BROWN
School of Public Health

Department of Health Services, Policy & Practice

Health Services Research Doctoral Program Handbook

Updated October 2026

BROWN
School of Public Health

Dear Students,

Welcome to the PhD program in Health Services Research at Brown University's School of Public Health. This handbook provides information about the policies and procedures to guide the completion of your doctoral degree. Information about University Doctoral and Graduate student policies can be found in the Graduate School Handbook.

Inside this handbook, you will find information about degree requirements, financial support and mentoring. We hope that this is a useful resource to you during your time in the program.

Sincerely,

David Meyers, PhD
PhD Program Director

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION 5
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS 6
DEGREE REQUIREMENTS 7
COURSE REQUIREMENTS 8
Quantitative Courses that meet quantitative course requirement 12
Independent Studies and Reading Courses 13
SPECIALTY TRACKS 14
Specialty in Pharmaceutical Health Services Research 14
Specialty in Health Economics 15
Specialty in Comparative Effectiveness Research and Evidence-based Medicine 16
QUALIFYING EXAMS 18
TEACHING REQUIREMENTS 21
JOURNAL CLUB 23
HSR SEMINAR SERIES 25
EXTERNAL DISSERTATION GRANT SUBMISSION 26
THE DISSERTATION 27
STUDENT FUNDING 31
RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS 35
STUDENT EVALUATION 38
MENTORING 39
DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAM COMPETENCIES 42
TRANSITIONAL MASTER OF ARTS (AM) DEGREE 43
ACADEMIC POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND RESOURCES 44

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The management and delivery of healthcare services is at the top of the national agenda. Currently, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation, the healthcare industry is one of the nation's largest employers with $5.1 trillion in total expenditures representing 19.3% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2023. Outside of spending, ensuring that all individuals are able to equitably receive access to care and have a high quality of life is a major goal domestically and globally. Thus, there is a high demand for well-trained professionals to focus on the study of healthcare systems, healthcare quality, organization and financing of medical care, health economics, pharmaceutical management, and policy analysis. Health services research examines how people access healthcare, the components and impacts of healthcare costs, and what happens to patients as a result of this care. The main goals of health services research are to identify the most effective ways to organize, manage, finance, and deliver high quality care; reduce medical errors; improve patient safety; and reduce costs. Health services research is a multidisciplinary field of scientific investigation that studies how social factors, financing systems, organizational structures, care processes, health technologies, and personal behaviors affect access to, the quality of, and the cost of healthcare for the purpose of designing interventions at the level of policies, institutions and individuals with the goal of improving population health.

The doctoral program in Health Services Research at Brown University is housed in the Department of Health Services, Policy & Practice (HSPP) at the School of Public Health. It seeks to:

- Develop scientists experienced in the use of state-of-the-art experimental and quasi-experimental research methods to advance fundamental knowledge of issues central to the improvement of population health by focusing on the organizational characteristics of healthcare delivery system providers, economic forces that shape consumer and provider behavior, and the policy environment in which these relationships exist.

- Promote rational decision making through research synthesis and evidence contextualization; and to develop scientists skilled in the communication of scientific knowledge; both to contribute to the discussion and to the training of the next generation of health services researchers.

- Train scientists to optimally contribute as part of multidisciplinary teams in academic posts, government agencies at the state, federal, and international level, and research arms of private sectors of health service delivery organizations.

- Equip trainees with the skills to lead independent studies to improve services and influence health policy at the organizational, state, national, and international levels such that those policies lead to more equitable health outcomes and equitable use of resources.

The educational philosophy of the doctoral program in Health Services Research incorporates active experiential learning as a complement to classroom work. The program seeks to train students to communicate across disciplinary boundaries. The identification of each student's

specific goals emerge and evolve during extensive mentoring that begins at matriculation and continues throughout the student's career in the program.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Most students admitted to our program come with either work experience or a prior graduate degree, or a mix of both. While there is no formal requirement for prior training, very few candidates are admitted directly from an undergraduate degree.

Students wishing to pursue graduate work in Health Services Research must complete a SOPHAS application. All applications must include the following components:

- A CV or Resume
- A personal statement
- 3 letters of recommendation
- All prior university transcripts
- GRE Scores
- TOEFL scores are required for a student whose native language is not English, but may be waived for those who hold a bachelor's or master's degree from a college or university in the United States or a non-U.S. university where the primary language of instruction is English.

Be sure to check the SOPHAS application to ensure any other requested components are completed.

While you are welcome to reach out to faculty and current students in advance of applying, we recommend first attending an admissions info session (HSR Hour), which are held by the department typically from August through November for a given admissions cycle.

Applications are due on December 1st each year.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The following are the primary requirements for completion of the PhD program in Health Services Research. Additional details about these requirements are found further in the handbook.

- **Residence:** All PhD students must complete the equivalent of three academic years of full-time study beyond a baccalaureate degree. This requirement is reduced to two years if a student has completed a prior graduate degree in a related field. Full-time study is defined as enrollment in at least 4 tuition units a semester. A tuition unit is earned through a single credit course, or appointment as a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant. Note that an academic credit equals one tuition unit.

- **Required Coursework:** Students must complete and pass all required coursework. The full list of required courses is included below.

- **First Year Qualifying Exam:** All students must successfully pass a first year qualifying exam, which will typically take place in May or June of their first year.

- **Second Year Qualifying Exam:** All students must successfully pass a second year qualifying exam in their chosen track, or on the generalist track, which will typically take place in May or June of their second year. Students requiring a third year of coursework have the option to either defer this exam by one year.

- **Responsible Conduct of Research:** All students must complete required research ethics training in their first year of the program.

- **Teaching Requirements:** All students must complete one Teaching Assistantship (TA) and one Teaching Experience (TE) by the time they complete their dissertation.

- **Journal Club and Department Seminars:** All students are expected to attend all journal club sessions as well as all departmental seminars throughout all years of the program. All students must organize journal club for at least one semester by the time they complete their dissertation. All students in year 3+ must also present regularly, typically annually, to the department during allocated student presentation weeks.

- **Grant Submission:** All students must submit a grant application for federal, state, or foundation funding by the end of their third academic year. This grant will typically focus on the student's dissertation.

- **Dissertation:** All students must complete a dissertation in their academic area of interest that presents the results of original health services research. The dissertation may take the form of a book, or three publication worthy academic manuscripts. To complete a dissertation, the degree requirements are:
    - To form a dissertation committee including a chair and at least two other members by the end of the student's third year (defined as the end of May of their third year)

    - To successfully pass an oral dissertation proposal defense by the end of the student's third year

    - To successfully pass a dissertation defense to complete the degree.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The following courses are currently required to complete a PhD in Health Services Research:

1. Responsible Conduct of Research
2. PHP 2000: Foundations of Public Health
3. HSP 2446 HSR Doctoral Seminar: Financing & Delivery
4. EPI 2150 Foundations in Epidemiologic Research (may be waived with prior approval)
5. EPI 2200 Intermediate Methods in Epidemiologic Research
6. An additional advanced quantitative course in the first year
7. PHP 2090A Research Grant Writing for Public Health Part I (0.5 credit)
8. PHP 2090B: Research Grant Writing Part II (0.5 credit)
9. HSP 2455A Health Services Research Methods I
10. HSP 2455B Health Services Research Methods II
11. At least 3 additional courses in chosen specialty track

All required courses must be taken unless specifically waived with the approval of a student's advisor and the program director. In general, each course at Brown is equivalent to one credit.

Students seeking to waive EPI 2150 should request permission from the course instructor and their academic advisor. The course instructor may ask the student to take a past final exam from the course for which a waiver is being requested. Students are expected to substitute an alternative course in place of the waived course.

A full-time course load is 3-4 courses a semester. A student may take a maximum of 5 courses in one semester, however this is generally discouraged.

To remain a full-time student, all students in their dissertation phase should enroll in PHP 2990: Thesis Preparation. Students may enroll in additional courses during this period as helpful but it is not required.

Students are generally not permitted to enroll in courses during the summer semester. If you would like to take a summer course, please first discuss it with your advisor and the program director.

A passing grade for a course is either an A or a B. Students who receive a C will be evaluated during a student progress meeting to see if they may remain in good standing or need to retake the course. A grade lower than a C will not fulfill any degree requirements and must be retaken.

The default should be to take courses for a grade (unless they are mandatory S/NC). However, with permission of their advisor, course instructor, and GPD a student may request to take a course S/NC. Permission is more likely to be granted for students who are stretching into more challenging courses outside their comfort zone.

An example curriculum for students in the program is included below along with expected milestones for each academic year. Note - the list of potential electives is not comprehensive and there are many more that can be taken across the University. The important piece is to make elective decisions in partnership with your advisor.

Time Period	Required	Recommended/ Potential Electives
Summer Prior to Starting	● Stata Summer Camp (when available) ● PHP 2000 Foundations of Public Health (non-credit, available in Banner)	● N/A
Year 1 Fall	● HSP 2446 HSR Doctoral Seminar: Financing & Delivery ● Responsible Conduct of Research Course (non-credit, not listed in CAB; CEPH requirement) If students have limited prior exposure to epidemiology or biostatistics, then they should also enroll in the below, as these courses are required prerequisites for EPI 2200 (which is required): ● EPI 2150 Foundations in Epidemiologic Research ● STAT 2510 Principles of Biostatistics and Data Analysis	Up to three electives: ● HSP 2465A Introduction to Health Decision Analysis ● STAT 2515 Fundamentals of Probability and Statistical Inference ● STAT 2520 Statistical Inference I ● ECON 1620 Introduction to Econometrics ● Other quantitative courses in consultation with academic advisor ● PHP 2980 Graduate Independent Study and Thesis Research (if completing RA-ship or reading course)
Year 1 Spring	● EPI 2200 Intermediate Methods in Epidemiologic Research ● Students must also take at least one other advanced quantitative course in the fall or spring from the list provided in the next section	Up to two electives: ● STAT 2511 Applied Regression Analysis ● ECON 1629 Applied Research Methods for Economists ● EPI 2030 Clinical Trials Methodology ● BSS 2060 Qualitative Methods in Health Research ● PHP 2040 Survey Research Methods ● STAT 2517 Applied Multilevel Data Analysis ● STAT 2605 Generalized Linear Models ● STAT 2550 Practical Data Analysis ● Other quantitative course in consultation with academic advisor ● PHP 2980 Graduate Independent Study and Thesis Research (if completing RA-ship or reading course)

Year 1 Summer	• Year 1 Comprehensive Exam • Required full time summer research assistantship • Sheridan Center TA training (required prior to semester TAing)	• Additional Training Workshops as recommended by your academic advisor • Attendance and/or presentation of work at professional meetings
Milestones by End of Year 1	• Completion of PHP 2000 and Responsible Conduct of Research courses • Completion of required courses plus electives for a total of 4 credits a semester • Completion of Year 1 Comprehensive Examination	
Year 2 Fall	• PHP 2090A Research Grant Writing for Public Health Part I (0.5 credit) • HSP 2455A Health Services Research Methods I • Concentration Required Courses	• Sheridan Center Teaching Certificate (required for all TA work, regardless of semester undertaken) • Other elective or track courses

Year 2 Spring	• PHP 2090B: Research Grant Writing Part II (0.5 credit) • HSP 2455B Health Services Research Methods II • Concentration Required Courses	• 2.5 Electives • PHP 2980 Graduate Independent Study and Thesis Research
Year 2 Summer	• Required full-time summer research assistantship	• Presentation of work at professional meetings
Milestones by End of Year 2	• Completion of Teaching Assistantship unless deferred to 3rd year • Completion of Sheridan Center TA coursework • Completion of core required courses • Completion of specialty track required courses (can be deferred to year 3 without a prior graduate degree) • Satisfactory completion of specialty or general track examination (can be deferred to year 3 without a prior graduate degree)	

Year 3 Fall and/or Spring	• PHP 2980 Graduate Independent Study and Thesis Research (Override code from faculty Thesis Chair needed) • Additional courses as required for specialty track or electives needed to complete course unit requirements (when not entering with prior graduate degree). • PHP 2988 Teaching Experience Independent Study (must be approved by PhD Program Director and Course Director)	• Presentation of work at professional meetings
Milestones by End of Year 3	• Select your dissertation committee and topic • Submit external dissertation grant • Complete dissertation proposal and oral exam • PHP 2988: Teaching Experience (TE) requirement; (could be completed in 4th year)	
Year 4 Fall and/or Spring	• PHP 2980 Graduate Independent Study and Thesis Research (Override code from facultyThesis Chair needed)	• Presentation of work at professional meetings
Milestones by End of Year 4	• Completion of Dissertation Defense/Oral Examination (may be in year 5) • Submission of final dissertation to the graduate school (may be in year 5)	

Quantitative Courses that meet quantitative course requirement

Students must take one of the courses from this list below in the first year of the program.

STAT 2511	Applied Regression Analysis
STAT 2515	Fundamentals of Probability and Statistical Inference
APMA 1650	Statistical Inference I
APMA 1660	Statistical Inference II
STAT 2520	Statistical Inference I
STAT 2580	Statistical Inference II
ECON 1620	Introduction to Econometrics
ECON 1629	Applied Research Methods for Economists
STAT 2517	Applied Multilevel Data Analysis
STAT 2605	Generalized Linear Models
STAT 2550	Practical Data Analysis

Students may petition for additional courses to fulfill this requirement at the approval of the instructors for HSP 2455 A and B.

Independent Studies and Reading Courses

Students in the PhD program have the option of taking independent studies or reading courses with faculty members during the fall and spring semesters. Given that learning how to conduct research is an important competency of the program, independent studies are opportunities for students to conduct research directly with a faculty member with the goal of producing publishable results and learning about the research process. Students interested in conducting an independent study should approach a faculty member they are interested in working with to discuss.

Independent reading courses are similar to independent studies and offer an opportunity for a student to investigate a topic in more detail with a faculty member. The student is responsible for putting together a reading list in consultation with a faculty member, and to meet with the faculty member to discuss the readings throughout the semester.

To register for an independent study or a reading course, students should enroll in their chosen faculty member's section of PHP 2980. The faculty member will then provide an override code. If the faculty member does not have a section created for that course, they should contact the Academic Manager. Independent studies and reading courses may *only* be taken with faculty members who have a primary appointment in HSPP. If a student wishes to take an independent study with a faculty member with a secondary appointment in HSPP, then they will still need a primarily appointed faculty member to sponsor them.

These courses receive a letter grade and are eligible for a course credit. Students should outline with the faculty member the expectations and deliverables for the semester *before*

beginning the independent course. Faculty and students have discretion to set their own expectations for the course grade as long as the workload does not exceed that of a standard 1 credit course.

As taking an independent course is eligible for a credit upon satisfactory completion, a student who, for example, takes an independent course and three other courses still has a complete schedule for full-time status. Importantly, independent courses do not replace any of the core program requirements and do not typically meet specialty track concentrations (unless special permission from the PhD Program Director and track lead is received), so students should ensure that independent studies do not take up time needed for other requirements. The workload for an independent course should be equivalent to about a 1 credit course, thus, about 180 hours during the semester or roughly 12 hours a week.

Third Year Milestones

While all student milestones are important, those in the third year deserve particular attention as for most students the 3rd year is when they transition into conducting their own dissertation research. The key milestones in the program we expect by the end of the third academic year include selecting your dissertation committee and topic, preparing and submitting an external dissertation grant, and completing the dissertation proposal defense, including all written and oral components. Generally, reaching these key milestones requires close and intensive work between your academic advisor, potential dissertation committee members, and sometimes program leadership. If you have any concerns about potentially missing any of these milestones, please raise those concerns as early as possible with your advisor or the program director.

SPECIALTY TRACKS

Students in the program have an option to take a generalist track, or to select a specialty track as a component of their degree. While students do not need to commit to a track upon starting the program, selecting a track earlier will make it easier to take all required coursework for that track. Each of the established tracks are described in greater detail below in an area relevant to HSR. The track must be selected by the end of the Fall semester in a student's second year, as the second-year exam is track specific. To take a specialty track, students should schedule a time to meet with the track advisor.

At present, three specialty tracks are offered: pharmaceutical health services research, health economics, and comparative effectiveness research/evidence-based medicine. Students may also take a generalist track, which has no additional requirements.

There is also an option for students to design their own track. Students who create their own track are responsible for identifying an approved sequence of courses that will fulfill the relevant content and methodological requirements, as well as an appropriate faculty advisor. Any custom specialty tracks must be approved by the PhD Program Director and the academic advisor.

Specialty in Pharmaceutical Health Services Research

The Department of Health Services Policy & Practice is committed to advancing safe, effective, and cost- effective pharmaceutical use. While drug products and devices are evaluated for efficacy in clinical trials, their population effectiveness is dependent upon their dissemination to patients who can benefit from them while at the same time limiting the adverse consequences inherent to their use. Students in our graduate program benefit from interdisciplinary, state-of-the-art training in epidemiology and biostatistics and application of real-world data to contemporary gaps in knowledge. These applications broadly span pharmacoepidemiology and pharmaceutical health services research.

Pharmacoepidemiology is the application of the principles of epidemiology to study the use and effects of medications and other medical devices, generally in large populations. Most studies examine the adverse events or therapeutic benefits of drugs or medical devices after products have been launched (post-marketing). Such work is critical to overcome the inherent limitations of pre-marketing studies and for supporting the most appropriate use of medications/devices with respect to safety and effectiveness. Pharmaceutical health services research moves beyond the risks and benefits of drugs in selected populations to important questions about access, quality, and costs. Despite the fact that the United States spends more on pharmaceuticals than any other nation, there remain significant disparities in prescribing and utilization, poor adherence, and failure to achieve therapeutic outcomes.

The demand for highly skilled researchers focusing on evaluation of issues related to medication use has increased. *Pharmaceutical health services research* is of interest to the government, pharmaceutical industry, state and federal regulators, and organizations delivering pharmacy care. Areas of research span multiple settings (e.g., population-based, outpatient settings, in-patient settings, nursing homes). Students will become highly skilled in

the implementation of pharmacoepidemiologic and other theory-based approaches to examining drug utilization, adverse and beneficial effects of medications, adherence, prescribing trends, pharmaceutical policy, drug pricing, as well as studies of interventions to improve the quality of pharmacy care. Most of this research has involved the use of large, cross-linked, observational datasets.

To complete this track, students must meet with track advisor Dr. Kaley Hayes (kaley_hayes@brown.edu), and collaborate with their academic advisor to select 3-6 additional courses as suggested below and as a function of interests, previous coursework and experience.

Foundational courses:

- EPI 2440 *Introduction to Pharmacoepidemiology*
- HSP 2410E *Medicare: A Data Based Policy Examination*
- EPI 2490 *Methods in Pharmacoepidemiology*
- EPI 2150 *Foundations in Epidemiologic Research Methods*
- EPI 2200 *Intermediate Methods in Epidemiologic Research*
- HSP 2400 *The U.S. Health Care System: Case Studies in Financing, Delivery, Regulation and Public Health*

For students interested in this track who lack sufficient background, suitable introductory courses will be identified through discussion with the student's academic advisor. Suggested courses may include:

- BIOL 2860 *Mechanisms of Disease*
- EPI 2030 *Clinical Trials Methodology*

Additional methods courses may be taken with permission from the student's advisor.

Specialty in Health Economics

The specialty track in health economics offers both economic theory as well as additional methodological training, relying upon econometrics tools, to better understand the demand for health services and the industry factors that influence the distribution and shape of healthcare services in different markets. Of the increasing number of doctoral training programs in health services research, those built around the discipline of health economics are highly prevalent. Nonetheless, few of these programs are designed to give students complete exposure to all aspects of economics as a discipline, but rather allow students to specialize in specific healthcare issues.

The goal of the specialty track in health economics is to offer additional training in both the theory and methods of economics to prepare students to acquire greater substantive and technical competencies so that they can execute a dissertation that has the potential of contributing to the health services literature from the perspective of a health economist. College-level intermediate Microeconomics is required as a prerequisite; and intermediate Econometrics is highly recommended.

To complete this track, students must meet with track advisor Dr. Andrew Ryan (andrew_m_ryan@brown.edu), and collaborate with their academic advisor to select at least 3 courses from the list below, as a function of interests, previous coursework and experience:

- ECON 2390 *Applied Econometrics I* [typically offered in the Fall]
- ECON 2400 *Applied Econometrics II* [Spring]
- ECON 2360 *Economics of Health and Population* [Fall]
- PHP 2480 *Selected Topics in Health Economics*
- PLCY 2460 *Economics for Public Policy* [Summer]
- ECON 2470 *Industrial Organization* [Fall]
- ECON 2520 *Economic Development* [Fall]
- ECON 2930 *Workshop in Applied Economics* [Spring and Fall]

For students interested in this track who are just starting to build their economics background, suitable introductory courses will be identified through discussion with the student's academic advisor. Suggested courses may include:

- HSP 1480 *Foundations of Health Economics*
- ECON 1100 *Intermediate Microeconomics*
- ECON 1430 *The Economics of Social Policy*
- ECON 1385 *Intergenerational Poverty in America*
- ECON 1629 *Applied Research Methods for Economists*

Additional courses may be taken with permission from the track advisor and the student's advisor.

Specialty in Evidence Synthesis, Decision Science, and Health Technology Assessment

Two questions organize this track. How do we know what we know about the effects of tests, treatments, and health policies? And, given what we know and what we do not, what should we do? Students learn to answer the first with evidence synthesis and the second with decision analysis, using explicit statistical and decision models rather than informal judgment.

Evidence synthesis covers systematic review as a study design and meta-analysis as hierarchical (multilevel) modeling: random-effects and Bayesian meta-analysis, network meta-analysis of multiple interventions, multivariate meta-analysis of correlated outcomes, synthesis of diagnostic accuracy and time-to-event data, and methods for combining randomized, observational, mechanistic evidence, and causally interpretable meta-analysis. Decision analysis and health technology assessment cover decision trees, state-transition (Markov) and microsimulation models, point processes, model calibration, cost-effectiveness and cost-utility analysis (net health benefit, net monetary benefit), probabilistic sensitivity analysis, and value-of-information analysis for prioritizing research. Advanced directions include decision making under deep uncertainty, imprecise probability, optimization with mathematical programming, and advanced mathematical modeling of chronic and infectious disease.

This is the track for students who want to build and analyze models. Dissertations typically develop a synthesis or decision-modeling method with an application, or build a calibrated simulation model of a clinical or public health decision problem and use it to evaluate policies and quantify what is worth learning next. A working knowledge of probability, regression, and programming in R or Python is expected; students without it should plan foundational coursework with the track advisor in the first year.

To complete this track, students must meet with track advisor Dr. Thomas Trikalinos (thomas_trikalinos@brown.edu), work with their academic advisor, and take a minimum of 4 courses, as follows.

Foundational [core] courses

HSP 2415 Introduction to Systematic Review and Meta-analysis (HTA-I)

HSP 2465A Introduction to Health Decision Analysis

HSP TBD Cost-effectiveness Analysis (HTA-II)

Advanced courses:

PHP 2960J Meta-analysis: Synthesizing Evidence from Different Data Sources

STAT 2670 Simulation Models for Public Health Decision Making

Other courses may be taken with permission of the track advisor and the student's academic advisor, depending on the student's direction and mathematical preparation. Examples include:

STAT 2530 Bayesian Statistical Methods

APMA 1690 Computational Probability and Statistics

DATA 1010 Probability, Statistics, and Machine Learning

APMA 2190 Nonlinear Dynamical Systems I

ECON 2050 Microeconomics I

ECON 2060 Microeconomics II

Specialty directions not covered by regular courses, including decision making under deep uncertainty, elements of robust optimization, and mathematical epidemiology, are covered by independent study and thesis research with the track advisor.

QUALIFYING EXAMS

Students complete three qualifying exams during the course of the program: the first year written exam, the second year written exam, and the dissertation proposal defense.

Qualifying exam results are generally communicated to students within two weeks of the exam. These take three forms: full pass, conditional pass, and not pass. A full pass indicates that the student successfully meets the bar for advancing from the exam, and no further follow-up is required. A conditional pass indicates that while the student demonstrated some competency in the topic, their performance does not fully meet the requirements to move forward. A not pass indicates that the student did not demonstrate sufficient competency in the topic and the exam must be retaken.

In the case that a student does not receive a full pass, this should be communicated to the program director. The examiner, with the sign off of the program director, will clearly lay out a set of requirements and a timeline that the student needs to meet in the case of a conditional pass to move to a full pass, or to retake the exam for a not pass. These requirements could include additional coursework, retaking portions of the exam, regular meetings with the examiner, or other requirements as approved by the program director.

Students who do not pass the exam on the first attempt will be placed on warning until they have passed the exam and have one additional opportunity to earn a pass or conditional pass. A re-taken exam should be scheduled by the end of the summer when possible and will be set in consultation with the program director.

Two failures on either the first- or second-year exam will result in immediate termination from the doctoral program.

First Year Written Examination

In late May or early June of the first year, students are required to demonstrate general HSR knowledge competence in fundamental HSR concepts as evaluated via the written qualifying exams. Students must complete at least the Doctoral Seminar (Finance & Delivery) and EPI 2200 Intermediate Methods in Epidemiologic Research before taking the Year 1 written examination. The reading list for the written exam consists of the texts and materials in the required courses. Students should be prepared to answer questions on any material covered in the required courses. The examiner for the first year exam is typically the program director.

Second Year Written Examination

By late May or early June of the second year, the student is required to pass the written qualifying examination focusing on HSR methods, theory or substantive area of research. Students must complete HSR Methods I and II and appropriate coursework relevant to their area of study prior to taking the written examination. The reading list for the written exam consists of relevant substantive texts from HSR Methods, specialty tracks, if appropriate, or specialized HSR literature. Students should be prepared to answer questions on any material covered in the required courses and/or from the reading list. There is more variation in the

format of the second year exam and depends on the student's selected track. The examiner for the second year exam is typically the specialty track advisor.

This exam may be deferred to a student's third year with permission of the program director if they require a third year of course work.

RESEARCH ETHICS TRAINING IN THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

All first-year doctoral students in the School of Public Health are required to successfully complete “Responsible Conduct of Research Training.” This is a five-week introduction to the scope and complexity of ethical situations that confront modern public health practitioners. Training covers multiple topics including: the context and history of ethical research practices within public health; research misconduct; the peer review process and its purpose; publication practices and responsible authorship; practical and ethical issues in human-subjects research; data acquisition, storage, and privacy; use of electronic resources; recognizing and navigating conflicts of interest; the mentoring relationship and associated responsibilities of mentors and trainees; and societal impact of public health research.

Successful completion of this course includes attendance at all meetings and passing the written final examination. Additionally, all students may continue their training after the first year by attending relevant lectures and discussion sessions sponsored by the Office of the Vice President for Research. The teaching certificate programs offered by the Sheridan Center are described here. The Center's mission and function are described in detail on their webpage.

TEACHING REQUIREMENTS

PhD students are required to develop experience and expertise in teaching. Two types of activities relating to teaching are required for doctoral students in the School of Public Health.

The first teaching requirement for doctoral students is a full Teaching Assistantship (TA) typically taken during the second year of the doctoral program. The course assignment is done by the Department. A Teaching Assistantship (TAship) is a full semester, 20-hour per week experience required by the program. Everyone is required to TA at least once. Responsibilities of the TAship may include grading, running study sections or labs, holding office hours, and presenting occasional lectures. For those on traineeships, it is typically expected that you will TA in your 4th academic semester. For those who are not on a traineeship, it is typically expected that you will TA in your 3rd academic semester.

SPH will adhere to a policy of a maximum TA-to-student ratio of 1:45 ratio for every 20hrs of TAship support, with regard to the responsibility for leading a section or lab and/or hand-grading of assignments, exams, and papers. Thus, regardless of the total size of the class, a TA will not be responsible for more than 45 students per 20hrs weekly. A TA must also be able to complete the work within the total assigned number of weekly hours. This ratio does not apply to situations where tests or quizzes are auto-graded or to other TA duties, such as assisting with the Canvas course site. This policy is subject to revision based on the latest collective bargaining agreement and guidance from the Graduate School.

Eligible PhD Students may also choose to do an optional (up to) 10hr per week Supplemental Teaching Assistantship (STA) position with approval from their advisor and PhD Program Director. In rare circumstances, if a student wishes to take on an STAship for more than one course (up to two), we would ask that the hours are no more than 5 hours per week for each course, and that you first reach out to your advisor, PhD Program Director and Academic Manager for approval; it is important to note that this will only count as one STAship as far as the stipended amount. *International students are only eligible to work above and beyond their 20 hours per week during the winter break and summer semester.

Prior to any TA work, the student is expected to complete the Sheridan Center's online, self-paced program: Teaching Essentials for Graduate TAs. Participants can expect to spend 4-6 hours on the course and typically it opens mid-August before the academic year begins.

As the program is self-directed and asynchronous, with no in-person or synchronous Zoom components, participants may choose to complete this online Canvas course over multiple days or weeks at a time convenient to them before the assignment begins. However, the student is expected to share the certification of completion of the program with the Academic Manager prior to the TA work commencing.

The second requirement is a Teaching Experience (TE) with a service expectation of up to 10 hours per week. The TE takes the form of a registered course (PHP 2988) and confers academic credit. This credit is included as part of the total credits required for the program. The TE is designed to enable graduate students to expand practical teaching skills as course

coordinators/instructors under the mentorship of an experienced instructor. While the TE is primarily a learning opportunity for doctoral students, secondarily, the activities associated with the TE should add value to the class by enhancing the experience of students enrolled in the course and assisting the faculty instructor with administration and delivery of the course. The TE is a mentored experience that provides students with more responsibility for pedagogy and leadership in the course. TEs are generally arranged according to student interests and goals and then approved by the student's Graduate Program Director. Specific activities and responsibilities are tailored to student-learning goals and negotiated between student and instructor.

A TE is typically undertaken during the student's third or fourth year; however, there can be exceptions to this requirement during the third year, such as a personal F31/R36 award or a T32 with stated restrictions on teaching experiences.

Other Teaching Opportunities

Students may elect to participate in other teaching activities during their study at Brown, for example as guest lecturers during the semester in a departmental course. However, these activities cannot be used to fulfill the teaching requirement. Except in rare circumstances, teaching experiences at other universities cannot be used to meet the teaching requirement.

Students with a career interest in teaching may elect to participate in more extensive teaching experiences such as the Brown-Wheaton Faculty Fellowship or the Brown-Tougaloo Partnership: Graduate Teaching Exchange. These fellowships substitute the research assistantship as funding support for advanced doctoral students and allow the student to design and teach their own course as visiting faculty. Students interested in these programs should discuss them with program leadership and their advisor before applying.

Students whose native language is not English must be evaluated and certified for English proficiency before serving as a Teaching Assistant. English language assessments are done by appointment only at the Center for Language Studies. Students should submit a request form at the Center for Language Studies early to make an appointment. This office handles the confirmation of English proficiency that is required within the first year of graduate studies and/or by the end of the semester in which the student serves as a TA.

Sheridan Center Teaching Certificate I Program: The Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning at Brown University administers the Teaching Certificate Program. PhD students are encouraged to complete the Reflective Teaching Certificate I Program. Please find here an overview of the complete list of Sheridan Center teaching certificate programs. This recommended program is intended to assist graduate students who wish to enhance their teaching experience. It addresses the immediate needs of students serving as Teaching Assistants, and focuses on issues they will confront throughout their academic careers. The program has three basic requirements: (1) participation in the Sheridan Teaching Seminar Lectures and Workshops, including completion of the final Program Evaluation form, (2) participation in a departmental Micro-Teaching Session, and (3) completion of an Individual Teaching Consultation. Interested students can participate in the extensive program of training and other activities sponsored by the Sheridan Center. This Center's mission and function are described in detail on their webpage.

JOURNAL CLUB

One of the program's priorities is that graduate students become competent in written and oral communication of scientific thinking. One strategy for the support and development of communication skills is the participation in Journal Club. Regular attendance at the Journal Club/Faculty Forum is required of all students throughout their time in the PhD program unless there is a time conflict with another requirement. Such conflicts must be approved by the student's advisor and the PhD Program Director. In addition to regular attendance throughout their degree, students are responsible for organizing Journal Club for one semester during the course of their time in the program. Please find the student-created Journal Club charter here (accessible only to HSR students).

To do this, students must register for PHP 2950 Doctoral Seminar in Public Health and undertake the responsibilities described below. Students will receive a tuition unit for their coordination of Journal Club.

The objective of the Journal Club is to provide doctoral students with a regular, peer-led, semi-structured discussion forum in which they:

- Critically appraise empirical, methodological, or theoretical papers in their field
- Improve oral and written presentation skills through scholarly debate about weekly topics
- Increase awareness about faculty and student-initiated research in the School of Public Health
- Share preliminary drafts of research reports, applications, presentations, and obtain feedback from peers
- Provide mutual support with regards to course work, RA/TA activities, job searches, etc.

Meeting Schedule: Journal Club meetings for the Doctoral Program in Health Services Research occur bi-weekly on Mondays at noon throughout the entire academic year.

Instructor of Record: Every departmental journal club will have an Instructor of Record and is required to notify the Associate Dean and Academic Manager of the Instructor name prior to pre-registration. The Instructor of Record will be announced before the start of the Academic Year. Primary responsibilities include: attending the first meeting of each semester to review guidelines; reviewing attendance; assisting in selection of articles upon request; attending additional Journal Club meetings upon request. The Instructor of Record will be assigned a section under PHP 2950.

Attendance Policy: Students are required to attend Journal Club **in person** each semester while enrolled in the program (unless an accommodation has been approved by the PhD Program Director or the university). Attendance will be taken. **This includes students in the dissertation phase of the program.**

Responsibilities: Journal Club Leadership - Doctoral students *must* serve as Journal Club leaders for one full semester, typically during their second or third year. Students may serve as co-leaders depending on cohort size. Student leaders are responsible for:

- Coordinating/assigning weekly student discussion facilitators (including sending reminders;

circulating papers in advance)
- Maintaining the semester Journal Club schedule (typically done at the beginning of the Fall semester for the entire year)
- Scheduling three faculty forums per semester
- Recording attendance for the Instructor of Record
- Ordering food as needed (Journal Club has a budget to cover at least a full lunch once a month and provide snacks each week).

Students Discussion Facilitators will:
- Identify an article or project in-progress for their session
- Create a set of discussion questions
- Send the article (published or draft, as appropriate), and discussion questions, to the students at least one week before their Journal Club date
- Lead the journal club discussion
- Invite faculty discussants, as appropriate

HSR SEMINAR SERIES

The Health Services Research PhD program holds an in-person weekly seminar series every Wednesday during the academic year (with the exception of holidays and breaks). Presenters are typically researchers from throughout the country suggested by students and faculty during the prior academic year, as well as internal center faculty giving updates on the work occurring throughout HSPP's affiliated centers, and our own PhD students.

From 11:00-11:50 a.m. (EST) the external presenter holds a session exclusively for HSR doctoral students for an informal discussion to learn more about the faculty's research and career journey. For each guest speaker, a student is expected to volunteer at least once to moderate and/or lead the student session as no faculty or staff will be present. This is an excellent opportunity to network with the guest speaker. From 12:00-1:00 p.m., the speaker will present to the Brown community at large on a topic of their choosing based on their research. Students are required to participate in both the presentation and the student sessions. Attendance is expected in-person unless an accommodation has been granted by the program or the University. Students who regularly miss attending the seminar series may have impacts to their academic standing.

During the academic year, a portion of the weekly seminar series will be devoted to our PhD program. All students in their third year and beyond of the program will be expected to present at least once a year during this session for around 20-30 minutes, in-person, on current research work or their dissertations. Students on the job market will have opportunities to present for a full hour. These sessions are meant to give students the experience of presenting to an academic audience and are an excellent way to receive feedback on works in progress.

EXTERNAL DISSERTATION GRANT SUBMISSION

By the end of a student's third academic year, it is expected that they will have submitted an external dissertation grant. This requirement may be deferred to the fourth year with permission of the program director if the student enters the program without an additional graduate degree. Students are encouraged to discuss potential grants with their advisors once they begin to develop a dissertation topic. There is no requirement that the grant is ultimately funded- but grant writing is an essential skill for all students to develop.

Grants should be written according to their funding requirements to cover the student's stipend and tuition. The most common grants that students in the program apply to are below:

R36: The AHRQ Grants for Health Services Research Dissertation Program (R36) is open to U.S. citizens or permanent residents. Application due dates are February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1, annually. Note- this award is currently not offered by AHRQ, but there are other R36 awards available in other NIH institutes.

F31: NIA supports the Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) Individual Predoctoral Fellowship (Parent F31), open to Ph.D. students conducting aging research. F31 recipients must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents at the time of award. Application due dates are April 8, August 8, and December 8, annually. There are other F31s also available from other institutes.

K99/R00: The NIH Pathway to Independence Award (K99/R00) is open to international students and researchers. While U.S. citizenship or permanent residency is not required, applicants must demonstrate they can legally stay in the U.S. for the duration of the K99 phase.

If a student wishes to apply for a grant outside of these options, they must first check in with their advisor and the PhD program director to ensure that the grant is sufficient to meet the program's requirements. For example, small research grants such as the Nora Kahn Piore award are not eligible to fulfill this requirement. The duration of support provided by an external dissertation grant is based on the value of the award relative to the University's standard graduate stipend. Awards that provide less than the equivalent of a full stipend may satisfy the program's funding requirement for only a portion of the academic year. The PhD Program Director will determine the period of support associated with each award.

Students are not permitted to apply for grants directly themselves, and must work with Andrea Medeiros, Assistant Director of Research Administration, to apply through the University once they have an idea for submission.

THE DISSERTATION

A dissertation for a PhD in Health Services Research must take the form of three academic journal articles suitable for publication, or a book. The dissertation process is divided into several steps which include the selection of a dissertation chair and committee, the dissertation proposal defense, and the dissertation defense. Details on each of these steps are included below:

Selecting a dissertation chair and dissertation mentoring team

Students enrolled in the PhD program must pass their written examinations prior to selecting a dissertation chair and committee and progressing to the oral examination. However, we encourage students to learn about the research interests of various faculty members to gather information about prospective chairs well in advance of completion of the written exams.

Any member of the faculty with a primary appointment in the Department of Health Services, Policy and Practice can serve as a dissertation chair. In select cases a secondary faculty member can also serve as chair with approval of the PhD Program Director. We recommend the following guidelines when selecting your dissertation chair:

- Ask someone who has experience in the area you are interested in studying.
- Ask someone who is able to make a commitment to be your mentor. Clarify and come to agreement with the dissertation advisor on expectations in terms of time and substance. Students who have established ongoing relationships with their advisors as research and/or teaching assistants have more opportunity for receiving mentoring from these individuals. Your initial academic advisor should assist you in the process of dissertation advisor selection.
- Your advisor provides ongoing supervision and consultation for the conceptualization, design, conduct, analysis, and interpretation of the research project. Most advisors engage you in scientific activities beyond your thesis, for example, presenting talks at university seminars and scientific meetings, assisting with manuscript reviews, and collaborating on other research projects.

Once they agree they become your dissertation advisor, please alert the academic manager.

The minimum size of a doctoral committee is three faculty members who can be selected from any faculty member at Brown or another institution; and in some particular cases, from a non-academic setting. More members are allowed to have a balance of expertise representing substantive and methodologic aspects of the thesis plan. However in general we don't recommend more than four members due to challenges with scheduling committee meetings and receiving feedback.

Students should discuss selection of committee members with their dissertation advisor. Although interactions with committee members vary considerably, the minimal expectation of the committee is to evaluate and provide feedback at quarterly intervals during the preparation of the dissertation. Committee meetings should be scheduled on a regular basis (e.g., quarterly) to ensure this.

Once a committee is selected, students must fill out the committee selection form and send it to the academic manager and the PhD program director for approval.

Dissertation Proposal Defense

All students must complete an oral dissertation proposal defense. The defense must take place before the end of the student's third academic year for students to remain in good standing. With the permission of the graduate program director, an extension can be granted for students who require a third year of coursework.

The goal of the proposal defense is for the student to demonstrate how well they can define important scientific questions and how they aim to answer those questions through their dissertation. The proposal defense consists of two parts:

The Written Proposal

The proposal should be delivered to members of the dissertation committee on a timeline agreed upon by the dissertation chair, typically 2-3 weeks before the defense. A written proposal typically includes the following:

- Summary of the proposal that includes the specific aims of the work to be done, the significance of the work to the field and the innovative nature of the study.

- Background and literature review. Describe the previous work done in the field that leads to the scientific problem you are addressing. Raise questions about or indicate existing gaps in existing work that your dissertation will address. This step is crucial to establishing that your work will be original and innovative.
- Preliminary studies. Describe what work you have done, if any, that supports the proposed project.

- Proposed work. This section is the most important part of your proposal and probably should be longer than each of the other three. It should describe the proposed work and give an outline for the three thesis papers. It is expected that the outline and preliminary work for the first and possibly second paper will be more developed than that of the third. Essentially this section needs to answer the questions: What do you plan to do? Why is it important? How do you plan to do it? Expected pitfalls and how might you approach them? If successful, where will your work lead in the future?

The full expectations of the dissertation proposal and what should be included is at the discretion of the dissertation chair and should be agreed upon in advance. Some dissertation chairs may permit the use of the dissertation grant to fulfill this requirement, while others may require a different format. It is essential that students discuss with their chairs about the specific expectations for their case.

The Oral Examination

For the oral exam, the student must prepare an oral presentation of the proposed work, using slides as necessary. The oral examination will be attended by the thesis committee. The exam will be chaired by the dissertation advisor. The defense should be about two hours in length including approximately 30-60 minutes of questions. Students should be sure to practice the presentation beforehand so that there is adequate time for questions. Most importantly, students should realize that the committee has read the proposal, and try to focus on the research plan and its importance, rather than reiterating the background material. Feedback from the oral exam can be very helpful for developing the thesis project.

To schedule the exam, students must submit the necessary paperwork to the academic manager for approval.

Evaluation

The chair of the oral exam will summarize the discussion and the outcome of the exam in a written memo to the candidate. The written proposal and oral exam will be evaluated for their content, plan, presentation, and defense. The evaluation results are the same as for the written comprehensive exams: full pass, conditional pass and not pass. Paperwork will need to be completed by the committee, reviewing the outcome of the oral examination. Please work with the Academic Manager to have this paperwork printed and ready prior to the day of your oral examination.

Those earning full pass and who have successfully completed all pre-candidate requirements are then admitted to PhD candidacy. Those earning conditional pass may either be asked to re-take the oral exam or to address significant deficiencies in the proposal. In this case, the committee must agree that any shortcomings have been adequately addressed before the student is admitted to candidacy. A ‘not pass’ means the student may be directed to retake the oral exam altogether, or may be declined candidacy to the PhD degree.

Upon becoming a PhD candidate, the student must plan at least twice-yearly meetings with the committee to review progress with members. Quarterly meetings are recommended, and more frequent meetings with the committee chair are also suggested.

***PLEASE NOTE:** After passing the oral exam, students must apply for a DUA if they plan on using CMS data for their dissertation. Please contact Julie Lima to begin this process.

Dissertation Defense

Upon completing the proposed research, students must schedule a public presentation and defense of their dissertation in collaboration with the Academic Manager by following procedures stipulated by the Graduate School. The defense may not be scheduled unless all other requirements of the degree are completed.

Students should work with their dissertation chair and committee to determine a point at which the dissertation is completed to schedule a defense. Committee members should receive the

penultimate draft of the dissertation sufficiently far in advance of the scheduled defense to allow for reading and preparation of questions; two to three weeks is recommended but is at the discretion of the dissertation chair.

The defense itself will typically last for 2-3 hours and must include an oral presentation of the dissertation lasting for around 1 hour, followed by questions from the committee, and the broader audience. At the conclusion of the presentation, the dissertation committee will meet in private to make a final determination of the acceptability of the dissertation and discuss any changes for the final version. Any condition that is not a full pass should be communicated to the PhD Program Director and a detailed plan should be agreed upon for next steps.

It is the student's responsibility to schedule their own dissertation defense date, send a calendar invitation to members of the HSPP department (fellow students, faculty, postdocs and the Academic Manager). The Academic team will work with the student to create a flyer with details of the student's upcoming defense after the initial invitation has been sent to the Department and will be shared School-wide and added to Today@Brown as an event.

Please meet with the academic manager in advance of scheduling a defense to ensure that all steps and required paperwork is needed.

The successful completion of the dissertation defense marks the end of the student's time at Brown. This has implications for the student's status: stipend coverage after dissertation defense can be extended until the end of the month in which the defense occurs; health insurance coverage extends until August 14 of each year (regardless of when the defense occurs).

The University requires all PhD dissertations to be completed by mid-April for a May graduation (deadlines can be found here). Students who do not hand in their final dissertation on time cannot participate in the University's graduation exercises. The graduate school has compiled instructions to help graduate students with the preparation and presentation of the dissertation. These dissertation guidelines from the Graduate School website will help assist and guide you through the process. When the thesis is presented to the University, it must be in final form. It may not be revised in any way after it is presented.

Degree conferral dates other than May are available in February and October. Students are encouraged to work with their dissertation advisor and the Academic Manager to ensure all deadlines are met. The student would automatically become a member of the graduating class of the following year regardless of the year of conferral.

STUDENT FUNDING

All PhD students will be financially supported for five years by the Department and University. Financial support is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress. Funding support is not guaranteed if the student maintains external employment upon entering the program that conflicts with typical funding arrangements in the program. Note that if a student receives a stipend from an external employer that exceeds Brown's monthly stipend amount, the program will not provide a stipend. The standard financial support package includes tuition, the health services fee, health insurance, and a monthly stipend.
Support packages are granted on a yearly basis.

Supplemental support may also be available from Brown, Federal Direct Student Loans and other loans. Visit the Brown Graduate School support website for additional information.

Awards of financial support for new students are made in conjunction with admission to the program. Awards for continuing students are determined in early spring preceding the academic year for which the award applies (e.g., Spring 2026 for awards that apply to academic year 2026-2027).

Students receiving financial support must be registered as full-time students, which corresponds to taking four tuition units per semester during periods of financial support. Prior to candidacy, if support is in the form of a full-time teaching assistantship or research assistantship, students should register to receive four tuition credits. Once students have advanced to candidacy, they must register for PHP 2980 (Graduate Independent Study and Thesis Research), which will correspond to full-time student status.

The Department has several financial support arrangements through which standard financial support packages are provided, each of which carry different responsibilities and requirements. All arrangements should average no more than 20 hours of work per week. You may work additional hours if approved, but unless those hours are covered by an SRA or STA, it would not come with additional compensation.

- Division fellowships are generally awarded to new students for one or more of their first three semesters and a summer. Fellows are permitted to take up to four courses per semester and generally have no teaching or research duties but will be assigned to work closely with a faculty research mentor.

- Teaching assistantships are awarded to students in their 2nd year and beyond. Each PhD student will need to fulfill the TA requirement for at least one semester. TAship responsibilities are described above in the "Teaching Requirements" section of this handbook. TAships typically require up to 20 hours of work per week on average.

- Traineeships are awarded to new students who are pursuing graduate work related to a specific field of study and for which there is a federally- or otherwise-funded training program. These carry a specific set of guidelines, restrictions and requirements. Students who are awarded a traineeship must check with the faculty member responsible for administering the grant to learn the details. The department currently holds two training

grants to support graduate students interested in aging and health services research. In addition, unless otherwise noted, it is expected that those on T32 traineeships will TA in their 4th semester.

- Research assistants work with faculty members on projects supported by the faculty investigators' grants or contracts. The PhD Program Director assists students in finding faculty with similar research interests. Research assistantships require, on average, up to 20 hours of work per week during the school year and the summer. You may work additional hours if approved, but unless those hours are covered by an SRA or STA, it would not come with additional compensation.
    - If a student is not funded on a specific faculty grant, they may be funded on a "Department Sponsored RAship. These RAships include the same requirements as a standard RAship. Students must have a research supervisor and maintain the standard 20-hour-per-week commitment. If you are appointed to a department funded research assistantship, you will work with program leadership on selecting who the research advisor should be based on department need and student interest.

- External fellowships: The terms of support for external fellowships vary widely and are determined on an individual basis. All students are expected to submit a grant for external funding (e.g., dissertation grants, NSF fellowships, private foundation, etc.), though ongoing participation and funding in the program is not contingent on successfully securing external funding.

In any given semester, a graduate student's stipend or research funding is attached to a particular activity, either a fellowship, teaching assistantship or research assistantship, as a part of the candidate's scholarly training. The program recognizes that various training opportunities outside regular appointments can play important roles in preparing graduate students for careers both inside and outside of academia. For supported graduate students in good standing, the program is supportive of such additional training opportunities including Supplemental RA or TA work (sRA/sTA). Such paid activities by graduate students in receipt of any university-issued stipends or research funding should not exceed ten (10) hours per week. If seeking out this opportunity, students wishing to exceed this limit must obtain permission from the Graduate Program Director, the student advisor and Director of Finance & Administration and must complete an online request (please ask Academic Manager for link).

In addition, regulations of outside agencies that provide funding to specific students, as well as those governing visas for international students, must be observed at all times to remain in compliance with visa restrictions - during the academic semester, doctoral international students are *not* permitted to pursue paid opportunities beyond their 20hr/week responsibility. They are only allowed to work up to an additional 12 hours during the winter break and summer semester *only*.

The program recognizes that various training opportunities or external employment outside regular appointments can play important roles in preparing graduate students for careers both inside and outside of academia. 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/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, the Graduate Program Director and the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at the Graduate School. In addition, regulations of outside agencies that provide funding to specific students, as well as those governing visas for international students, must be observed at all times.

At the beginning of each semester, we will solicit students to verify their employment, RA work and/or responsibilities to ensure no changes and to ensure they remain compliant with federal government regulations. Brown's PhD programs are full time and fully supported. However, if a student maintains external employment upon entering the program that conflicts with typical funding arrangements in the program, we would be unable to guarantee funding.

Income Tax Withholding Information: The different funding sources that may cover you during your time in the program may or may not include tax withholding, but most students are still required to pay the federal and state income tax. It may be valuable to speak with a certified tax accountant in navigating these issues as the program and department are not legally permitted to provide tax advice. The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program provides free tax preparation assistance to those who qualify, and Brown University provides a tax preparation database for international students. Brown Graduate School also hosts online resources about Tax Preparation for Graduate Students. The PhD program is not permitted to provide tax advice.

Funding Sources vs. Program Requirements

As described above, certain activities that students engage in count as sources of funding for a given semester, while other activities count as program requirements or academic credits. The following table helps to clarify these classifications.

Topic	Funding Source	Academic Credit/Other course requirements
Teaching	Teaching Assistantships: If a student is a TA for a course, it counts as a source of funding coverage. It does not, however, count as a credit.	Teaching Experience: The TE-ship counts as an academic credit and does not cover a students' funding for the semester. Journal Club: Hosting journal club at least once during the program is a requirement and counts as a credit, but not as a source of funding.

Grants	T32s and other fellowships: Students in the first two years are typically covered under a fellowship or a T32 grant which count as a student's funding source for the semester. Dissertation grant: If a student receives a dissertation grant, it will typically count as a funding source for the remainder of the program or the grant period.	Dissertation grant: all students are required to submit a dissertation grant as a program requirement, regardless of whether it is funded.

Research	RAship on faculty grants: If a student is an RA on a faculty member's grant, the grant will count as the funding source for the semester/summer period.	First Summer RAship: The first summer RA-ship that a student engages in is a program requirement and does not need to be a funded position. Students are covered for their first summer. Independent Study RAship: If a student performs research under an independent study it counts as an academic credit and not a source of funding. However, it is possible to work with the same faculty member as both a funded RA-ship and independent study RA-ship concurrently if both an academic credit and a funding source are needed.

RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

Being a part of a research community is a key part of our PhD program, and we want to give students the opportunity to engage in research early on in their academic career. Conducting research with faculty can help to build networks and give students the opportunity to publish papers early which can help build their career. This can greatly enhance the graduate experience and jumpstart engagement in research, allowing for an earlier exposure to data sets that may generate and has the potential to deepen or generate research interests of students.

For all students, during the academic year, there is an expectation that no more than 20 hours per week will be spent on a specific research project that corresponds to the supporting training source. The balance of the full-time activities may include additional time spent on the primary research project or related training activities, such as preparing for comprehensive exams, participating in summer classes/tutorials, individual reading and/or class preparation. You may work additional hours if approved, but unless those hours are covered by an SRA or STA, it would not come with additional compensation.

Students participate in RAships in a variety of on and off campus settings, including Public Health Research Centers, the Rhode Island Department of Health, (RIDoH) the Veteran's Administration (VA) and clinical departments at Brown-affiliated hospitals. This section of the handbook is meant to provide a set of uniform guidelines that apply to RAs in all settings.

Purpose of the Research Assistantship: An RA should be an integral part of the student's training program. It provides a means of financial support, experience with academic research in a field relevant to the student, and provides faculty investigators with support in the form of graduate student participation on their projects.

Role of the RA advisor: The RA advisor is responsible for supervising and directing the student's work during the term of the appointment. Frequently, the faculty member providing the financial support for the RA position will serve as the advisor, but another faculty member can be designated (note: the advisor must be a faculty member with a primary or secondary appointment at HSPP). The RA advisor is responsible for coordinating, scheduling, and keeping appropriate documentation on the RA's activity; this is a particularly important function on large

projects where the RA may be working with several different faculty and staff members. The advisor also will be solicited for formal feedback as part of the twice-yearly evaluation of students.

Role of the student: A student is responsible for working on the assigned project for a maximum of 20 hours per week during academic semesters per Brown University Graduate School policy. It is understood that this may sometimes fluctuate during different points in the year, such as when project demands are higher or when students are in an exam period. The advisor and student must work together to ensure that both academic and RA responsibilities are being met.

Duration of the appointment: RA-ships typically last a minimum of a semester and are subject to renewal. As described below arrangements for leaves and time off should be handled between the RA supervisor and the student; however, conflicts or concerns should be communicated to the PhD Program Director and, in some cases the Graduate School, for resolution. In addition, students are not expected to work during any of the official Brown staff holidays.

Publications and academic freedoms: Although the RA's role in generating manuscripts for publication may vary by individual setting, it must be recognized that, consistent with academic norms, those who contribute intellectual content must be given appropriate credit. Being an RA as opposed to being an investigator is not grounds to preclude authorship. RAs who contribute meaningfully to a research project should be offered the opportunity to participate as a coauthor in publications, even if the RAship has been completed at the time the manuscript is being prepared. RAs should notify and work with the RA advisor directly should they wish to initiate preparation of a manuscript for publication based on a project or data associated with the RAship.

Special consideration for students engaged in dissertation work: Students engaged in PhD thesis research should, when possible, be matched to an RAship that is closely related to their field of research, to the point that some of their work as an RA may eventually result in a first-author published manuscript.

Awarding of industry-sponsored RAships and internships: Industry-sponsored RAships are classified by the Department as 'Sponsored Fellowships' and are awarded to students based on mutual agreement by the student, the sponsoring organization, and the PhD Program Director. The industry sponsor submits a description of the Sponsored Fellowship to the PhD Program Director for review and approval before it is made available as a means of support.

The process of awarding Sponsored Fellowships follows the guidelines, including timeline, publications, and terms of appointment as the awarding of other RAships. Sponsors of off-campus RAs should factor travel time into the student's overall time commitment, and be prepared to defray appropriate travel expenses.

Specific guidelines for off-campus RAships: RAs must be directly supervised by a full-time Brown faculty member. When the supervisor is not a member of the Department, a faculty liaison, a Department faculty member, will be assigned to oversee the RAship broadly. In many cases this

liaison can be the student's academic advisor.

STUDENT EVALUATION

Student Academic Standing Evaluations

Students' academic standing (good, satisfactory, or warning) is evaluated twice per year, at the end of the fall semester and at the end of the spring semester. Student evaluations are completed with input from program faculty (teaching faculty, RA or TA/TE supervisors, academic advisors). The purpose is to provide consolidated feedback to students about their performance and progress in the program. If the determination is made that a student is not making satisfactory progress, prospects for future financial support could be adversely affected and/or student enrollment in the program may be terminated.

Overall evaluation of graduate students takes place through a twice-annual review by the graduate faculty. The graduate faculty provide feedback in late January/early February and early June to assess each graduate student's progress and performance from the previous semester. These are important points of evaluation, because overall assessments and decisions for continued support are made at these meetings. The results of the evaluation are communicated to students in a formal letter from the PhD Program Director at least once per year. Letters are sent once per semester for first year students and those students whose progress falls below "good" standing.

If a student is placed on a warning, they will receive specific instructions in their evaluation letter on what must be done to return to good standing with associated deadlines. Failure to meet these expectations could result in separation from the program. While in most cases a student will have a semester or the summer to return to satisfactory or good standing, in the case of a failed qualifying exam or dissertation proposal, separation can occur if the retaken-exam or second dissertation proposal defense is failed within the same term.

Students' advisors will discuss the evaluation in greater detail and will be able to provide additional information. Topics relevant for the evaluation can include (though are not limited to) status in academic courses, performance on the qualifying exams, progress towards the thesis, performance as a teaching assistant and research assistant, priorities for the coming year to facilitate progress towards completing the degree and becoming an independent investigator and current and possible financial support.

The program encourages and expects that students and advisors meet periodically during the academic year to discuss the student's progress. This should occur in the context of course selection and subsequently to review the results of the annual evaluation. Semi-annual meetings are not intended to substitute for regular contact and students are encouraged to take the initiative to schedule appointments with advisors on a recurring basis.

MENTORING

The cornerstone of the health services research doctoral training program is the advising/mentoring program. The mentoring program integrates students into university life, promotes their retention of students, increases mentors' satisfaction, recruitment yield, decreases time to graduation and creates networking opportunities. The National Institutes of Health recognizes that today's research climate calls on methods from different related disciplines. The traditional sole-mentor model that typifies most graduate training programs does not suffice. A team of mentors at varying levels of career, offering complementary expertise is likely to be more effective than the sole-mentor model.

Individual Development Plan Policy

In response to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Brown University School of Public Health mandate regarding the use of Individual Development Plans (IDP) for graduate students, the doctoral program in Health Services Research requires:

- All incoming and continuing HSR doctoral students (regardless of funding source) must submit an updated IDP, in consultation with their advisor, on an annual basis. Once completed and signed by the student and advisor, it is due to the Academic Manager no later than May 15th in order to create an updated progress letter addressed to you. This letter will be shared with your advisor and the Graduate School.

The IDP is a valuable tool that gives students the opportunity to address their short-term and long-term career goals. In order to achieve compliance with the IDP policy, please fill out the Individual Development Plan for Health Services Research Doctoral Students, discuss with your advisor, and submit your signed and completed form to the Academic Manager.

As students develop their specific research interest, they are encouraged to consider adding an additional research advisor if their research interests are not aligned with their academic advisor. In addition to the faculty advisors, students have access to peer mentors, as well as alumni, if requested (through the PhD Program Director).

Academic advising/mentoring

The PhD Program Director assigns each incoming student an academic advisor to assist the student in charting an academic course to assure that key benchmarks are met. The advisor is expected to be familiar with the student's academic background, particularly with respect to previous graduate coursework. The academic advisor not only assists in the selection of courses, but also in shaping academic, career and personal goals. Further, the academic advisor assists the student in developing strategies for achieving these goals.

Students should plan to meet with their academic advisor at least twice per semester, however, more frequent meetings are encouraged given the student's goals. In the initial meetings with the academic advisor, students should try to plan a curricular program for up to two years and together complete an IDP (see above). The plan should include setting target dates for completion of milestones.

The advising relationship is an important one and students should be comfortable with their advisor. Ground-rules and expectations are identified and established via a mentoring contract. The academic manager will email this contract to be signed by both the student and the advisor before they start the program. It is understood that in some cases an individual student may wish to change academic advisors. This can be done at any time by requesting a change from the PhD Program Director. If the student is not comfortable making this request to the PhD Program Director, they may make it with the Department Chair and/or the Academic Manager. If they are not comfortable bringing this request to either of those individuals, they may bring it up with another faculty member.

Note: The selection process and role of the academic advisor is different from that of the dissertation advisor. As the student's research trajectory becomes clear, the academic advisor is formally replaced by the dissertation advisor of the student's choosing. Please inform the Academic Manager of this transition as there is some documentation that needs to be updated.

Research mentoring

The primary roles of the research mentor are to: 1) immediately integrate students into the research enterprise at Brown University; and 2) identify potential learning experiences beyond the classroom. The research mentor should be familiar with the student's personal statement included in the application for admission. The research mentor may be separate from the academic advisor to increase students' exposure to faculty. Students are NOT required to participate in a research assistantship in the first year, but exposure to ongoing research projects is beneficial to student development. However, students who enter the program with background experience may choose to get involved in research if they so desire. The research mentor connects students to ongoing research meetings and studies on substantive research topics.

When assigned to an RAship, students are expected to attend regular meetings to begin observing the research process, networking with researchers interested in their field of inquiry, and hearing what the latest research questions, issues, and funding streams are. Students will be expected to meet project deliverables outlined with the research advisor. If the RAship is being completed for funding that semester, students are expected to work up to 20 hours per week on the project.

The research mentor helps the student develop a list of "shadowing" experiences. These can include clinicians, hospital quality improvement program staff, sitting in on regulatory board meetings, health insurance companies, observing people coding data used to populate administrative data sources, etc. The purpose of these experiences helps students gain insight into how the various stakeholders in health care view the issues discussed in the academic context and to accumulate experiences that should help stimulate more useful, practical research questions. These experiences also should help students understand some of the influences on existing data collected for administrative or payment purposes.

Peer mentoring program

The mission of the graduate student peer mentoring program (big sib/little sib) is to provide a supportive environment for health services research graduate students and to link new students

with successful role models. This program is designed to provide an opportunity for guidance and a mechanism for students to tap into appropriate resources available on campus. Peer mentors' model professional behaviors expected of future scientists including guiding and mentoring people newer to the field. Students will be assigned a peer mentor upon matriculation into the program.

Development of strong student networks within the program facilitates future professional development. Peer advisers can respond to frequently asked questions that students have. They can also interact with students in a wide variety of settings, and students may feel more comfortable talking to one of their peers than to a professional adviser. Peer advisors have firsthand knowledge of the issues and concerns that students face on a daily basis and have experience dealing with the challenges related to the selection of classes and time management.

DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAM COMPETENCIES

The doctoral program is intended for highly qualified students who plan to pursue a career focused on research, or research combined with teaching, in academic or non-academic settings. The Graduate School has several University-wide requirements of all students enrolled in graduate programs at Brown.

The curriculum is competency-based because this approach provides clarity of the learning direction, stimulates accountability in the process of learning, and provides a framework regarding evaluation of learning. We define competencies in terms of knowledge, skills, and abilities. The doctoral program in HSR builds upon the methodological foundation of epidemiology and biostatistics, but extends beyond to incorporate social science theory pertinent to health services research.

There are eight core competency areas:

- Theory and context
- Study design
- Analysis
- Policy
- Data management and practical research skills
- Effective communication
- Ethical behavior, administrative skills, and personal and professional development
- Project leadership/independent research skills.

These competencies will be developed over the course of the PhD program through coursework, research experiences, exams, and the dissertation.

TRANSITIONAL MASTER OF ARTS (AM) DEGREE

In the instance that a student either (a) withdraws from Brown prior to earning their doctorate degree or (b) wants a master's en route to the terminal PhD, the Health Services Research (HSR) PhD program has an AM degree as a transitional master's for HSR PhD students who have completed course requirements. Students who already have a masters degree are generally not eligible for the Transitional AM.

To receive the AM in HSR, students are required to satisfactorily pass (B or greater) the following eight courses:

1. PHP 2446 HSR Doctoral Seminar: Financing & Delivery
2. PHP 2150 Foundations in Epidemiologic Research
3. PHP 2200 Intermediate Methods in Epidemiologic Research
4. PHP 2455A Health Services Research Methods I
5. PHP 2455B Health Services Research Methods II
6. An additional advanced quantitative course selected from our Advanced Quantitative Course selective list
7. Two additional HSR elective courses either from the Specialty Track Electives listed in the handbook.

Depending on course and instructor availability, the curriculum is subject to change annually. Substitutions for these course requirements can be made at the discretion of the PhD Program Director, HSPP Department Chair, or HSPP Department Curriculum Committee.

Applying for the AM requires consultation with and approval of the HSR PhD Program Director and HSPP Department Chair. When you have completed the needed requirements, please contact the PhD Program Director for next steps.

ACADEMIC POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND RESOURCES

Overall Program Expectations

This PhD program is intended to be a full-time in-person training program. By full-time, we expect that students do not retain full-time outside employment. While work requirements on RAships and TAships are not more than 20 hours a week, it is expected that you will spend the remaining 20 hours a week attending coursework, working on your dissertation, or furthering your training goals.

By in-person, we expect that students attend coursework, and co-curricular activities such as research meetings, seminars, brown bags, journal club, etc. in-person. While a Zoom option may be available for some of this programming, attending via Zoom should not be the norm. **This expectation to be in-person remains true during the entire course of the PhD program, even during the dissertation phase.** While during and immediately following the pandemic, there was more flexibility to these requirements, these exceptions are not the norm.

Stata Summer Camp

When possible, the program will offer a student-led training workshop for incoming PhD students to help them gain needed data skills to be able to participate in research or to take higher level coursework. We recognize that students enter with varied skills and experiences using Stata, and this workshop seeks to create opportunities for all students to feel ready to use Stata in their own work and that of any PI they may be working with. The Summer Camp is required for first-year students; other students in the program are welcome to attend as desired.

Grades and Course Credit

Students are expected to achieve grades of A or B in all courses that count for credit towards the graduate degree. Although students could earn credit for grades of C, a C grade may have an adverse impact on the student's overall evaluation and academic standing.

Transfer Credits

PhD students may be allowed credit for graduate work done while in graduate residence at another institution. This includes work taken as part of a graduate-level degree prior to entering the PhD program. No more than 8 of the required 24 units can be credited in this manner (each course, TA, or TEship at Brown is considered one credit).

To receive transfer credit, students must complete the appropriate application, available from the Registrar's website and obtain approval from the PhD Program Director.

Domestic Conference Travel

If a student has any abstracts to present or any role in a conference, the department expects the student to be reimbursed by a mixture of the Graduate School's Conference Travel Fund (and International Travel Grant, if applicable), the Graduate Student Council's professional development fund (look out for this from them by email) and/or grant or T32 traineeship (for

eligible students) coverage. Each academic year, a set dollar amount will be determined by September to provide support for conferences.

As a general rule, it is the student's responsibility to discuss potential meeting costs with their mentors as many faculty grants have support for conference funding prior to the conference. It is suggested to discuss this at the time of the abstract submission, particularly for conferences that might be unduly expensive. If a student wishes to attend a conference internationally, or to attend a second conference, the department will make its best effort to accommodate the request, based on available funding and departmental resources.

If a student has no work to present and has no grant coverage, the department guarantees attendance to one domestic conference per academic year (aligning with that year's budget period) in which the program's operating budget will cover up to the specific dollar amount issued at the beginning of the academic year. Please note, the Grad School's travel funds will not be an option if students are not presenting.

As soon as you start to plan your travel and have received pertinent approvals, we can begin to process your reimbursement requests immediately up to the approved amount - hotel, taxis, and meals/per diem cannot be reimbursed in advance. Please only book non-refundable, coach class airline tickets per University guidelines. If you are flying out of a different airport other than Boston Logan or TF Green Providence, or traveling on dates outside of the day before or after the conference, please work with the Academic Manager prior to booking as cost comparisons will be needed, and we need ensure compliance of policies issued by the federal government and the University.

Food expenses will be reimbursed through either a receipt or a per diem allowance (to be determined by Academic team prior to conference) following per diem guidelines from the U.S. General Services Administration; note that allowance may be reduced during days food is provided by the conference or on days of travel (depending on travel timing). At this time, when traveling internationally, per diem will not be allowed and individual receipts will be required for reimbursement.

When submitting requests, please send separate receipts, as well as a copy of this calculation worksheet with details of what the expense is for and specific receipts (none are needed for per diem allowances) such as taxi or Uber fares. Uber transactions using Uber Cash will NOT be reimbursed by the University. Credit card statements are considered as invalid forms of proof by the University. Please also include any travel awards/grants, and any approvals from PIs offering financial coverage for your travel if you have had this discussion, otherwise, we will handle these communications.

The academic manager and the director of finance & administration will hold open office hours in the spring to help students prepare for conference and travel booking. Each semester, the academic manager will also send an email with the above calculation worksheet as well as additional information about booking conference travel.

Publication Fees/Expenses

If students will be published as part of research relating to your work as an RA, please discuss with the PI of the project to determine if funds are available for you to use to cover the publication expenses.

If students are being published outside of their work as an RA and need to cover a publication fee, they can apply to receive funds from the department at the discretion of the PhD Program Director and Department Chair. This support is subject to current department resources and is not guaranteed.

Policy on Leaves of Absence and Time Off for Supported Students

The department views summer RAships and fellowships as an extension of program-supported training activities that take place during the academic year. In both the academic year and summer, students enrolled in PhD programs are provided a full-time stipend with the expectation that they will be engaged on a full-time basis in educational and training activities that are relevant to the student's personal, professional and educational objectives.

Per Article VII of the Graduate Labor Organization's (GLO) Collective Bargaining Agreement with the University: "All graduate student employee leaves of absence and time off, including, but not limited to, medical leave, short-term medical accommodation, family leave, parental relief, professional development leave, and personal leave, as well as time off for sick time, jury service, bereavement, special time-off, and holidays, will be governed by Article VII and the Graduate School's policies of leaves of absence. If there is any inconsistency, ambiguity or conflict between Article VII and the Graduate School's policies, Brown agrees to meet with GLO to review the issue. Graduate student employees considering any leave or time off are encouraged to review, depending on their circumstances, whether accommodations are suitable through the appropriate University office." Please refer to Article VII for more information and types of leave.

- RA supervisors are expected to make reasonable allowances for personal days and for workload during exam periods.
- Arrangements for leaves and time off should be handled between the RA supervisor and the student; however, conflicts or concerns should be communicated to the PhD Program Director, and in some cases the Graduate School, for resolution.
- Students supported by a Teaching Assistantship or Fellowship are expected to be available to work with their faculty mentor or other designated faculty supervisor during Academic Recess periods.

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 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 IRB regulatory protocols, student loans, as well as 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.

Policy on Work During the Summer

Sources of support: During the summer, students are supported either on a divisional fellowship, training grant or RA-ship unless undertaking an external internship (if so, please give advance notice to Academic Manager). Each source of support provides a comparable stipend. In most cases, students on divisional fellowships and training grants are matched to a faculty member for the summer, providing an opportunity to work individually with the faculty on a specific research project, thereby gaining additional exposure and experience. RAships are paid for by specific grants held by faculty members; work on an RAship generally is geared toward the research program corresponding to the objectives of the grant and also provides students with important skill-building experience. The assignment process is coordinated by the PhD Program Director of each doctoral program.

Objectives: The student, academic advisor and summer research supervisor should work jointly to formulate a schedule and set of activities designed to meet this comprehensive set of educational objectives. Oversight and advice can be provided by the PhD Program Director as needed.

Work requirement and schedule: The period of work for summer research appointments is June 1 through August 31. During this period of time, it is expected that the student's schedule of activities, averaged over the summer, will correspond to 20 hours of work each week. You may work additional hours beyond the 20 per week if approved, but unless those hours are covered by an SRA or STA, it would not come with additional compensation.

If a student wishes to participate in an internship program with industry, they should first discuss the opportunity with their advisor and then the program director. As students are still appointed to RAships or fellowships during the summer, they are expected to work full time with the department, and the external opportunities should be secondary. If a student wishes to participate in an internship that requires their attention full time, then accommodations need to be made to reduce the student stipend during that period.

Support for Student Parents

The University, School and Department are committed to supporting students throughout their academic careers, including when students become parents, or if students enter the program as parents. This support takes several forms, as outlined below.

Graduate PhD students are afforded parental relief (including stipend) that lasts the duration of one semester or summer when a child is born/adopted, or the semester/summer immediately following. For more information, please see this resources page.

The School of Public Health has a dedicated Health Room on the 3rd floor that is available to students, staff and faculty by appointment in Skedda (see next section) and is a private, clean and quiet space to aid in lactation and address health concerns.

Brown University also has a childcare subsidy which can help defray childcare costs. Applications

are made yearly. Further information, including eligibility and application details, can be found here.

The University also provides a number of web-based resources for student parents or students planning to become parents. See the Graduate School Family Resources link for further details.

Facilities/Space in The School of Public Health

The department makes every effort to ensure that all graduate students are provided with adequate office space. While the School does not use assigned seating, they have created dedicated space throughout the building that can be booked through Skedda. Please see the School of Public Health's PhD Space website for more information, and use this link to view and book the School's student space offerings. See below for more information on getting set up in Skedda, as well as other booking forms for assigned space and lockers:

- Skedda Scheduling System: To access Skedda, please use this link and use Brown SSO to login. Important: Please do not share this link with others. This link automatically tags you as a Ph.D. student providing you access to designated Ph.D. spaces. Download the app from the Apple Store or Google Play
- Assigned Seating: If you have an extenuating reason requiring an assigned seat, such as being in the process of defending or other exceptional circumstances, please complete this form.
- Lockers: If you need a locker, please complete this form.
- Mailboxes: Student mailboxes are located on the 3rd floor. From the stairs, go through the door directly across from the staircase. From the elevators, take a left, pass the glass and wood doors, and it will be on your left.

For any additional questions or to report an issue with the student spaces, please contact sph-operations@brown.edu.

Laptop Computers

The Program will provide each incoming doctoral student their own laptop computer. While the program will fund the initial laptop purchase, each student will be responsible for any needed repairs, replacement parts, upgrades, etc. As different components of the laptop are subject to different warranty periods, students should always check with the SPH IT Support Consultant Team (sph-itsc@brown.edu) for any possible component warranty before making a purchase or requesting repair. Students must return the computer to the Academic Manager upon leaving the program.

Student Membership on Departmental/School Committees

The Department mandates student representation on the Curriculum Committee and the Doctoral Graduate Studies Committee (as there are student representatives from each program participating). Students may also be represented on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, the Admissions Committee (open to students who have advanced to candidacy and are typically in their last year or semester), the occasional School student panel (used to connect with prospective students) and to serve as student program ambassadors. Students are also encouraged to participate in School, University and/or Division level committees such as the University Graduate Council and the Graduate Student Council.

Grievances

Students may not agree with faculty or committee actions related to evaluation of academic progress and standing. This may occur at the point of semi-annual evaluations, or at any of the points in achieving doctoral candidacy and preparing the thesis. Our intent as a faculty is to address disagreements directly and constructively. Therefore, we encourage students initially to discuss their concerns and explore possible solutions with their advisor, the Department Chair, and/or the PhD Program Director. The University's faculty handbook has a detailed description of grievance procedures, and students are referred and recommended to review.

Procedures exist for the resolution of non-academic grievances, such as complaints of harassment involving sexually or racially offensive behavior, and discrimination as cited in the University's Non- Discrimination Policy. There are also established procedures for reviewing the cases of students whose actions may require disciplinary measures. Inquiries about these procedures should be directed to the Department Chair and/or the Dean of the Graduate School.

Title IX

"No person in the United States, shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and its implementing regulation at 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (Title IX). HSR is committed to providing an environment free from all forms of harassment. Please see Brown's Title IX and Gender Equity website for more details.

Language and Writing Assistance

One of the Program's priorities is that graduate students become competent in written and oral communication of scientific thinking. To this end, we offer multiple strategies for support and development of these skills in the graduate program through formal coursework, participation in seminars and journal club, and in teaching and research assistantships. We also encourage students to take full advantage of resources provided by the following organizations on campus.

English Language Program & Writing Center: Those students whose native language is not English can make use of the opportunities provided at Brown to improve their command of spoken and written English. The Sheridan Center offers an English Language Support Program where Master's and PhD students come together for a two-week summer session aimed at equipping incoming international graduate students, for whom English is not a primary language, with the language skills to feel confident and successful in navigating their academic pursuits. In addition, The Sheridan Center offers a Writing Center. The Center is staffed by graduate students from various academic disciplines and staff members who are experienced writers and teachers who participate in ongoing training in composition and Writing Center theory and practice. The Writing Center associates are prepared to discuss all stages of the writing process, from finding a topic up through revision and editing strategies. Associates can help writers deal with writer's block, audience awareness, argumentation, organization, grammar, research skills, the conventions of academic writing, English as a Foreign Language, and issues of clarity and style, either one-on-one in person or virtually. Various workshops are held throughout the year including a Dissertation Writing Retreat is offered every January and July.

Tutoring Resources

Occasionally students in the program may require additional support, most often with programming, causal inference, or in working with large claims databases. On a case-by-case basis subject to PhD Program Director approval, the department may be able to provide funds for peer tutoring, pairing a student with another to provide short term support. If you would like to request this, please contact the program director.

Diversity and Inclusion

We work together to create and maintain an environment stimulated, encouraged and nourished by the exchange of ideas from individuals with a wide variety of diverse backgrounds. We believe that it is our responsibility to ensure a richly diverse cultural environment that enhances learning and collaborative opportunities. We recognize and appreciate the valuable benefits of this exchange to our immediate and surrounding communities. We are committed to this important vision of our future; a commitment that relies on all of us to ensure its success.

Feel free to visit the SPH Office of Diversity and Inclusion website to learn about the variety of opportunities and the resources available to you and how you can become involved. Brown University's strategic plan emphasizes these values and you can read more about it at the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI). In the event you may need to report an incident on the topics of bias, discrimination and harassment or Title IX and Gender Equity, please use this link to find more information on how to proceed.

Offboarding

Upon completing your dissertation defense, your funding will end at the end of that month (ex. if you defend on April 18, you will receive your last paycheck on April 30).

If you are still finishing up research with faculty after this point and require continued access to data, you may reach out to the sponsoring faculty member (typically your advisor) and the academic manager to request an unpaid "adjunct investigator" position. If approved by SPH Faculty Affairs, this will allow you one year to maintain access. If this position isn't approved, a sponsored ID is also an option. Anything beyond the first year will require a new request at the end of that year.

When leaving the program, please give your keys, Brown ID, and Brown laptop to the academic manager. If you feel you still need your laptop until your work is finished, please reach out to the academic manager for further discussion.