduate Study in the program to which the student was admitted and a faculty advisor(s) in the relevant field(s).
- A statement of rationale for pursuing the PhD in Integrative Studies rather than in an existing doctoral program.
- Written statements of support by the Director of Graduate Study in the program to which the student was admitted and a faculty advisor(s) in the relevant field(s).

Information for Programs and Students

- Statements verifying the continuation of support in accordance with Brown University's funding guarantee.

The completed proposal is submitted to the relevant dean in the Graduate School, who will make it available to the Graduate Council for their consideration and approval.

Master's in Integrative Studies

In exceptional circumstances, students internal and external to Brown may apply for permission to enroll as a Master's student pursuing integrative graduate study. Students are encouraged to contact the relevant dean in the School of Professional Studies to discuss the program and for advice about the application and admission process. The Graduate Council reviews and decides all applications to the Integrative Studies Program. Students may apply at any time during the academic year but no later than the first Tuesday in April if they would like to enroll in the following fall semester.

The application process proceeds as follows:

- Students identify a Brown faculty advisor for their program of study.
- Students write a proposal detailing a plan of study. It should include the rationale for the program, the curriculum, an explanation of the curriculum, and the degree type (AM or ScM). The proposal should include a completion timeline and specify how many courses will be taken each semester. The faculty advisor must review and approve this document.
- The faculty advisor and Director of Graduate Study (if there is one in the department with which the student would be associated) submit letters of support. The letter from the faculty advisor must address the rationale for the plan for study.
- For administrative purposes, Integrative Studies Master's students are considered students in the department of their advisor, even if that department does not have an existing Master's program.
- Students who are not already enrolled at Brown apply using the regular application portal. Before they do so, they should notify the relevant dean in the School of Professional Studies, who will open the application for them. Students should upload the proposal and letters of support as part of the application. They should also submit all of the other regular application components, including unofficial transcripts. Note that applicants are expected to submit three letters of recommendation that can address their past academic and/or relevant professional performance.
- Students who are already enrolled at Brown submit the materials directly to the relevant dean in the School of Professional Studies. The letters of support can be sent directly from the faculty to the doctoral program at Brown submit the materials directly to that dean.
- Students must take the GRE or another standardized test if the advisor requires it.

Once students have completed the application, the coordinating dean will make it available to the Graduate Council for their consideration and approval.

*Information for Programs and Students****Directors of Graduate Study***

Every department or program offering a graduate-level degree at Brown has a Director of Graduate Study (DGS). (In some programs, the person is called the Graduate Program Director; but the role is the same.) Faculty members who act as the primary liaisons between graduate students, the faculty in their programs, and the Graduate School, DGSs are responsible for all graduate-related issues in their respective programs. DGSs are the primary point of contact for students on all issues related to admission, academic standing, funding and appointments, etc., though programs may delegate some of these responsibilities to other colleagues. They are responsible for the regular evaluation of their program's students, and for notifying students in cases where there may be problems (see [Academic Standing and Warning Policy](#)). All official changes to graduate students' academic or financial records require the signature of the program DGS.

An especially important responsibility of the DGS is to ensure that each graduate student in the program has an advisor at all points in the student's career. However, students should also be proactive in seeking advice from their faculty advisor/mentor, the DGS, chair, and instructors.

Program Handbooks

Each graduate program at Brown is required to maintain a handbook that provides detailed and up-to-date information to students regarding the path toward their degrees. Handbooks must have a clear outline of all expected academic milestones, along with a timeline for their completion, teaching and language requirements, expectations regarding coursework, as well as detailed information on any and all other completion requirements. The program handbooks should also provide clear information regarding the consequences of failing to meet milestones and what opportunities exist for students to have a second chance to meet milestones. Each graduate program should revisit this document on an annual basis to make sure it is kept current. All handbooks must also be available electronically (via department websites).

Written documents do not take the place of sustained, proactive advising, and it is the responsibility of department chairs, DGSs, and advisors to interact often and regularly with the graduate students in their programs.

Changes in Status

Any changes in a student's status (i.e., requests for leaves of absence, withdrawals, changes in degree program) except medical leaves should be submitted by program staff or the DGS via [UFunds](#). Applications for medical leaves may be submitted by students directly. When the change reflects the changing or dropping of a degree program, a statement from the student acknowledging notice of the change must accompany the request.

*Information for Programs and Students****Academic Standing and Warning Policy*****Academic Standing**

Students' academic standing are classified in four ways: good, satisfactory, warning, or termination. Each program's Director of Graduate Study is required to maintain an up-to-date and comprehensive list of the status of each student in their graduate program. DGSs are also required to update students on a regular basis regarding their academic status; requirements for the scheduling of these notifications are below.

Students should be evaluated in terms of their performance and progress in three broad areas: **research, coursework, and teaching**. However, not all students will necessarily be evaluated in all areas every year, because (for example) coursework may only be relevant during the initial years of a doctoral program and teaching evaluations will only be necessary if students have had appropriate appointments. Performance in TA, RA, or Proctorship assignments can also affect academic standing because it forms a part of a student's professional training. Because of the short duration of master's programs, their use of statuses will be slightly different from doctoral programs.

Students who are in ***good standing*** are making good and timely academic progress. Normally, no more than one incomplete can be carried on a student record for PhD and MFA students in good standing.

Satisfactory standing indicates that a student has encountered difficulties of some kind— inadequate performance or slow progress in coursework, research, writing, or appointments, etc. For doctoral students, two or more incompletes will normally result in a shift from good to satisfactory standing. This status level normally has no immediate impact on funding. If the concerns impacting a student's status are not resolved, the student will move to warning status. Master's programs are generally advised not to use satisfactory status except insofar as it is useful to record program-specific requirements.

Warning status signals chronic or severe deficiencies. Students on warning must be given a written notice of the deficiencies in their performance and the consequences of those deficiencies. Students must also receive clear, written instructions of the steps to be taken (if possible) to regain good or satisfactory standing, and date-specific deadlines for recovery. Please see the guidance below on the specific information that must be included in a warning letter. Such notice must come at the end of every semester that a student is on warning status. Due to the shorter duration of master's programs, warning status should be invoked more readily, generally for any student failing to complete the expected number of credits due to an INC or an NC, and for students completing the required number of credits but failing to receive credit for a required course. For master's students on warning because of an INC, programs are encouraged to update the status to "good" as soon as the requirements for the INC are met, rather than waiting until the end of the semester.

Information for Programs and Students

Except in exceptional cases, a student must have a full term (Fall, Spring, or Summer) on warning status before being withdrawn from the program. If the deficiencies are not resolved by the specified deadline, the student on warning will be withdrawn from the program on the specified date. Students will typically continue to receive funding in a probationary state while on warning. Warning can lead to an immediate removal of funding depending on the severity of the deficiency, but this occurs only in rare circumstances and only with the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School or the School of Professional Studies.

Termination signals severe and irremediable deficiencies. Termination indicates an immediate removal of matriculation/enrollment status, as well as all forms of financial support. Master's students who wish to dispute the grounds for their academic termination may do so, in writing, to the Dean of the School of Professional Studies. To be considered, such appeals must normally be filed within one week of the letter conveying the termination.

Doctoral and MFA students may appeal their withdrawal to the Dean of the Graduate School. Appeals should be shared with the Dean as soon as possible and no later than 10 business days after the notification that the student will be withdrawn. Students submitting an appeal should send documentation of the rationale for the appeal directly to the Dean.

Deadlines for Evaluation and Notification

Enrolled students in good or satisfactory standing must receive an evaluation of their standing in the program **at least once every academic year. First-year students and those on warning status must receive an evaluation at least once every semester.** All students should also receive written notification promptly following the successful completion of each academic milestone in their program. These letters regarding academic standing must also be provided to the Graduate School and School of Professional Studies by being uploaded into the Graduate Student Information System (GSIM).

Changes to academic standing—and the accompanying standing letter to the student—normally come at the end of a term. An evaluation of the student at the end of a term should be reflected in the student's academic standing for the following term. For instance, evaluations conducted at the end of the academic year in May should determine the student's academic standing for the summer (not for the spring semester). The student's standing in a given term reflects performance prior to that term.

A student's status only changes in the middle of a term in severe cases. In cases of extreme non-performance, such as when a student stops attending courses and is unresponsive to departmental outreach, a student can be removed from the program immediately, but only with approval of the Dean of the Graduate School.

Warning Letters

It is essential that warning letters contain the following elements:

Information for Programs and Students

- A clear statement of the grounds for being placed on warning.
- A clear statement of the requirements for coming off warning (if possible), with deadlines.
- A statement regarding the program's commitment to helping the student satisfy these requirements.
- A clear statement of the consequences of not meeting those requirements, with an indication of when those consequences will take place (typically withdrawal at the end of the following term).
- Indication of additional resources, e.g., Associate Deans of Academic Affairs and Student Support.

Programs are encouraged to discuss the content of warning letters with the appropriate deans in the Graduate School (for MFA and PhD students) and the School of Professional Studies (for all other students)

Actions and Deadlines for Withdrawing a Student

In order for a student to be withdrawn by the end of a particular term (whether Fall, Spring, or Summer), the student must receive a warning letter in accordance with the deadlines listed below. If the student does not subsequently satisfy the requirements for continuing in the program, they should be notified as soon as possible and no later than ten days prior to the date of withdrawal. Exceptions to these deadlines for notification require approval by the Graduate School.

Deadlines for Alerting Students on Warning Status by Term

Assessment in	Produces Standing for	Deadline to Alert Students on Warning Status
Summer	Fall	August 31
Fall	Spring	Tuesday prior to the beginning of Spring Term classes
Spring	Summer	June 1 (May 1, for students in the Online MPH program)

Evaluation of Students with TA, RA, or Proctorship Appointments Outside of their Home Program

As a part of the evaluation process, students who have a TA or RA appointment in a program outside of their home program should receive an evaluation of their performance at the end of

Information for Programs and Students

each academic semester by the course instructor or research supervisor. A copy of the evaluation should be provided to the student and to the DGS in the student's home program. The DGS in the student's home program should review the report with the student and use it in the program's annual evaluation of the student. With the student's permission, a copy of the evaluation may also be made available to the student's academic advisor.

Implications of Enrollment Status for Financial Aid and Student Loan Deferral

Students must be enrolled in a degree-seeking program to maintain eligibility for repayment-deferral status for any existing federal student loans they hold. Following federal guidelines, the [Registrar](#) reports to the [National Student Clearinghouse](#) any student who falls below "halftime" time status. ***The student's program must inform the Graduate School in writing of all changes in status, particularly in cases where a student's aid may be adjusted or terminated. Failure to do so will result in charges being applied to the department.***

Enrollment Satisfied, Requirements Pending (ESRP) Status

The status of Enrollment Satisfied, Requirements Pending (formerly ETRP or TP status) indicates that a student has satisfied the enrollment requirements but still needs to complete certain requirements in order to be awarded the degree. For instance, a student may have completed all coursework but still have to complete the capstone, thesis, or dissertation. Alternatively, a student may have taken all required courses but still have an Incomplete in one of those courses. Please note that some requirements, such as completing additional courses or teaching requirements, cannot be satisfied while on ESRP status.

Note that ESRP is not an active student status and, once taken, students cannot return to active status. No tuition is charged, and no stipends can be awarded. Because it is not an active student status, it may have significant implications for student loans as well as for visas for international students. Because of this, international students are required to consult with OISSS. Students may request an extension of email and library privileges, but students on ESRP status should not be active in University laboratories.

Visiting Research Fellows and Non-Degree Students

The Graduate School offers the Visiting Research Fellow and non-degree student statuses to visiting graduate students from other institutions and other non-degree students. The Visiting Research Fellow status is for graduate students from other institutions who would like to come to Brown for durations of usually less than 12 months to conduct research with a Brown faculty member. Visiting Research Fellows are not enrolled in classes and do not have official student status at Brown. They are required to have a faculty advisor at Brown who will supervise and direct their activities.

The non-degree (visiting) student status is for either a graduate student from another institution or for a non-affiliated post-baccalaureate who would like to enroll in a class or classes or needs

Information for Programs and Students

official student status at Brown for visa or funding purposes. This is the appropriate status for a graduate student wishing to take a graduate course or courses at Brown without being admitted to and enrolled in a graduate program at Brown. Even though the applicant will not be enrolled in a program, the applicant must notify a program that the applicant wishes to take courses in the program, and the program must approve. The non-degree (visiting) student begins the process by first communicating with the receiving program at Brown. Once this connection has been established the next step is the completion of an online application by the non-degree (visiting) student, stating the program with which the non-degree (visiting) student will be affiliated. The application will be sent to the program for their approval. All non-degree (visiting) students must obtain the written acknowledgement and permission of the applicable department(s) in which the visiting student will be taking a course or courses and/or working with a professor or professors in the program. Upon program approval the application is sent to the Graduate School for final approval.

The non-degree (probationary) student status is for applicants to graduate programs who have been admitted on a probationary basis, and will be considered for admission as a degree student after 1-2 semesters.

The non-degree (postdoctoral) student status is for postdoctoral students at Brown University who need to enroll in courses for credit as part of their training program.

Visiting Research Fellows

Visiting Research Fellows are enrolled in graduate programs at other institutions and come to Brown for durations of usually less than 12 months to conduct research in collaboration with a Brown faculty member. The Visiting Research Fellow appointment is for up to 12 months and the appointment must be renewed for a longer stay, with a maximum stay not to exceed two years. Visiting Research Fellows are provided access to the library, an email account, and limited building access. Requests for Visiting Research Fellow status are made by programs to the Graduate School. Programs should submit a [Visiting Research Fellow Appointment Request Form](#), letters of endorsement by the program chair/director and the faculty member who will advise the visitor at Brown, and a copy of the student's original appointment request to the program.

Visiting Research Fellows are required to provide proof of health insurance for the full duration of their stay at Brown well in advance of arrival either in the form of an insurance card, a signed letter on letterhead from the insurer stating coverage, or a receipt of payment from a short-term health insurance provider. Visiting Research Fellows who do not provide proof of coverage to the Graduate School will not have their Visiting Research Fellow appointment activated and will not be issued a Brown ID.

Visiting Research Fellows from universities outside of the United States who are in need of a visa are required for visa purposes to provide proof of financial support well in advance of their stay. The [Office of International Student and Scholar Services](#) (OISSS) cannot provide assistance with a visa application without this material.

*Information for Programs and Students***Visiting Research Fellow Processing Table:**

1. Applying	<p>Applicants make a request for a Visiting Research Fellow appointment directly to the program. Programs may establish their own application requirements and evaluation criteria, but there should be an identified source of funding for the student and a faculty member who is willing to serve as an advisor to the visitor.</p> <p>Prior to the student's arrival at Brown, programs submit to the Graduate School Admissions Office a Visiting Research Fellow Appointment Request Form, letters of endorsement from the program chair/director and the applicant's faculty advisor at Brown, a copy of the applicant's original appointment request, and any additional required documentation (see the Graduate School Website).</p> <p>The Graduate School issues an appointment letter to the applicant with a copy sent to the chair/director in the host program. Applicants are required to notify the Admissions Office by email or in writing of their acceptance of the appointment offer.</p>
2. Acceptance	International applicants who need assistance from Brown in securing a visa are required to submit to the Graduate School proof of support at the time of application. Failure to provide this material in a timely manner will delay the processing of visa requests.
3. Arrival	<p>Visiting Research Fellows should report to the Brown Card Office to have their photo taken and to receive their Brown Sponsored ID.</p> <p>Note: Activation of Visiting Research Fellow status and the issuance of the Brown ID card is contingent upon prior submission of proof of health insurance and, in the case of international visitors, proof of financial support.</p>
4. Payroll	Programs that wish to pay Visiting Research Fellows from faculty research grants or other sources should contact Accounts Payable in the Controllers Office. In the case of international visitors, programs must coordinate with the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (OISSS) prior to the visitor's arrival to ensure that the international Visiting Research Fellow may work, and that the appropriate visa is acquired for temporary employment.

Non-Degree Graduate Students

Non-degree graduate students are not candidates for any degree. They pay the University health services fee and tuition by the course for any courses they take. Student must also have Brown health insurance or provide proof of comparable coverage. Non-degree students are admitted for a limited time period, a semester or a year. Departments must re-enroll students every semester

Information for Programs and Students

after the first. If a non-degree graduate student is subsequently admitted to a degree program, their transcript will report on their initial “non-degree” status. Coursework completed for credit as a non-degree student may be counted toward graduate degrees with the approval of the graduate program. All non-degree graduate students should be recorded and monitored by the Graduate School, and their progress monitored by the advisor, graduate program, and Graduate School deans.

The application requirements and conditions of the non-degree student status are summarized in the Non-Degree Student Information Table below. The procedural steps for non-degree student applications and processing are described in the Non-Degree Graduate Student Processing Table below.

Non-Degree (Visiting) Students

Individuals who wish to come to Brown for one or two semesters as non-degree (visiting) students start this process by first contacting and obtaining permission from the host department(s) in which the visiting student will be taking a course or courses and/or working with a professor or professors in the program. Having received prior approval from the department, the visiting student next completes an online application. The student completes the first page and the signature page of the on-line application for admission to the Graduate School.

Non-degree (visiting) students who do not enroll in regular courses are required to register for an independent or directed study with a faculty member in the host department and pay the assessed tuition charge. The independent or directed study is recorded on the student transcript and one credit is granted.

Non-degree (visiting) students may enroll in classes for credit. Non-degree (visiting) students who enroll in classes for credit are not required to enroll in an independent or directed study course, but will be charged the standard per credit tuition fee.

Non-Degree (Postdoctoral) Students

Postdoctoral students at Brown who wish to enroll in courses for credit need to apply for non-degree student status by completing the first page and the signature page of the on-line application for admission to the Graduate School. Postdoctoral applicants to the Graduate School should request their faculty advisor to submit to the Graduate School a letter requesting admission as a non-degree student along with the source of funding for tuition.

*Information for Programs and Students***Non-Degree Graduate Student Processing Table**

I. APPLYING	
1.	<p>a. Applicants to Degree Programs [Non-degree (Probationary) Students]: The student follows standard application process to the Graduate School as a degree student. Special (probationary) student status is requested by the student's degree program in instances where the degree program does not want to admit the student with multiple years of guaranteed support. At the start of the second semester, the degree program must decide whether or not to admit the student into the graduate program starting semester I of the following academic year. Special (probationary) students who are subsequently admitted into the degree program will count as one of the degree program's targeted number of new admissions.</p> <p>Pays online Graduate School application fee.</p>
	<p>b. Non-degree Student Applicants [Non-degree (Visiting) Students]: The prospective student first contacts the Director of Graduate Study (DGS) in the department where they plan to take courses or work with faculty. In the case of the latter, the prospective student locates a faculty advisor who agrees to supervise the student while at Brown. Upon receiving approval from the department DGS and/or faculty member, the student completes the first page and signature page of the online application for admission to the Graduate School. In the case of non-degree visiting students who plan on working with Brown faculty, the faculty member submits to the Graduate School a letter recommending that the student be admitted as a non-degree (visiting) student. The letter should specify the duration of the student's appointment, the conditions of the faculty member's advising relationship with the student, and if appropriate, any financial support that the faculty member will provide the student.</p> <p>The student completes the first page and the signature page of the on-line application for admission to the Graduate School. The student should select "Non-degree" for degree type, and "special (non-degree)" for program.</p> <p>Pays online Graduate School application fee.</p>
	<p>c. Postdoctoral Students Taking Classes [Non-degree (Postdoctoral) Students]: Postdoctoral students wishing to take a Graduate course complete the first page and the signature page of the on-line application for admission to the Graduate School. The student should select "Non-degree" for degree type, and "special (non-degree)" for program.</p> <p>The Director of Graduate Study in the student's host program or the Associate Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in the Division of Biology and Medicine, submits to the Graduate School a letter requesting admission as a non-degree student along with the source of funding for tuition.</p> <p>Pays online Graduate School application fee.</p>

Information for Programs and Students

II. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS	
2.	<p>a. Applicants to Degree Programs [Non-degree (Probationary) Students]: Same documents as applicants to degree programs.</p> <p>b. Non-degree Student Applicants [Non-degree (Visiting) Students]: Non-degree (visiting) student applicants are required to submit a copy of their transcript from their current or most recent program. GRE scores are not required for students who apply directly for non-degree (visiting) student status.</p> <p>c. Postdoctoral Students Taking Classes [Non-degree (Postdoctoral) Students]: The Director of Graduate Study in the student's host program or the Associate Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies in the Division of Biology and Medicine, submits to the Graduate School a letter requesting admission as a Special Student along with the source of funding for tuition.</p> <p>Transcripts, GRE, TOEFL are not required at the Graduate School.</p>
III. ADMISSION TO BROWN	
3.	<p>a. Non-degree (Probationary) Students: Non-degree (probationary) student status is requested by the admitting department after the application has come into the Graduate School and been processed as an applicant to a degree program. Admissions staff will be informed on a case-by-case basis to adjust the applicant's status from a degree student to a special (probationary) student.</p> <p>b. Non-degree (Visiting) Students:</p> <p>(i) Applicants first contact the program and/or faculty for approval. Prospective student then applies online filling out first page and signature page. Program and/or faculty letters of recommendation for non-degree (visiting) students are reviewed by the Graduate School.</p> <p>(ii) Non-degree (visiting) applicants who are offered admission by the Graduate School are sent an admission letter from the Graduate School. International students who are admitted into non-degree (visiting) status must provide proof of financial support for the duration of their visit to the Office of International Student and Scholar Services.</p> <p>Applicants who wish to accept the offer of admission should do so through the online application system.</p> <p>Upon arrival to campus the host program at Brown and faculty advisor are responsible for providing orientation to the non-degree student to Brown and the surrounding community.</p> <p>c. Non-degree (Postdoctoral) Students: Postdoctoral students who wish to enroll in graduate courses are charged the standard per credit tuition fee.</p>
IV. REGISTRATION	
4.	<p>a. Non-degree (Probationary) Students: Register with the Office of the Registrar. Registration forms are signed by program's Director of Graduate Study or program advisor.</p>

Information for Programs and Students

<p>b. Non-degree (Visiting) Students: Register in-person at the Office of the Registrar.</p> <p>Non-degree (visiting) students must enroll in a minimum of one course, sometimes an independent study course with a particular professor, and the visiting student will be charged tuition on a per course basis. Non-degree (visiting) students obtain a registration form from the Office of the Registrar and register for a standard course or an Independent Study using the appropriate course number and section number for their host program and faculty advisor. The form is signed by the faculty advisor and given to the Graduate School for the signature of the relevant dean. The completed form is submitted to the Registrar.</p> <p>c. Non-degree (Postdoctoral) Students: Register with the Office of the Registrar. Registration forms are signed by program's Director of Graduate Study or program advisor.</p>
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Non-Degree Student Information Table

Application process/ Application fee	Transcripts/ GRE/ TOEFL/ Proof of Support	Duration	Course enrollment/ Teaching	Brown health insurance and health services	Facilities
<p>Application process:</p> <p>(1) Non-degree (probationary) Student follows standard application process for the Graduate School. Non-degree (probationary) student status is requested by the student's degree program.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>(2) Non-degree (visiting) Student locates faculty advisor. Faculty advisor submits recommendation for non-degree (visiting) student status to the Graduate School. Student completes first page of on-line application for admission to the Graduate School.</p> <p>Application fee: (1) (2) Yes</p>	<p>Transcripts: (1) (2) Transcripts from most recent graduate program required.</p> <p>GRE: (1) Students who apply through standard application process must follow program requirements for GRE. (2) Not required for students who apply directly for non-degree (visiting) student status.</p> <p>TOEFL: (1) Same country-specific requirements for admittance to degree programs. (2) Not required for students who apply directly for non-degree (visiting) student status.</p> <p>Proof of support: International students who are admitted into non-degree (visiting) status must provide proof of financial support for the duration of the visit to the Office of International Student and Scholar Services.</p>	<p>Duration:</p> <p>1-2 semesters</p>	<p>Course enrollment: Students may enroll in classes for credit.</p> <p>Registration: Students must register for the independent/directed study or courses in person at the Office of the Registrar.</p> <p>Tuition: Students who enroll in classes pay full per credit tuition fees, unless other arrangements have been made.</p> <p>Teaching: Students may be contracted to teach 1-2 courses per semester. Sponsor pays for teaching stipend.</p>	<p>Health insurance: Student must have Brown health insurance or provide proof of comparable coverage.</p> <p>Health service fee: Student is charged health service fee.</p> <p>Student pays health insurance and health service fee, unless other arrangements have been made.</p>	<p>Student has Brown ID, email account, library privileges, access to university housing, and access to athletic facilities.</p>

Information Primarily for Programs

Admissions

Guiding Principles

Graduate students make important contributions to the University, including but not limited to, the discovery and preservation of knowledge, participating in faculty research, communicating research outcomes, and supporting undergraduate instruction. The overarching goal of recruitment efforts is to attract the best students to our graduate programs. Through the recruitment and selection of students who have academic potential, creativity, diversity of background, perspective, and experience, graduate programs and the Graduate School collaborate in developing competitive scholars who will graduate from Brown to play leading roles in the future, both domestically and internationally.

Admission Committees

It is the prerogative of programs to determine the make-up and functioning of their own admission committees. If programs so desire, students in the program may serve on an admissions committee.

Recruiting

Recruitment is a comprehensive effort that involves:

1. Promoting awareness of the institution and its graduate program(s) to produce a competitive applicant pool,
2. Selecting appropriate applicants to achieve a diverse pool of admitted candidates, and
3. Securing the matriculation of accepted candidates for an incoming graduate cohort.

The Graduate School is engaged in activities at each stage of recruitment and encourages partnership with every program in ways that lead to the recruitment and enrollment of the most promising students.

Awareness strategies provide accurate information about graduate programs at Brown. Given that top students can come from various institutions both nationally and internationally, information should be readily accessible and disseminated widely.

Recruitment strategies assist in the identification of the appropriately prepared and diverse students who comprise a high-quality applicant pool. Professional societies, research consortia, graduate preparation institutes, and federally-sponsored undergraduate honors programs present recruitment opportunities to increase diversity among underrepresented students in specific disciplines.

Information for Programs

Yield strategies increase the matriculation of students who have been offered acceptance by the Graduate School. These activities are a vital part of students' understanding of the specifics of the disciplinary training and encourage them to choose Brown as their academic home for growth into professionals and scholars.

Our recruitment plan is consistent with the [Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan of Brown University](#) and is in keeping with the overarching goal of the Graduate School to attract the best possible students to our graduate programs and provide them with competitive levels of support.

One of the most effective recruiting techniques is personal contact with faculty. Within the limits of recruiting discussed below, it is permissible for the DGS or any faculty member to contact by telephone or in writing an applicant whose application seems particularly of interest, or whose interests seems particularly suited to Brown's program, or to gather more information on the applicant's interests.

Limits on Recruiting

All formal offers of admission come from the Graduate School in the form of a letter signed by the Dean of the Graduate School. Directors of Graduate Study and other faculty may not promise admission, but may indicate that the program will recommend admission to the Graduate School. Generally, the Graduate School accepts the program's recommendations; but there may be cases where the Graduate School intends to limit the number of students admitted or where the applicant's qualifications, particularly English proficiency, may be an issue. The Graduate School also will not matriculate an applicant without official transcripts of previous academic work, without an official TOEFL or IELTS score, or without two of the requested three letters of recommendation, even though the program may be satisfied with fewer or less official documents.

Fellowships, teaching assistantships, proctorships and tuition scholarships are offered by the Graduate School, on recommendations from the graduate programs. No offers of financial support from Graduate School funds can be made by the faculty or Directors of Graduate Study. Departments can offer RA and fellowship support from their own funds, but admission and appointment are contingent on Graduate School approval.

Brown University subscribes to the policy adopted by the [Council of Graduate Schools](#) (CGS) on a universal deadline of April 15 for responses to offers of admission with financial support (defined by CGS as graduate scholarship, fellowship, traineeship, or assistantship). It is forbidden to ask an applicant to respond to an offer before April 15. Nevertheless, it is permissible to ask an applicant to inform the Graduate School as soon as their decision is made. The same CGS policy requires that an applicant who has accepted an offer and then wants to relinquish it must write to the Graduate School to be released from their commitment. Programs recommending offers of admission after April 15 should be aware that such offers are contingent on the applicant's obtaining a written release from any other graduate school whose offer they may have accepted.

Information for Programs

Applications

Graduate Record Exam (GRE)

Some graduate programs at Brown University require the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) as part of the application. The Graduate School allows individual graduate programs to determine whether they require the GRE.

Privacy of Applications

Applications are to be seen only by the admissions committees and support staff and used only for the purpose of admission. Applications and associated materials may not be viewed by anyone without an official role in the admissions process.

All materials submitted as part of the application to the Graduate School become the property of the Graduate School. Transcripts and other documents submitted as part of the application will not be returned to applicants or admitted students.

For information on the retention of records, please see the University's [Retention Policy](#).

The applications of students who matriculate are subject to the requirements of the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA). [Brown University's FERPA policy](#) is maintained on the Registrar's website.

Early Matriculants

If a program wants to bring a new PhD student in before the start of the Fall semester, they must consult with the Graduate School to review options. Tuition and fees may be assessed depending on the specifics of the case.

Advisors and Advising

Selection of Advisor/Mentor

It is the responsibility of the program to ensure that each graduate student is assigned an advisor upon entering a program and continues to have an advisor at every point until completion of the program. All advisors must be designated in GSIM. Students also have a responsibility to be proactive in seeking advice from their faculty advisor/mentor, DGS, chair, as well as from their instructors and peers.

The Graduate School has gathered extensive resources to support [Graduate Advising and Mentoring](#). These resources are intended for faculty, graduate students, and program leadership.

*Information for Programs***First-Year Advising**

Each entering student needs to be placed into the available courses that fit the requirements of the program and the student's personal goals. Those goals may have changed since the student applied, almost a year previously, and care should be taken to see that each student enrolls in the most appropriate courses. Any gaps in preparation should be filled as soon as possible. Courses essential for passing departmental exams should be taken, and plans for meeting language requirements must be begun. Sometimes it is clear to a student after only a few meetings of a course that the course is at the wrong level or its content is not what was expected. Students should be encouraged to seek advice after the first week of classes and revise their registrations appropriately, if necessary.

The DGS must provide a report to each student in writing before the second semester begins on their first semester's progress and the faculty's expectations for progress in the second semester. This academic standing letter should also be uploaded into the Graduate Student Information System (GSIM). Plans for second semester courses may need revision.

Student Records

All students have a Banner student record as well as a GSIM record. These records should at all times be kept up to date by the DGS and/or program administrator. Any change in academic status (especially academic warning) should be recorded in the GSIM record. Letters regarding academic standing, including warning letters, should be uploaded into the student's GSIM record.

GSIM is an online system that allows the Graduate School and individual graduate programs to monitor and predict the progress of all its students. The information generated by GSIM allows tracking of academic standing and progress (or milestones, which vary by program), funding commitments, and other significant student events (admission to candidacy, leaves, graduation, etc.). It also allows programs and the Graduate School to model and predict program-specific and overall student support budgets.

Student records are subject to the requirements of the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) (FERPA). [Brown University's FERPA policy](#) is maintained on the Registrar's website.

Changes to the Curriculum

The [Graduate Council](#) meets once each month during the academic year to consider proposed changes and to review existing graduate programs. Anyone intending to bring a proposal before the Council may discuss it first with the relevant [dean in the Graduate School or the School of Professional Studies](#).

*Information for Programs***New or Revised Graduate Programs**

All new programs and any significant revisions to existing programs must be approved by the [Graduate Council](#). New programs approved by the Graduate Council must subsequently be reviewed by the Academic Priorities Committee (APC) and the Faculty Executive Committee (FEC), approved by the Faculty as a whole, and the Corporation. New graduate programs that also affect the College or the Medical School must also be approved by the College Curriculum Council (CCC) or the Medical Curriculum Council (MCC), as appropriate.

Generally, only major revisions to existing programs, such as changes in the number of required courses, language requirements, or thesis requirements require [Graduate Council](#) approval. Changes in matters internal to the program, such as changes to the format of prelims or in the mechanism for forming an advisory committee do not require the approval of the Council. Questions about whether proposed changes require review should be directed to the relevant dean. The Graduate School should be notified in writing of any substantive revisions to program handbooks.

Programs are required to give students ample warning of any proposed changes to a program's requirements or curriculum. Normally, students proceed through their degrees with the requirements that were in place when they were admitted. Sometimes, due to staffing changes or other events, there may be slight variations in the availability of courses or in the sequence of graduate program requirements. The Graduate Council must review any substantive change that affects a student's ability to fulfill requirements.

New Graduate Courses

New courses in which the primary instructor is a voting faculty member are approved by the [Office of the Registrar](#) for a one-year "provisional" period. If that same course is to be offered in any subsequent year, regardless of the voting status of the faculty, the course must go through a full approval process. For graduate (2000-level) courses, this means that a course proposal, including a complete syllabus, must be submitted to the Graduate Council for review. Graduate Council approval of the course proposal is required for course continuation beyond the initial, provisional year.

New courses in which the primary instructor is a non-voting member of the faculty must be fully approved by the Graduate Council on the initial offering.

Guidelines for New Course Syllabi

Criteria for the evaluation of syllabi, as well as sample syllabi, can be found under "[Creating a Brown University Syllabus](#)" on the website of the Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning.

*Information for Programs****Financial Support for Doctoral Students: Brown Support Guarantee***

The 5-year support guarantee for doctoral students in the Life and Physical Sciences and 6-year support guarantee for doctoral students in the Humanities and Social Sciences places Brown University's graduate programs in an excellent competitive position. Coupled with support for four summers for students in the Life and Physical Sciences and five summers for students in the Humanities and Social Sciences, this support enables students to focus on progress through their academic program.

The Graduate School's support package should be considered a minimum package. Programs may increase funding. All such additional commitments must be funded through departmental resources.

For information on topics such as doctoral program support allocation and costs and support guidelines for doctoral students on external funding, please see the documents available on the [Graduate School Program Resources google site](#), under Internal Documents.

Staff and Alumni Achievement Awards

For information on student achievement awards such as the [Wilson-DeBlois Award](#) for outstanding contributions to graduate students and the Graduate School and the [Horace Mann Medal](#) for distinguished alumni, see the [Graduate School's website](#).

Information for All Graduate Students

Coursework

Tuition Unit versus Academic Credit

Tuition units refer to a portion of a student's tuition obligation. Specifically, one tuition unit equals one-eighth of full-time tuition. Academic credits refer to credits earned upon the successful passing of a course. The two, tuition units and academic credits, are loosely coupled. Academic credit requires that tuition be paid. That is, tuition unit credit is required for academic credit to be earned. For example, a student could pass a course, but if the student were responsible for the tuition payment on that course and did not fulfill this obligation, the academic credit for the successfully completed course would not be earned.

The converse is not true; tuition credit stands even if the student fails the course, or even if the student did not register for as many courses as were paid for. This becomes important for degree requirements for doctoral students because they are required to satisfy the residency requirement, which is 24 tuition units. Full-time doctoral students are billed for four courses per semester, even if they register for fewer. The importance of tuition units for Master's students is that the achievement of tuition units is also linked to degree requirements. Master's programs may differ in terms of length, e.g., 8 tuition units, 16 tuition units, etc., and in terms of the structure of the timing of how the units are billed each term. For example, one 8 tuition unit program might be structured as a two-term, 4 tuition unit + 4 tuition unit program, while another 8 tuition unit program might be structured as a four-term, 2 tuition unit + 2 tuition unit + 2 tuition unit + 2 tuition unit program.

Doctoral students with TA, RA, or Proctorship appointments normally take three courses in a term, but are billed for the four tuition units. Thus, in these cases the student who successfully passes all three courses would earn three academic credits while simultaneously earning four tuition unit credits. Doctoral students entering with a Master's degree can petition for up to 8 units of transfer credit at the end of their first semester. For information on transferring credit, please see the entry on transfer credit later in this document.

Doctoral students are normally required to enroll for 4 course credits (3 if an RA or TA) per semester during their first 3 years (first 2 years if transferring in 8 credits). After a doctoral student has met the residency requirement (normally after three years) and satisfied a given program's academic credit requirement, to remain an "enrolled student," the student must enroll in either a full-time independent study, a thesis preparation course, or take the equivalent of a full-time course load.

Master's students are required to enroll full-time in accordance with the program's degree requirements. ***Any deviations from full-time enrollment in any given semester must first be approved by the program DGS and the School of Professional Studies in advance of that semester or else the student or the program may be responsible for full-time tuition-related charges.***

Information for All Students

Grading Standards

The Graduate Council has set no more specific standards for the grades that graduate students must achieve than that implied by the grading scale itself: a “C” is a passing grade. Individual graduate programs may set more demanding standards, such as requiring a B average to receive the degree or grades of B or better in specified courses to receive credit toward the degree for those courses. ***Students need to be aware of the standards they must meet; such standards should be explicitly stated in each departmental handbook for students. If a student’s performance in coursework is poor enough that they may be asked to leave the program, their grades should have indicated that fact.***

Grade Options

Some programs restrict graduate courses to the S/NC (Satisfactory/No Credit) grade option, while others insist that all graduate courses be taken for a grade of ABC/NC. Since the Registrar does not allow professors to restrict the grade option to ABC/NC for all students, students must be advised to register for that option when necessary. Similarly, a professor who does not intend to grade more precisely than S/NC should restrict the grade option of the course (Graduate Council approval required) or clearly advise the students to register for S/NC. Change of a grade option after the deadline is not impossible but requires a strong rationale as well as a dean’s permission, and is strongly discouraged.

Graduate Credit

Courses numbered less than 1000 do not normally carry graduate credit. With permission of the instructor and approval from a dean in the Graduate School, a graduate student may do extra work to earn credit towards a graduate degree. It is essential that the student who makes such an arrangement to register in the course for credit type “E” (for “Extra”). The tuition credit for undergraduate courses automatically counts towards the tuition units needed for the graduate degree. Since PhD programs normally do not require 24 academic credits, allowing a doctoral student to take an undergraduate course without earning graduate academic credit often does not present a problem. But Master’s students who do not want to take or pay for more than the minimum number of courses required should be counseled to make arrangements for graduate credit when a nominally undergraduate course is an appropriate part of their program.

Brown Summer and Continuing Studies Program

Graduate students may register for one or two independent study or research courses in the summer by special arrangement with the instructor. They will be charged at the rate of one tuition unit per course in such cases. This option is only available to students who do not have a multi-year guarantee of support from the Graduate School.

Courses in [Brown Summer Session](#), offered by the Division of Pre-College and Summer Undergraduate Programs, are open to graduate students. If a graduate student wants graduate credit for a Summer Session course to count towards the residency requirement for a degree, they

Information for All Students

must obtain the approval of their DGS and the Dean of the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies; regular tuition will then be charged rather than the undergraduate rate. The ordinary restrictions on graduate credit for courses numbered under 1000 apply (see above). Online and residential Master's students should consult with their program directors to determine if courses in Brown's summer session are compatible with their program's course sequences.

An exception is made for students enrolled in certain graduate degree programs that offer semester-long (14-week) courses through online modalities. Degree candidates in these programs do not require advance approval for such summer courses and may count up to four fourteen-week summer courses in any given summer.

Deadlines

Graduate students are subject to all of the Registrar's deadlines regarding course registrations. Students should review their enrollments well in advance of the deadlines. Changes after the deadlines are possible with departmental approval and a Dean's signature, but are to be avoided.

Grades of INC (Incompletes)

Graduate students may request grades of incomplete. Students should be aware, however, that failure to complete courses on time can affect their academic status and jeopardize their funding. Two or more incompletes will normally result in a shift from good to satisfactory standing. The Graduate School may delay approval of a teaching appointment or other funding until coursework has been completed. An instructor may allow a student to complete coursework after the normal deadline, but after one year, the permission of a Dean is required for a grade to be given.

Conference and Research Travel Funds

Presenting papers at professional conferences and conducting field research is important to graduate students' academic careers and growth as professionals, and is relevant experience for all career paths. The knowledge gained from these endeavors, especially when shared with peers at Brown, contributes to the scholarly development of the entire campus. For information on these offerings, see the Graduate School's pages on [the Conference Travel Fund](#), [the Joukowsky Summer Research Award](#), and [the Doctoral Research Travel Grant as well as the Division of Master's and Professional Programs' Master's Student Professional Development Fund](#).

We also encourage students to seek out additional sources of conference and research funding, including the [Graduate Student Council \(GSC\)](#), the Graduate School's [Distinctive Opportunities](#), as well as departments and centers around campus.

*Information for All Students****Language Requirements*****English Language Proficiency**

English language proficiency requirements for international applicants whose primary language is not English can be found on the [Graduate School website](#).

Admitted students whose primary language is not English and who will potentially have a teaching assistant appointment must pass a panel evaluation of their English shortly after arrival and before teaching. Evaluations are performed by the program in English for International Teaching Assistants. Students whose English language skills require further support for the purposes of holding a Teaching Assistantship will be enrolled in an English-language training course during the first semester.

Foreign Language Requirements

Each program determines its own foreign language requirements. Changes in the program language requirements must be approved by the Graduate Council. Each program sets the criteria for passing its requirement, whether by previous course work, passing a course at Brown, or a departmental exam. Once a student has passed a language requirement, the program will make a notation in GSIM indicating what language has been passed and the date; the dates of satisfying language proficiency requirements are printed on transcripts. This information must also be included by the DGS in the program's annual report.

Application of Prior Graduate-Level Coursework

Graduate-level academic credit earned outside of and prior to a student's current degree program at Brown may accelerate the time to the completion of the tuition unit requirement of the degree.

Limits

For PhD students: Up to 8 courses may be used to satisfy the tuition requirement of a doctoral degree.

For Master's students: One course may be used to satisfy the tuition requirements of an 8-course Master's degree. Two courses may be used to satisfy the tuition requirements of a 14-16 course Master's degree. Students should note that this is the upper limit set by Brown policy. Individual programs have discretion to set lower limits on the number of courses that may be used to satisfy the tuition requirements for a Master's degree.

Only advanced coursework taken while the student was a graduate student either at Brown or another institution may be used for graduate credit at Brown. With the exception of Brown undergraduates continuing on for a fifth-year Master's degree, courses taken while the student was an undergraduate may not be used, no matter how advanced the coursework was. Likewise,

Information for All Students

undergraduate courses may not be used even if the courses were taken while the student was a graduate student.

Transfer Credit for Research

Students who have not otherwise reached their limit of transfer credit may be able to obtain transfer credit for research conducted away from Brown. When there is no transcript to show that the student was effectively engaged in full-time study or research, other evidence can suffice at the discretion of the Graduate School, such as proof of holding a fellowship such as a Fulbright and/or certain letters from libraries or archives. A dean's signature will be required in order for the Registrar to accept transfer of credits for which there is no transcript.

Applying for Transfer Credit

To apply to transfer credit, please see [the form provided by the Office of the Registrar](#). The form requires the signature of the DGS. It is submitted to the Registrar's office. Only when the request is not justified by a transcript or when it is desired to round up semester-hours to the next higher multiple of 4 is the approval of the Graduate School required.

A student suspended for an academic code violation or disciplinary violation must be enrolled for at least one full semester at Brown following the suspension in order to be eligible to graduate. Permission to return to Brown must take place through the relevant readmission application process and is neither implied nor guaranteed by this requirement.

Registration at Other Universities

In addition to the transfer of credit earned at other universities, there are three ways for students to earn credit for academic work performed elsewhere: cross-registration available through the Harvard University Faculty of Arts & Sciences (FAS) and Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), registration in the [Exchange Scholar Program](#), and international exchange programs.

Cross-Registration

There are agreements in place between Brown and the Harvard University Faculty of Arts & Sciences and Brown and the Rhode Island School of Design to allow cross-registration of graduate students in courses without paying tuition to the host institution.

A Brown graduate student is required to use the appropriate form in [UFunds](#) to obtain authorization from the DGS of their graduate program. The Brown graduate student would then receive instructions to electronically enroll at Harvard FAS or manually at RISD. Neither Harvard nor RISD is required to offer courses in online or hybrid formats by virtue of these agreements. Students should confirm that they can participate in the course in accordance with its listed format.

*Information for All Students***Steps for Cross Registering at Harvard**

Brown students go to the “Graduate School Administrative Forms” page in [UFunds](#) and fill out the “Harvard and RISD Cross-Registration” form. The student will get the approval of their program’s DGS to take the course. If approval is given, the student will designate the DGS a recommender for the form in [UFunds](#) and the department representative will complete the online recommendation. This notifies the Registrar’s office that the student may proceed, at which point the student will be instructed to register online at Harvard.

Harvard Registration Process

1. [Create an account](#) allowing you to enroll through my.harvard. The New User Registration form needs to be re-submitted each term regardless of previous FAS course enrollments.
2. Step 2: [Cross-register for courses directly](#) in my.harvard.

Steps for Cross Registering at RISD

Brown students go to the “Graduate School Administrative Forms” page in [UFunds](#) and fill out the “Harvard and RISD Cross-Registration” form. The student will get the approval of their program’s DGS to take the course. If approval is given, the student will designate the DGS a recommender for the form in [UFunds](#) and the department representative will complete the online recommendation. This notifies the Registrar’s office that the student may proceed, at which point the student will be instructed to register online at RISD.

RISD Registration Process

1. The student will take the RISD cross-registration form to the first day of class at RISD. If the instructor is willing to allow them into the course, the instructor will sign the form.
2. The student will take the form to the RISD Registrar’s Office for their approval. If they approve, an office representative will sign the form. Because cross-registered students are registered at both RISD and Brown, the student should expect to complete further paperwork for RISD’s registration purposes.
3. Once the student has all of the necessary approvals, the student will bring the form back to the Brown Registrar’s Office. A Registrar’s Office staff member will sign the form and will register the student for the course.

International Partnership Programs

Brown has a variety of partnership programs with international institutions. Some are open to students in every discipline, while others are restricted by field. Please contact the [Office of Global Engagement](#) for more information

Employment, Health Insurance, and Loans

Outside Employment: Students on a Stipend-Based or Research Appointments

Brown's doctoral programs are residential degree programs that require full-time dedication in order to reach the goals of superior scholarship envisioned for all students. Brown University awards doctoral students generous stipends, tuition and health insurance with the express expectation, and for the express reason, that students devote themselves fully to the prospect of becoming the very best possible scholar during their time as a graduate student at Brown. Additionally, students in the sciences may be supported as research assistants via grant funding.

In any given academic term (spring, summer, or fall), a graduate student's stipend or research funding is attached to a particular activity, either a fellowship, teaching assistantship, research assistantship, or proctorship as a part of the candidate's scholarly training. The Graduate School also recognizes that various training opportunities outside regular appointments can play important roles in preparing graduate students for careers both inside and outside of academe. For supported graduate students in good standing, the Graduate Council is supportive of such additional training opportunities. Such paid activities by graduate students in receipt of Graduate School stipends or research funding should not exceed twelve (12) hours per week. Students wishing to exceed this limit must obtain permission from both their advisor and the [Senior Associate Dean of Student Development](#) at the Graduate School. In addition, policies of outside agencies that provide funding to specific students, as well as those governing visas for international students, must be observed at all times.

Students on a stipend-based or research appointment who desire to work in an outside employment position at Brown are only eligible to be employed in an exempt position; such students are not eligible to work in a non-exempt position at Brown while receiving a stipend.

Policy on activities outside of stipended appointments

Graduate students who are not supported on full-time, stipend-based appointments (e.g. Master's students, doctoral students beyond who do not receive a stipend due to being beyond their funding guarantee) may choose to find hourly employment. University Human Resources posts work opportunities on [Workday](#), where students can browse available postings any time. Any current, unsupported graduate students are eligible to work through the student employment program without regard to financial need. International students should consult with the [Office of International Student and Scholar Services](#) on the visa implications of hourly student employment.

Doctoral students employed full-time as an adjunct instructor at Brown or another institution may be eligible for a professional development leave of absence during the period of their employment.

Student Health and Dental Insurance

Information for All Students

For the most current information on the policies surrounding health and dental insurance for Brown graduate students, please see the [Graduate School website](#).

Student Loans

To supplement other forms of support they receive from Brown, students may also be eligible for federal direct student loans and other educational loans. Student loans for graduate and undergraduate students are administered through the [Office of Financial Aid](#). To be considered for any student loans, domestic students are required to submit a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). The FAFSA should be submitted online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. (Brown University's graduate code for the FAFSA is: E00058).

The Federal Direct Student Loan program may provide loans to eligible applicants. International students are not eligible for these loans. In order to be considered for a federal loan, students must submit the FAFSA form, and complete any additional requirements requested by the Office of Financial Aid before the loan application can be processed. Students in most graduate degree programs may be eligible for Federal Graduate Unsubsidized loans each academic year. Students should check with the [Department of Education for up to date information on borrowing limits and interest rates](#). A Federal Graduate PLUS loan can also be applied for after a FAFSA is completed, but this loan requires a credit history check as part of the application. Unlike the Federal Graduate Unsubsidized loans, the PLUS loan has no set limit, and can be up to the student's cost of attendance. Students should consult the [Office of Financial Aid](#) for the maximum borrowing eligibility. A FAFSA must be on file for the student to be considered for these funds.

Should a graduate student require additional loans beyond federal eligibility, various alternative loans are available in the commercial marketplace. Eligibility is based on credit and both U.S. citizens and international students (with an eligible U.S. citizen co-borrower) may apply. Students would apply directly through the third-party lender and the Loan Office would certify the student's loan amount eligibility.

To learn more about loan borrowing options please visit the [Office of Financial Aid](#)'s website for graduate students or write to the Graduate School Financial Aid counselors at GS_Financial_Aid@brown.edu.

Brown University also provides a number of opportunities for short-term loans and emergency funding. Please see [Emergency Loan Programs](#) on the Graduate School website.

Leaves of Absence

The Graduate School recognizes that during the course of graduate study a student may need to request a leave of absence. Students considering a leave of absence are encouraged to make an appointment with a dean in the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies to review their leave options. Depending on individual circumstances, students may also be referred to other offices for additional support, such as Student Accessibility Services (SAS), the Office of

Information for All Students

International Students and Scholar Services (OISSS), and the Office of Financial Aid. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to review whether reasonable accommodations through Student Accessibility Services might make it possible to continue as an active registered student.

Requests for leaves of absence should be submitted to the Graduate School or the School of Professional Studies, as appropriate, at least four weeks before the start of the semester in which the leave is to be taken. Students who need to address a medical need may request a medical leave of absence at any time, and students experiencing an urgent personal matter may request a personal leave of absence at any time. Requests received at a later date will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Students who have not been approved for a leave by the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies will still be considered active and be billed for tuition. Until students receive written confirmation of the approval of their leave of absence request from the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies, they are considered registered and will be expected to fulfill their academic and other responsibilities as enrolled students, including completing coursework. All leave of absence applications require approval by the Director of Graduate Study via the appropriate form in [UFunds](#).

Initiating a Leave Request: Students must use the relevant [UFunds](#) application to request a leave.

For leaves other than medical leave, the process for which is discussed later in this handbook, the leave request process then follows these steps:

1. Once the student submits the request via [UFunds](#), the Department Chair or the program DGS must review the leave request for approval.
2. If approved, the form is then reviewed by the relevant dean.
3. If a student is an international student, the [UFunds](#) application must also be reviewed and approved by the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (OISSS) regardless of program modality.

In cases where a student has existing Federal Title IV Aid funding or prior Federal student loans, we also recommend that the student reviews the impact of a leave with Student Financial Services.

Eligibility for all types of leave: All students in good academic standing are eligible to apply for a leave of absence. Eligibility for leave of absence requests from students who have completed less than one full term or who are not in good academic standing will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Leaves are available only in instances when a student's academic standing permits them to continue in the degree program when they return from leave and when there is otherwise a viable path to completion of the degree. Students on warning status may have their request for leave denied.

Length of Leave: Leaves of absence may range in length from one semester to one full year (two semesters and a summer term). Leaves of absence are not regularly granted for the summer term only. Readmission from a leave for the summer term requires additional approval by the program and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. To request an extension to a leave of

Information for All Students

absence for a second year, students must file a request for an extension with the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies prior to the expiration of their leave; this request must be accompanied by a supporting letter from the program DGS. Students who do not file extension requests or whose extension requests are not approved may be automatically withdrawn from their graduate programs at Brown.

Student Status: Students on a leave of absence are not active enrolled students. Students on leave retain their admitted student status; however, they are not registered and enrolled and therefore do not have the rights and privileges of registered and enrolled students. Because individuals on leave are not active enrolled students, taking a leave may have significant implications for student loans as well as for visas for international students.

Academic Obligations: All types of leave “stop the clock” on the student’s academic requirements, including service requirements, for the duration of the leave—with the exception of requirements that should have been met prior to the leave. Thus, students on leave may be expected to complete academic work from previous terms (e.g. incomplete grades) before readmission. Taking a leave of absence in and of itself should not affect a student’s academic progress or standing. Teaching and research requirements must be met by the student following return from leave.

University Privileges: Students on all types of leave will retain their Brown University email account during the first year of leave and as needed if leaves are extended. Students on all types of leave can request continued access to Brown University libraries and recreation facilities, unless otherwise noted, for the period of the approved leave by emailing the dean approving their leave. Students requesting access to recreation facilities will have to pay the standard recreation fee for students. No fee will be charged for continued access to Brown University libraries. Students may also request continued building access, which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

As students on leave are not active registered students, they do not have continued access to all University services available to registered students, such as University Health Services (including the Pharmacy), Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), free RIPTA use, and student membership to Brown Recreation facilities while on leave of absence.

Insurance: Students who are approved for a leave of absence and who have been previously insured under the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) for the enrollment period immediately prior to taking the leave of absence are eligible to enroll in SHIP for a maximum of one year. Students are responsible for the payment of the premium, unless they are doctoral or MFA students on medical leave in which case the Graduate School pays the premium. It is not possible to extend enrollment in SHIP beyond one year even if the leave is extended further.

Financial Terms: No financial support will be given during the leave period. Students should consult with the Student Financial Services regarding the implications of a leave for financial aid and student loans. Students in Master’s programs should also consult with the Office of Financial Aid on the Brown policy regarding tuition refunds.

Information for All Students

Family, Medical, Professional Development, and Probationary Leaves allow students to defer funding commitments from Brown. Personal Leaves do not allow students to defer funding commitments from Brown, except by petition in exceptional cases, with approval by the graduate program and the Graduate School.

Students receiving funding from external sources, such as the government grants, are subject to the conditions established by the funding source.

International Students: A student in F-1 or J-1 status seeking a leave of absence is required to contact the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (OISSS) as soon as possible for advising and to enter the contact information of an OISSS staff member in the “recommender” on their leave of absence application in [UFunds](#). When on a leave of absence a student is no longer enrolled full-time and is not allowed to remain in the U.S. during a period of approved leave of absence (for students seeking medical leave, please see the section for international students below).

Categories of Leave

- **Family Leave:** This leave is granted for family needs. (See below for more details. The Family Leave is distinct from the “parental relief” accommodation discussed in the following section.)
- **Medical Leave:** This leave is granted for a graduate student to address a medical need. (See below for more details.)
- **Short-Term Medical Accommodation:** This accommodation is granted for temporary relief from academic duties due to illness, injury, or a temporary acute phase of a chronic condition. Short-term medical accommodations are not available for most master’s students. (See below for more details.)
- **Professional Development Leave:** This leave is granted for an approved educational or professional development opportunity that advances the student’s pedagogic goals. (See below for more details.)
- **Probationary Leave:** This leave is granted to students for problems with academic performance. (See below for more details.)
- **Personal Leave:** This leave is an elective leave taken for personal reasons. (See below for more details.)

Regardless of the type of leave, the leave will be recorded in the academic transcript as “Leave of absence.”

Family Leave of Absence

Subject to the conditions above, a graduate student at Brown University may take an unpaid Family Leave of Absence for the birth or adoption of the student’s child within one year of the child’s birth or placement for adoption or for care of the student’s spouse, domestic partner, child, or parent with a serious health condition. One student per family may be on Family Leave at a given time. Students may take a Family Leave for up to one year (two semesters and a

Information for All Students

summer) Requests for extension of a Family Leave beyond one year, or for repeated Family Leaves, may be made. Approval of extensions, deferral of funding and continued academic accommodation is at the discretion of the deans of the Graduate School. The student is expected to notify the DGS in writing of plans to take a Family Leave at the earliest possible date, so that appropriate arrangements can be made to cover any teaching/research responsibilities.

For information on academic requirements, insurance, financial terms, etc., please consult the information common to all leaves above.

Medical Leave of Absence

Subject to the conditions above, a graduate student may take a Medical Leave of Absence to address a medical need. A student considering a Medical Leave should consult with the Associate Dean of Student Support in the Graduate School or the Associate Dean of Student Affairs in the School of Professional Studies, as well as [University Health Services](#) and/or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#). Students may request a Medical Leave at any time.

Students requesting a Medical Leave of Absence initiate the process with the Associate Dean of Student Support in the Graduate School or the Associate Dean of Student Affairs in SPS and must submit the relevant Medical Leave of Absence Request application in [UFunds](#). (No confidential information need be shared with except with the relevant deans and health care providers.) The request for a medical leave must be approved in writing by the student's department and the Graduate School or the School of Professional Studies (as applicable). The student's transcript will read only "Leave of Absence."

In exceptional circumstances and where program and funding structures allow, medical leaves may be approved for periods of that do not fully align with the semester and summer term periods.

Students who are seeking to return to Brown following a medical leave should follow the Guidelines for Clearance to Return from Medical leave ([found here on the Graduate School website](#)).

Requests for extension of Medical Leave beyond the initially approved period may be made with approval the relevant dean in the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies and the student's graduate program.

Insurance: Students who take a Medical Leave of Absence who have been previously insured under the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) for the enrollment period immediately prior to taking the leave of absence are eligible to enroll in SHIP for a maximum of one year. For doctoral students on Medical Leave, the Graduate School or the Division of Biology and Medicine will pay their insurance premium. It is not possible to extend enrollment in the Student Health Plan beyond one year even if the leave is extended further.

Information for All Students

International Students: A student approved for a Medical Leave of Absence, who intends to seek treatment in the U.S. (doctor's note required) during the approved period of leave, may be approved to remain in the United States. Students seeking to remain in the U.S. while on Medical Leave are required to request this with OISSS.

Accommodations: Students with disabilities who are considering a Medical Leave are encouraged to review, depending on their circumstances, whether a reasonable accommodation through Student and Accessibility Services (SAS) might either make it possible to continue as an active registered student and/or be appropriate once a student has returned from leave.

Medical Leave Grant: The Graduate School recognizes that a Medical Leave of Absence, particularly the temporary interruption of a stipend, can be a financial challenge. In an effort to help graduate students prioritize their health and wellbeing and alleviate the potential financial difficulties, doctoral and MFA students who are supported by a stipend are eligible to apply for a Medical Leave Grant to be paid at the onset of a Medical Leave. Students should submit the Medical Leave Grant application in [UFunds](#). Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications to these medical leave of absence procedures by contacting the Associate Dean for Student Support in the Graduate School.

Professional Development Leave of Absence

A graduate student may take a one to two semester leave for an approved educational or professional development opportunity that advances the student's pedagogic goals. Examples of reasons for a Professional Leave include full-time professional internships, or short-term teaching or research appointments at another institution. Applications for a Professional Leave must be require the approval of the student's department and the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies. Professional development leave requests and should be made at least four weeks before the start of the semester in which the student would like to take the leave.

Professional Leaves are normally for a maximum of one year. In extraordinary situations the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies will consider a request for one, and one only, extra year.

Probationary Leave of Absence

A graduate student may take a one to two semester academic Probationary Leave at the recommendation of the student's graduate program for deficiencies related to academic performance. For all Probationary Leaves, the Graduate School and School of Professional Studies will require written confirmation that both the graduate program and the student agree to the leave of absence. A Probationary Leave allows a student additional time to meet academic requirements while on leave, preserving any funding commitments and the possibility of a return to active student status in the program. In some circumstances, a graduate program may recommend Probationary Leave following a term or semester on Warning status. Probationary Leaves must be accompanied by a plan of action that describes what the student needs to accomplish during the leave in order to be considered for reenrollment in the program.

Information for All Students

Applications for a Probationary Leave must be completed with the student's graduate program and with the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies, and should be made at least four weeks before the start of the semester in which the student would like to take the leave. Probationary Leaves are granted for one to two semesters, with the possibility of extension for up to one additional year. Students on a Probationary Leave may only reenroll with the written permission of the Director of Graduate Studies and approval by the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies.

Requests for extension of a probationary leave may be made to the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies.

Academic Obligations: As with other types of leave, students on Probationary Leave will have their academic "clock stopped" and will not accrue new academic obligations. However, students are still responsible for academic obligations incurred prior to going on Probationary Leave, such as grades of incomplete.

Personal Leave of Absence

A graduate student may take a one to two semester leave for personal reasons, including military service. Applications for a Personal Leave must be completed with the student's graduate program and with the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies, and should be made at least four weeks before the start of the semester in which the student would like to take the leave. Personal Leaves are granted for one to two semesters, with the possibility of extension for up to one additional year.

Financial Terms: Funding commitments from Brown are not deferred while a student is on Personal Leave; this means that a student who takes Personal Leave during years one through five (year six in the Humanities and Social Sciences) in the program forfeits guaranteed funding from the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies equal to the duration of the Personal Leave. In exceptional cases, the Graduate School and the graduate program may allow funding commitments to be deferred while a student is on personal leave. Students receiving funding from external sources, such as government grants, are subject to the conditions established by the funding source.

Leaves and Progress in the Program

Doctoral students have five years from the time they advance to candidacy to submit their dissertation. Extensions to candidacy may be granted by the Graduate School. If time on leave will place a student past the five-year post-candidacy deadline for completion, then the student must request both a leave of absence and an extension to candidacy.

Filing a Dissertation or Thesis While on Leave

Students may file their thesis or dissertation while on leave.

*Information for All Students****Readmission from Leave***

To return to active status, and to be eligible for funding in the next academic term, students for all leave types *other than* Medical Leave must notify the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies in writing by May 1 for a fall-semester return or November 1 for a spring-semester return. Readmission for summer term requires additional approval by the program and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis; such requests must be submitted no later than April 1.

For readmission from leaves other than medical, the student should write to the program requesting readmission, and if the request is approved by the program, the DGS should endorse and forward the request to the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies.

Students who are seeking to return to Brown following a Medical Leave must notify the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies by May 1 and should follow the Guidelines for Clearance to Return from Medical leave ([found here on the Graduate School website](#)).

Return after an extended leave: Before students are readmitted from an extended absence, chairs and DGSs need to take special care to re-orient them. Completion requirements and the processes for determining financial support and appointment types, among other things, may be different than when that student was previously enrolled. Advisors and faculty may have changed, as well as training and degree requirements.

Accommodations**Short-Term Medical Accommodation (PhD and MFA students only)**

The Graduate School recognizes there are times when an acute medical matter may arise that requires accommodations but not a Medical Leave of Absence.

A Short-Term Medical Accommodation allows graduate students from one week up to a maximum of 4 weeks away from academic responsibilities (including coursework, teaching, and research) to focus on their health and wellbeing, when the accommodation would not fundamentally alter a student's academic program. A graduate student requiring temporary relief from their academic duties due to illness, injury, or a temporary acute phase of a chronic condition may apply for a Short-Term Medical Accommodation at any point during the academic year. Students approved for a Short-Term Medical Accommodation maintain their active, full-time student status and all accompanying privileges, including stipend, where applicable.

As Short-Term Medical Accommodations may not fundamentally alter the essential nature of a student's course, curriculum or program, a medical leave may be required if an accommodation for the period requested would result in a fundamental alteration.

Eligibility: Graduate students in good or satisfactory academic standing are eligible for up to 4 weeks of Short-Term Medical accommodation.

Information for All Students

Length of Accommodation: Short-Term Medical Accommodations provide one to four weeks of relief from academic responsibilities. The length is determined by the nature of the acute medical matter and any documented recommendation from a licensed provider.

Financial Terms: Stipended students approved for a Short-Term Medical Accommodation will continue to receive their stipend for the period of the accommodation. As such, a student's funding clock is not paused. Students receiving funding from external sources, such as government grants, may, subject to the conditions established by the funding source, require additional review and may elect to be fully supported by the Graduate School for the term of the accommodation.

Concurrent stipends from an external source and the Graduate School are not allowed.

Request Procedure: Graduate students who experience an acute medical matter must meet as soon as possible with Associate Dean of Student Support in the Graduate School (for doctoral and MFA students) or the Associate Dean of Student Affairs in the School of Professional Studies (for all other master's students). Students should submit the appropriate Short-Term Medical Accommodation Request Form in [UFunds](#). The relevant dean will review the application and share the accommodation request with the student's department, asking the Chair, DGS and faculty or research advisor, as applicable, to determine if the Short-Term Accommodation would be a reasonable in the context of the particular degree program. If a reasonable accommodation cannot be identified, a Medical Leave of Absence may be necessary. Students are required to register with Student and Accessibility Services (SAS), which includes completing an Information and Release for, meeting with a SAS professional staff member to discuss student needs, and submitting documentation that meets their guidelines.

Supporting Documents: Documentation from a medical provider must be submitted to SAS at the conclusion of the accommodation period, clearing the graduate student to resume all full-time academic duties. In those instances where a student has not been cleared to return to full academic responsibilities, a Medical Leave of Absence may be necessary.

Medical documentation will also be required at the conclusion of the accommodation period, clearing the graduate student to resume all full-time academic duties. In those instances where a student has not been cleared to return to full academic responsibilities, a medical leave of absence may be necessary.

Support for Student Parents

Brown University is committed to supporting all of our graduate students in their professional development, and to finding ways to accommodate life events in that process. The Family Leave and Parental Relief policies are aimed at helping graduate students successfully balance their parenting responsibilities and their academic and professional pursuits. The Parental Relief and the family leave policies both provide ways of "stopping the clock" for graduate students facing special family needs that require their full-time attention.

Information for All Students

The Parental Relief and Family Leave policies establish minimum standards for accommodation for graduate students. It is expected that advisors, academic staff, and departmental leaders will work with sensitivity and imagination to provide more than this minimum, according to the particular circumstances of the student. For example, students whose research involves working with toxic materials or requires extensive travel to remote archives or field areas may need additional forms of accommodation during the entire term of their pregnancy and during lactation. Advisors should have realistic expectations about rates of progress on research for students with new additions to their families. We encourage students availing themselves of Parental Relief or Family Leave to keep open lines of communication with their departments. The Parental Relief and Family Leave policies do not replace the communication and cooperation between students and their programs, and the good-faith efforts of both to accommodate family needs. Programs are also encouraged to take into consideration the additional challenges that after-hours programming may place on graduate students who are parents.

Students who are not eligible for Parental Relief should contact any Associate Dean in the Graduate School or School of Professional Studies to request modifications of academic responsibilities because of the birth or adoption of a child. Such students include many Master's students and doctoral students beyond year six. The Associate Deans will provide guidance to the student and faculty advisors, department chairs or DGSs, where relevant. Student parents are encouraged to review the eligibility requirements for other family resources, including the child care subsidy, child dependent health insurance subsidy, and backup care.

Parental Relief Support

Parental Relief is designed to partially ameliorate the academic and professional demands on graduate student parents who are primary caregivers of newly born or adopted children.

Recognizing the demands of being the primary caregiver for a newborn infant or adopted child, Parental Relief provides stipended graduate students with an additional semester, or a summer, of stipended support, regardless of funding source, at the standard rate set annually by the Graduate School.

- Parental Relief “stops the clock” on the student’s academic requirements, including service requirements, for the duration of one semester or summer.
- Eligible graduate students may take this relief during the semester or summer in which birth or adoption occurs, or in the immediately following semester.
- Students on Parental Relief maintain full-time student status. Insurance coverage, eligibility for deferment of student loan repayment, and visa status for international students are thus maintained during the relief period.
- In instances in which co-parents are both graduate students at Brown both parents are eligible for Parental Relief for a birth or adoption.

Eligibility: Graduate students in good or satisfactory academic standing who are supported by a stipend are eligible for Parental Relief for the care of a newly born infant or adopted child under

Information for All Students

16 years of age. Doctoral students beyond year 6 are not eligible for Parental Relief. Graduate students may request Parental Relief up to two times during their tenure as a student at Brown.

Length of Parental Relief: The relief provides a stipend for one semester or a summer. Students electing summer support will receive the summer support outlined in the applicant's admissions letter at the monthly stipend rate set by the Graduate School.

Financial Terms: The Graduate School provides support at the rate of the standard base stipend for the duration of the relief period. Health insurance, health service fee coverage, and dental insurance for the student are maintained. Students receiving funding from external sources, such as government grants, may, subject to the conditions established by the funding source, elect to be fully supported by the Graduate School for the term of the Parental Relief instead of by the external funding source. Concurrent stipends from an external source and the Graduate School are not allowed.

Request Procedure: Graduate students who anticipate the birth or adoption of a child are encouraged to meet early with the Associate Dean of Student Support in the Graduate School, to address questions about the Parental Relief policy. Students should submit the Parental Relief Support Request application in [UFunds](#). Students are encouraged to communicate with their advisor(s) and DGS as early as possible prior to the anticipated start of the Parental Relief term in order to allow programs to rearrange teaching duties and research directors to work out schedules as appropriate.

Supporting Documents: Students approved for Parental Relief are required to submit supporting documents of the adoption or childbirth event 15 days before or after the event.

See also: [Family Leave of Absence section](#).

Part-Time Status

Part-time study requires written prior approval of the Graduate School and the DGS of the program.

PhD

In some degree programs, it is possible for doctoral students to study on a part-time basis, with the approval of the program director of graduate study and the Graduate School. Enrollment in fewer than four courses per semester does not in itself make a student part-time.

Master's

The number of courses required for full-time enrollment status in Master's programs depends upon the program structure. Students whose enrollment is less than or more than full-time will be charged at the rate per tuition unit set for that program by the Corporation.

*Information for All Students***Financial and Visa Implications of Part-Time Status**

Half-time is usually enough to maintain eligibility for student loan deferrals, but students should review their specific loan agreements before relinquishing full-time status. International students should also be aware of potential impact on their visa status, and should confirm any change with the [Office of International Student and Scholar Services](#) (OISSS).

Additional information on the tuition implications related to part-time status can be found on the [Office of the Registrar's website](#). Once financial and visa implications have been considered, the student should request part-time status and the DGS endorse the request and forward it to the Graduate School.

Codes of Student Conduct**Academic and Student Conduct Codes**

Graduate students are expected to be aware of, and to comply with, the Academic Code: Graduate Student Edition and the Brown University Code of Student Conduct. The Academic Code: Graduate Student Edition can be found on the Graduate School website, and the [Code of Student Conduct can be found on the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards website](#). All graduate students are required to complete the Academic and Student Codes of Conduct course shared with them by the Graduate School and School of Professional Studies. PhD and MFA students who have not completed this course should contact the Graduate School for further instructions. All other graduate students should contact the School of Professional studies for the same.

Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment

Graduate students in their roles as students, research assistants, teaching assistants, and teaching fellows are expected to comply with the University's policies prohibiting sexual and gender-based harassment and sexual violence. The applicable policies can be found on the Title IX and Gender Equity Office's [website](#). The Title IX and Gender Equity's Office website also contains information on reporting options, support services, and resources available to students.

Grievance Procedures

Read the updated [Graduate Student Grievance Procedures](#) (adopted by the Faculty on November 6, 2018). They can also be found in the [Faculty Rules and Regulations](#), Part 4, Section 11, IIA.

Grievances related to students' appointment as RAs, TAs, TA IIs, TFs, and Proctors may be subject to further processes outlined in the union contract.

Information for All Students

Commencement

Prizes and Awards

There are a number of awards for which students can be nominated to recognize excellence in a variety of areas including teaching, scholarship, community engagement. For more detailed information, please refer to the Graduate School's [webpage on awards](#).

Procession and Ceremony

Only students who are receiving advanced degrees from Brown are permitted to march in the Commencement procession and participate in the Graduate School graduation ceremony. Students who have been awarded degrees the prior October or February are also eligible to participate in the May Commencement ceremony.

For information on registering for commencement, please consult [the Graduate School website](#).

The Graduate School requires that degree requirements be complete to participate in the Commencement ceremony. The only exception to this rule is for a diploma that is withheld for financial reasons. In this instance, a student may march and receive a blank piece of paper instead of the diploma. Departments may include students who are almost finished with their degree requirements in their departmental ceremonies.

After degree requirements are complete but before the next Commencement, a student may request a Certificate of Completion from the [Registrar's](#) office.

Post-Graduation

Student Privileges

Students transition from student status to alumni status as of the date of graduation. This transition entails a number of practical changes of which students should be aware. Brown card access is terminated on May 31; students who need access to card-controlled buildings should request such access with the appropriate program staff. Students must return keys to Brown facilities once they graduate unless other arrangements are made with their program. Brown student email accounts are migrated from brown.edu to alumni.brown.edu ten days after the Registrar's Office marks a student as having completed their degree requirements.

Students who have graduated and were covered by the Brown University health insurance program will continue to be covered by their insurance until August 14. While insurance coverage remains active during the summer, access to [University Health Services](#), athletic facilities, and other benefits specific to active students ends with the close of the academic year for students who graduate.

Information for All Students

Alumni Relations

Brown University is proud of the accomplishments of its students, and the University encourages students to remain in contact with their program staff, faculty members, the [Brown Alumni Association](#), and the Graduate School. Students who have graduated may contact the [Brown Alumni Association](#) to request activation of an alumni email account and to establish alumni borrowing privileges at the Brown libraries.

Student Records

Students may order documents such as a transcript or enrollment verification at any time from the [Office of the Registrar](#). Students who have completed and filed their dissertations but not yet received their degrees may request a Certificate of Degree Completion from the Office of the Registrar once their degree requirements have been fulfilled.

Information Primarily for Doctoral Students

Dissertation Advisor and Committee

The Dissertation Committee

Each program should provide in its handbook the procedure for how students select their dissertation advisors and committees, and set a timetable for doing so. Programs should be structured so that each student always has an advisor; leaving a gap between advice from the DGS and advice from the preliminary examination committee and/or dissertation advisor may prolong time to degree and increase attrition.

Chairs and DGSs need to be aware of the advising and mentoring relationships in their graduate programs. Monitoring the progress of each student is the responsibility of the program and not only that of the faculty advisor. The dissertation chair and the other faculty members of a dissertation committee should meet with the student on a regular basis, with a minimum of once a semester.

Policy on Advisors Who Have Left Brown

Under normal circumstances, when a faculty member leaves Brown, their advisees will be required to seek a new advisor. Subject to the approval of the chair of the department, faculty who leave Brown may continue to serve as dissertation or thesis advisors for students whom they were advising at the time of their departure. The program must be mindful of the need to provide students with some on-campus supervision and contact in the cases where a non-resident advisor continues service.

Policy on Emeriti Faculty

Emeriti faculty are a valuable resource for students, programs, and the University. The Graduate School has adopted the following guidelines regarding the role of emeriti faculty:

- Faculty who retire and move into emeritus standing may, at the request of the relevant student(s) and program(s), continue to serve as advisors to students who were under their tutelage at the time of retirement.
- With departmental approval, an emeritus faculty member can serve as a reader on a dissertation provided there are no other emeritus faculty members on that thesis committee.
- With departmental approval, an emeritus faculty member can serve as a co-primary advisor on a dissertation along with a regular member of the faculty. An emeritus faculty member cannot serve as the sole primary advisor on a dissertation.

*Information Primarily for Master's Students****Admission to Candidacy***

Admission to doctoral candidacy is a student's last formal requirement for earning the PhD before the submission of the dissertation. To be admitted, the student must have passed all other departmental requirements, usually including courses, language proficiency, and one or more written or oral examinations (prelims). Each program's handbook should clearly explain what the requirements are, how they may be met, what is the timetable or deadlines for meeting them, how students will be notified when they have met requirements, and what happens when students fail to meet these requirements upon the first attempt as well as what happens regarding subsequent failed attempts.

Most programs allow a second attempt at all or part of the preliminary exams. The program's handbook should state clear standards for allowing the exam to be retaken and a reasonable time frame for a second attempt. If the exams are tailored to each student's specific interests, the scope in each case should be clear to the examiners and the student.

Advancement to candidacy must be recorded in GSIM. The date of admission is printed on the student's transcript, and the fact that they have been admitted is required for general reporting purposes within the University as well as many applications for external funding.

Doctoral students have up to five years after admission into their program to achieve candidacy. Students who do not achieve candidacy by the end of their fifth year will be withdrawn from the Graduate School. Requests for a one-year extension for achieving candidacy may be made to the Graduate School by the DGS in the student's program.

Extension of Candidacy

It is University policy that the dissertation should be completed within five years of achieving candidacy. Nevertheless, students sometimes require more time, and in cases where the faculty believes the student will finish and accepts the reasons for delay, candidacy may be extended. Extensions of up to an additional two years beyond the five years since achieving candidacy may be granted by the Graduate School; extensions beyond two years require a vote of the Graduate Council.

The DGS must request any extension of candidacy from the Graduate School in writing. Note that the student must also write to justify the extension. Any extension must be to a specific date mentioned in the request.

Students who are more than five years beyond achieving candidacy and who have not been approved for an extension of candidacy may be withdrawn from the Graduate School.

Conducting Dissertation Research Away from Brown

Conducting Research and Traveling Abroad

Research related activities under any circumstances are subject to a variety of important requirements. When there is an international component, these requirements still apply and there may be additional compliance issues that need to be addressed.

Before students engage in [Brown-sponsored travel abroad](#), they are required to register their travel plans in [TravelSafe](#), Brown's international travel registry. Adding travel itineraries and emergency contact information enables international travel risk management staff to reach out and assist travelers in the event of an emergency. Registration also provides travelers with pre-authorization to access the benefits provided--at no additional cost--through International SOS, Brown's emergency assistance provider.

All Brown graduate students traveling abroad on behalf of the University (i.e., internships, research, study abroad, conference travel, etc.) are automatically enrolled in a [blanket study/travel abroad accident and sickness insurance policy](#). Please review the information about what is covered and what the limitations are, [per this policy](#). Benefits covered through both International SOS and the accident and sickness insurance policy are all coordinated through International SOS.

Depending on where they are traveling, students may be required to complete a Safety Plan and obtain approval prior to making their travel arrangements. For more information, and to review the international travel policy, please visit the [international travel risk management website](#).

Students who plan to conduct dissertation research away from Brown during one of their years of guaranteed support from the Graduate School have the following funding options available to them: (1) they may be eligible for a dissertation fellowship based on the recommendation of their department, in which case they use one of their years of guaranteed funding; (2) they may have an external fellowship and apply for supplemental stipend and tuition support from the Graduate School under the incentive program; or (3) they may "opt-out" of Graduate School funding and "stop their funding clock" for up to two semesters by taking Advanced Status. For information on Advanced Status, see above. Students who are ineligible for Advanced Status may, with the approval of the graduate program and the Graduate School, have the option to opt out of the stipend but retain tuition remission in order to maintain active student status; please note that this does not defer funding commitments.

Students who are awarded external fellowships and do not take Advanced Status are considered by the Graduate School as funded students and the conditions of the external award incentive policy apply.

Information Primarily for Master's Students

Exchange Scholar Program

Under terms of the [Exchange Scholar Program](#), the graduate schools of the University of California at Berkeley, Brown, the University of Chicago, Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, MIT, the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, Stanford and Yale have agreed to admit each others' students for one year of study, where appropriate, without charging tuition. For information on this program, see the [Exchange Scholar Program](#) page on the Graduate School website.

Submission of Dissertations and Theses

Filing of Dissertations and Policy on Public Access to Dissertations

PhD candidates at Brown must file their dissertations electronically. Brown's electronic theses and dissertation (ETD) system is designed to collect and archive final dissertation as a text-based PDF file. Electronic dissertations submitted through the ETD will appear in the Library's discovery service and in the Brown digital repository.

In the spirit of the dissemination of new knowledge that is a hallmark of higher education, dissertations will be subject to web searches and unrestricted downloads unless the student requests to opt out that system and have their dissertation unavailable for download outside of the Brown community. A request to restrict download access to a dissertation has an initial two-year window from the time the degree is conferred. Guidelines associated with restricted dissertation access are:

- The full text version of the dissertation will be available for download only to members of the Brown community.
- Web searches including the citation and abstract of restricted dissertations will continue to be available to the general public.
- After two years the restriction will elapse.
- Restrictions on full text download may be renewed for two-year periods up to a total of ten years from the date of degree conferral. Requests for additional two-year restrictions should be made to the Graduate School.
- Any requests to extend the restriction beyond ten years must go to the Graduate Council for approval.
- In cases where the dissertation is a co-worked piece and there is disagreement between the student and the advisor over whether the dissertation will or will not be available for download outside of the Brown community, the dispute will be brought before the Graduate Council for resolution.

To complete the electronic submission process, doctoral candidates must have successfully defended their dissertation and had it approved by their committee. To use the ETD system, doctoral candidates must possess a valid username and password for accessing Brown's computer network. If you are unable to create an account in the system, please contact ETD@brown.edu for assistance.

*Information Primarily for Master's Students***Deadlines**

For current information on deadlines, please see [the Registrar's webpage on degree conferrals](#).

Registration in semester I allows a student to submit a dissertation or thesis until the start of classes in the spring. Registration in semester II allows a student to submit a dissertation or thesis until the start of classes in the following fall. If the student does not submit the dissertation or thesis by then and does not need to be an active student, they can be placed on "Enrollment Satisfied – Requirements Pending" status. For information on ESRP (formerly, TP) status, please see above.

Formatting Guidelines

The current dissertation formatting guidelines can be found [on the Graduate School website](#). If you have questions that are not addressed on that site, please contact the [a member of the Academic Affairs team](#).

Information Primarily for Master's Students***Master's Theses: Policy on Emeriti Faculty***

Emeriti faculty are a valuable resource for students, programs, and the University. The Graduate School has adopted the following guidelines regarding the role of emeriti faculty:

- Faculty who retire and move into emeritus standing may, at the pleasure of the relevant student(s) and program(s), continue to serve as advisors to masters students who were under their tutelage at the time of retirement.
- With departmental approval, an emeritus faculty member can serve as a reader on a Master's thesis provided there are no other emeritus faculty members on that thesis committee.

With departmental approval, an emeritus faculty member can serve as a co-primary advisor on a Master's thesis along with a regular member of the faculty. An emeritus faculty member cannot serve as the sole primary advisor on a Master's thesis.

Financial Aid

Financial aid for Master's students is not currently managed centrally, and it varies among programs. Prospective Master's students who have questions about financial aid should contact the program's DGS. Students on campus can also contact the [Office of Financial Aid](#).

Official letters of admission for Master's students provide details of their funding packages (i.e., the number of years and levels of support). All subsequent funding decisions are made at the departmental level and depend on students' academic progress. Students with questions or concerns regarding their funding should address them to their program's DGS