

Epidemiology Department Graduate Program Handbook

Academic Year 2021-2022



BROWN
School of Public Health

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School of Public Health

“This Handbook is intended to give an overview of the Epidemiology Department’s master’s and doctoral programs at Brown University and to answer some of the commonly raised questions about policies and procedures. However, the authoritative source for Graduate School policies is the [Brown Graduate School Handbook](#) which can be found on the [Graduate School website](#)

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Mission Statement

The primary mission of the Department of Epidemiology is to provide excellence in teaching and training in the field of epidemiology. The graduate program supports an MPH degree and offers a doctoral degree to prepare students for careers in research or professions in public health which require knowledge of advanced epidemiologic methods.

Department of Epidemiology Leadership & Staff

Francesca L. Beaudoin, MD, PhD, Interim Department Chair - *she/her/hers*

Chanelle Howe, PhD, Doctoral Program Director - *she/her/hers*

Jesse Yedinak Gray, MPH Epidemiology Concentration Lead - *she/her/hers*

Brittany Leclerc, Department Manager - *she/her/hers*
(Faculty affairs, student funding, dissertation assistance, RAships)

Kathleen Graham, Administrative Coordinator - *she/her/hers*
(All other student affairs, Department events, seminar series)

Commitment to Program Diversity and a Culture of Respect

The Brown University Department of Epidemiology is committed to ensuring that we admit students from diverse socioeconomic, cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds. The Department of Epidemiology is committed to creating an inclusive, collaborative climate centered on mutual respect, with the goal of cultivating a productive work and learning environment.

MPH – Epidemiology Concentration Overview

The [Brown MPH Program](#) offers a concentration in Epidemiology for students looking to pursue a knowledge of Epidemiology at a master's degree level. The information below provides an overview of the MPH Epidemiology concentration.

For additional information regarding the MPH with a concentration in Epidemiology curriculum and to view the MPH student handbook, please visit their website: [The Curriculum | Master of Public Health | Brown University](#)

This concentration is administered through the MPH program. For questions about the MPH programs, admissions, or funding, please contact Diane Schlacter at diane_schlacter@brown.edu.

MPH students are not required to complete the Applied Public Health Experience (APHE) in their respective concentration area.

Course Requirements for the MPH with a Concentration in Epidemiology

The MPH with a concentration in epidemiology will provide advanced training in the underlying principles and practice of epidemiology for students with little or no prior graduate-level training in epidemiology. This program prepares students to work in academia, industry, or public health practice as a key member of a team who can provide expertise in epidemiologic study design or data analysis.

To receive the MPH degree at Brown, students are required to successfully complete fourteen courses (12 full credit courses and two half credit courses) and complete an internship and a thesis. Full-time students typically take 6.5 courses/year. Students pursuing the MPH with a concentration in Epidemiology are specifically required to complete the following courses and non-credit activities:

Required Courses

All of the following 6 core courses*:

- PHP2150 – Foundations in Epidemiologic Research Methods
(Full credit course offered every year)
- PHP2510 – Principles of Biostatistics and Data Analysis
(Full credit course offered every year)
- PHP2511 – Introduction to Applied Regression Analysis
(Full credit course offered every year)
- PHP2071 – Applied Public Health: Systems and Practice
(Half credit course offered every year)
- PHP2072- Applied Public Health: Policy, Leadership and Communication
(Half credit course offered every other year)
- PHP2355 – Designing and Evaluating Public Health Interventions
(Full credit course offered every year)

All of the following 5 concentration courses:

- PHP2200 – Intermediate Methods in Epidemiologic Research
(Full credit course offered every year)
- PHP2180 – Interpretation and Application of Epidemiology
(Full credit course offered every year)
- PHP2260 – Applied Epidemiologic Data Analysis
(Full credit course offered every year)

1 full credit methods course chosen from the following list**:

(Course may be offered every year or every other year):

- PHP1560/2560 – Statistical Programming in R
- PHP1895 – Mindfulness Epidemiology***
- PHP2030 – Clinical Trials Methodology
- PHP2040 – Survey Research Methods
- PHP2118 – Genomics Epidemiology
- PHP2220B - Nutritional Epidemiology***
- PHP2250 – Advanced Quantitative Methods in Epidemiologic Research
- PHP2440 - Introduction to Pharmacoepidemiology
- PHP2455A – Health Services Research Methods I
- PHP2465A – Introduction to Health Decision Analysis
- PHP2515 – Fundamentals of Probability and Statistical Inference
- PHP2530 – Bayesian Statistical Methods
- PHP2550 – Practical Data Analysis
- PHP2602 – Analysis of Lifetime Data

- PHP2610 – Causal Inference and Missing Data
- PHP2620 – Statistical Methods in Bioinformatics I
- PHP2650 – Statistical Learning and Big Data

1 full-credit substantive course at the 1000 or 2000 level chosen so that the student will develop greater knowledge of human biology or expertise in applying epidemiologic methods to substantive areas (e.g., cardiovascular disease, cancer, infectious diseases, or environmental health). Substantive courses may be offered every year or every other year. The below list includes example substantive courses that would meet this requirement. However, other courses may meet this requirement as well.

- PHP2130 – Human Biology for Public Health
- PHP1854 - Infectious Disease Epidemiology
- PHP2220H – HIV Epidemiology
- PHP1895 – Mindfulness Epidemiology***
- PHP1900H – Racial/Ethnic-, Socioeconomic-, and other Group-based Health Disparities in the United States
- PHP1920 – Social Determinants of Health
- PHP1964 – Cancer Epidemiology
- PHP2108 – Epidemiology of Cardio-Metabolic Health
- PHP2220B – Nutritional Epidemiology***
- PHP2220C – Perinatal Epidemiology
- PHP2220D – Reproductive Epidemiology
- PHP2222E – Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology

3 full-credit selective courses at the 1000 or 2000 level that are different from the 5 selected concentration courses****. Selective courses may be offered every year or every other year.

Non-credit activities (to be completed by the end of the first semester after enrollment):

- [PHP1001](#) - Foundations in Public Health
- CITI Training
- IRB Basics
- Semester One Core Advisor Small Group Sessions
- Online course offered by the SAS Institute
 - SAS Programming 1: Essentials

Non-credit activities (to be completed by the end of the second semester after enrollment):

- Online course offered by the SAS Institute
 - SAS Programming 2: Data Management

Non-credit activities (to be completed each semester):

- Epidemiology Student Journal Club
- Department of Epidemiology Seminar series
- Lunch with Epidemiology Concentration Lead

*If a student completes PHP2120 or PHP2507 or PHP2507 & PHP2508 before deciding on the Epidemiology Concentration, the student must meet with the Epidemiology Concentration Lead and the MPH Program Director to request that PHP2120 or PHP2507 or PHP2507 & PHP2508 meet(s) the relevant core requirement(s). Based on an assessment of the student's background, course performance, and knowledge base and other Department of Epidemiology requirements, PHP2120 or PHP2507 or PHP2507 & PHP2508 may be able to substitute.

**1 full-credit methods course requirement can also be met by taking both of the following half credit methods courses: PHP2516 – Applied Longitudinal Data Analysis and PHP2517 – Applied Multilevel Data Analysis.

***Can be used as either a substantive or methods course, but cannot count towards both.

****1 of the required 3 full-credit selective courses can be PHP2516 – Applied Longitudinal Data Analysis (half credit course) plus PHP2517 – Applied Multilevel Data Analysis (half credit course).

Overview of Introductory Methods Classes Offered by the Department of Epidemiology at the Brown University School of Public Health

The Department of Epidemiology offers the 3 following introductory methods classes:

PHP0850 (Fundamentals of Epidemiology). Undergraduate introductory course.

Required of all undergraduate public health concentrators. This course is aimed towards juniors and seniors who have completed prior coursework and/or who have a strong interest in public health methods.

This is an introductory course relevant for those who have not yet taken an epidemiology class. Successful completion of PHP 0320 (Introduction to Public Health) is a prerequisite. This course will provide students with a strong foundation in basic epidemiologic concepts and methods to describe the occurrence of infectious and chronic diseases and study their etiologies. How to interpret epidemiologic evidence to inform public health policy and practice will be emphasized throughout the course. Lectures are reinforced with problem-based discussion groups throughout the semester.

PHP2120 (Introduction to Methods in Epidemiologic Research). Graduate-level, terminal course. Required of 5th year Masters students, general MPH students and some PhD students.

This course is designed for graduate students who are planning a career in public health but who may not see their primary interest in epidemiological methods. Thus, the course is designed as preparation for a professional career in public health (i.e., 'consumers' of epidemiological research, rather than 'producers' per se). The focus is on understanding epidemiological methods, applying them to a variety of settings and becoming conversant in critical reading of the epidemiological literature. The emphasis is on the application of basic epidemiological methods and concepts and interpretation of findings from epidemiological studies.

PHP2150 (Foundations in Epidemiologic Research Methods). Graduate-level, advanced introductory methods course. Required of PhD Epi students, MPH students who concentrate in Epi, and some other doctoral programs in public health.

This more advanced introductory epidemiological methods class is intended for students who are planning to pursue a career in epidemiology (e.g., ‘producers’ of epidemiology) or closely related disciplines (e.g., health policy, behavioral science). It is the first class in the sequence of epidemiological methods classes required of Epi PhD and Epi ScM students and MPH students who concentrate in Epi. Other students often elect to take some or all the subsequent courses in the Epi methods sequence (PHP2200, PHP2250, PHP2180). Many (but not all) students who take PHP2150 will have already taken a basic introductory epidemiology course. The goal of PHP2150 is to provide a solid foundation in core epi methods that will be built upon in subsequent courses in the sequence. The course delves deeply into theory and principles behind epi methods, focusing on causal inference.

Required activities for MPH students who have decided to declare the Epi concentration after they have taken PHP2120 (Introduction to Methods in Epidemiologic Research)

The epidemiology methods sequence that is designed for the Epidemiology MPH and doctoral students includes PHP2150 (Foundations in Epidemiologic Research Methods), followed by PHP2200 (Intermediate Methods in Epidemiologic Research). However, the curriculum is designed such that it may be possible for MPH students who decide to declare the Epi concentration after taking PHP2120 (Introduction in Epidemiologic Research) to enroll in PHP2200 (Intermediate Methods in Epidemiologic

Research) to meet the MPH in Epi degree requirements (MPH students who declare the Epi concentration must enroll in PHP2200).

Given that PHP2150 is a more advanced introduction to epidemiological methods than PHP2120, prior to enrolling in PHP2200, the following activities must be completed.

1. Read *Epidemiology: An Introduction* by KJ Rothman (2nd ed., New York: Oxford University Press; 2012).
2. Review chapters 1 through 3 of *Causal Inference: What If* by Hernán MA & Robins JM (to be published, available here: <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/miguel-hernan/causal-inference-book/>).
3. Complete the Measures of Association tutorial for the MPH program at the Boston University School of Public Health (http://sphweb.bumc.bu.edu/otlt/MPH-Modules/EP/EP713_Association/EP713_Association-TOC.html). Other tutorials may be helpful and can be found here: <http://sphweb.bumc.bu.edu/otlt/MPH-Modules/Menu/index.html>.
4. Receive approval from the Epidemiology Concentration Lead and the MPH Program Director for PHP2120 to substitute for PHP2150.
5. Meet with the instructor of PHP2200 at least two weeks before the start of classes to ensure that other gaps in knowledge have been addressed.

Additional Thesis Requirements for the MPH Epidemiology Concentration:

(Please review the MPH thesis requirements in the MPH program handbook.)

1. The thesis advisor or the thesis reader must be a primary, secondary, or adjunct faculty member of the epidemiology department.
2. Students must add a sentence or two to the project description portion of their thesis proposal that explains the scientific rationale for the selected thesis reader or thesis advisor who is not an affiliated faculty member within the epidemiology department (if applicable).
3. The thesis must be disseminated to a public health audience in writing. Examples of broad dissemination include:
 - Submit thesis work as a manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal
 - Submit thesis work as an abstract to a conference
 - Submit thesis work as an abstract to the SPH Public Health Research Day

- Thesis work is posted on a partner website (e.g. as a report, or a data or policy brief)
4. The thesis must be disseminated to a public health audience via an oral or poster presentation. Examples of broad dissemination include:
- Present thesis work as an oral or poster presentation at a conference
 - Present thesis work as part of an oral invited talk
 - Present thesis work as part of a poster presentation at the SPH Public Health
 - Research Day (during spring semester)
 - Present thesis work as an oral or poster presentation given in a public forum or at an appropriate organizational meeting for a public health organization
 - Present thesis work as part of oral testimony before a government body
 - Students completing their degree for October or February for whom the SPH Public Health Research Day is not an option may present their thesis work as part of a poster presentation to be given simultaneously for the thesis reader, thesis advisor, and concentration lead (during the fall semester)

Examples of Careers in Epidemiology:

Previous Brown graduates with an ScM in Epidemiology have gone on to careers such as:

Research Data Manager,
Clinical Research Coordinator
Data Analyst
Health Workforce Specialist
Senior Epidemiologist
HIV Molecular Epidemiologist
Research Assistant
Continuing to pursue a PhD or MD

PhD Program Guide

Program Description:

The Doctoral Program in Epidemiology's mission is to prepare students to become leading, independent investigators with rigorous training in epidemiologic methods, able to excel in academia, industry, government or public health practice. All students in the Doctoral Program in Epidemiology are required to demonstrate mastery of advanced epidemiologic methods, which is assessed via coursework and examinations.

Upon completion of the PhD program, students are expected to have proficiency in the following areas: 1) Develop a strong foundation in contemporary approaches to epidemiologic methods, and major observational study designs; 2) Design a research study that can appropriately and efficiently examine an epidemiologic research question of interest; write and submit a proposal to support this research; 3) Use causal diagrams to identify threats to study validity and potential approaches to mitigating such threats; 4) Conduct appropriate analyses of epidemiologic data using standard regression models in SAS or R; 5) Distinguish between association and causation based on counterfactual theory to make causal inference using data obtained from observational studies; 6) Represent a priori subject-matter knowledge and hypotheses with causal diagrams; 7) Understand the difference between effect modification and interaction; 8) Learn to interpret and integrate multiple lines of scientific evidence concerning a particular topic of importance to the field of epidemiology; 9) Effective communication of scientific findings; 10) Demonstrate a basic understanding of human physiology and pathophysiology; 11) Demonstrate mastery of a substantive area; 12) Review, critically analyze and synthesize existing epidemiologic literature to identify meaningful gaps in current knowledge and formulate research objectives; 13) Strong understanding of what scientific misconduct is and the impact unethical conduct can cause within and outside of the research community.

Coursework

All students in the PhD program in Epidemiology are required to take 13 courses for credit, including 8 core courses, 2 or 3 more methods selective courses, and 2 or 3 more substantive selective courses. Each of these courses must be taken for credit and for a grade. PhD students are also required to: a) take PHP1001, an online, noncredit introductory course b) take a noncredit online introductory course on SAS data management, c) participate in the journal club series (course credit optional), and d) take the noncredit Responsible Conduct in Research (RCR) course.

NOTE: For course descriptions visit the [University Bulletin](#)

Specifically, students pursuing a PhD in Epidemiology are required to take the following:

Core Courses:

- PHP 2150 – Foundations in Epidemiologic Research Methods
- PHP 2200 – Intermediate Methods in Epidemiologic Research
- PHP 2250 – Advanced Quantitative Methods for Epidemiologic Research
- PHP 2180 – Interpretation and Application of Epidemiology
- PHP 2510 – Principles of Biostatistics and Data Analysis
- PHP 2511 – Applied Regression Analysis
- PHP 2090 – Research Grant Writing for Public Health
- PHP 2130 – Human Biology for Epidemiology

The 3 following non-credit courses during the first semester:

1. [Public Health 1001](#)

- PHP1001 is an online course required of first year graduate students in all SPH programs and newly declared ScB Statistics concentrators. The course, which is neither credit bearing nor tuition requiring, provides a broad exposure to important public health content as mandated by our

accrediting body, CEPH. All modules are required for all new students regardless of program of enrollment or prior coursework or degrees. Public Health 1001 provides an introduction to public health concepts and practice by examining the philosophy, history, purpose, organization, functions, tools, activities and population impact of public health. The emphasis is on the core areas of public health, challenges and strategies for working with communities, and specific health issues that impact the health of the population. The instructional methods emphasize competency in basic concepts through active student participation in a variety of computer-mediated activities.

All new graduate students in all SPH programs and new concentrators in Statistics will be automatically enrolled in the course. Students will receive an introductory email with links to the Canvas site through which the course is administered. It is recommended that students complete the course in the summer prior to starting the degree program. For those for whom that is not possible, the course will be offered again later in the academic year.

2. Online Graduate Student Course on SAS Data Management

- Two online courses offered by the SAS Institute will be required: SAS Programming 1 & SAS Programming 2.

SAS Programming 1: Essentials is designed as a basic introduction to SAS and must be completed by the end of the first term by all students unless a waiver is obtained from the GPD. The emphasis is on data management (including how to read in different types of data, formatting, and creating variables) and, programming univariate comparisons. The topics for the second SAS course include more advanced data management, including do loops and arrays, as well as summarizing, reading, and writing different types of data. The online learning is self-paced, but students are encouraged to start the training early in the first semester. Epidemiology courses offered during the second term will

assume the online SAS courses have been completed and that the students understand the material in the training.

- [Instructions for accessing SAS](#) - Please note: Users must start with a SAS Profile created with their .EDU email address. If the .EDU email is not used in the Shopping Cart when they place their order for the Academic Hub, they will not get access. The activation code process and access is not instantaneous. There is an hourly update job that runs to create and email activation codes.

3. Research Ethics Training in the School of Public Health (RCR Training)

- All first-year doctoral students in the School of Public Health are required to successfully complete “Responsible Conduct in Research (RCR) Training.” Public health students required to take the course will automatically be enrolled and receive communication from the instructor. This five-week introduction to the scope and complexity of ethical situations that confront modern public health practitioners is led by Elizabeth Aston, Assistant Professor of Behavioral and Social Sciences. 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. Discussion of the ethics of diversity is incorporated to convey an appreciation for the fact that differences of race, culture, age, gender, disability, and religion can affect the conduct and interpretation of research. The training includes presentations, short illustrative films specific to public health research issues, and small group discussion of hypothetical and real scenarios drawn from current literature and the news media. Supplemental materials and homework assignments are provided

through the Collaborative Institutional Review Board Training Initiative (CITI) program online system. School of Public Health faculty and University staff from the Office of Vice President for Research and Research Administration participate as presenters and discussants along with students. Successful completion of this course includes attendance at all meetings and passing the written final examination. This course can be accessed through Brown University's Canvas site.

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.

Students must also take 2 or more of the following methods selective courses (note, not all courses will be offered each year):

Method selective definition:

- Primary purpose of course is on design, analyses, or interpretation of public health or clinical studies.
- 2+ course objectives focused on design, data analysis technique or tool, or epidemiologic interpretation of public health or clinical studies OR
- 1+ objective focused on causal inference or mathematical statistics, and could include confounding, bias, validity, mediation, or effect modification.
- Courses may be both a Method and Substantive selective course when the course objectives are focused on epidemiological methods and the course is topically focused on a specific topic, disease, or population.

Students are encouraged to seek diversity in their epidemiologic and biostatistical methods training, in line with their career goals. The following courses have been approved to be counted as methods courses for PhD Epidemiology students. See the key below for exceptions and specifications.

PHP 2560 – Statistical Programming in R
PHP 1895 - Mindfulness Epidemiology
PHP 2030 – Clinical Trials Methodology
PHP 2040 – Applied Research Methods
PHP 2180 – Interpretation and Application of Epidemiology (1)
PHP2118 – Genomics Epidemiology
PHP 2220B - Nutritional Epidemiology
PHP 2250 – Advanced Quantitative Methods in Epidemiologic Research (1)
PHP 2260 – Applied Epidemiologic Analysis Using SAS (2)
PHP 2430 – Analysis of Population Based Datasets (2)
PHP 2440 - Introduction to Pharmacoepidemiology*
PHP 2455A – Health Services Research Methods I (3)
PHP 2455B – Health Services Research Methods II (3)
PHP 2465A – Introduction to Health Decision Analysis
PHP 2520 – Statistical Inference I
PHP 2530 – Bayesian Statistical Methods
PHP 2550 – Practical Data Analysis (2)
PHP 2601 – Linear and Generalized Linear Models
PHP 2602 – Analysis of Lifetime Data
PHP 2610 – Causal Inference and Missing Data
PHP 2620 – Statistical Methods in Bioinformatics I

Key:

1. Required for PhD students and will not count as methods selective.
2. PhD students may only count one of these courses as a methods selective.
3. Students are encouraged to take PHP2250 prior to or concurrently with either PHP2455A or PHP2455B. Students are discouraged from taking both PHP2455B and PHP2610.

Additional methods selectives will be approved at the discretion of the department Curriculum Committee. Students wishing to have a course approved as a methods selective should consult with their advisor. With support of the advisor, the student should then forward a copy of the course's syllabus and a brief rationale for taking the course as a methods selective to the Curriculum Committee for review and possible approval. Requests should be submitted no later than three weeks prior to the semester that the course will be offered.

Students must also take 2 or more of the following substantive selective courses (note, not all courses will be offered each year):

Substantive selective definition:

- Primary focus of course is on a public health or disease topic, or is on diseases or disorders within a defined population.
- <2 course objectives focused on study design, data analyses, or interpretation.
- Courses may be both a Method and Substantive selective course when the course objectives are focused on epidemiological methods and the course is topically focused on a specific topic, disease, or population.

PHP 1700 – Introduction to Environmental Health

PHP 1854 – The Epidemiology and Control of Infectious Diseases

PHP 1880 – Meditation, Mindfulness, and Health

PHP 1900 – Epidemiology of Disorders and Diseases of Childhood and Young Adulthood

PHP 1920 – Social Determinants of Health

PHP 1960 – Epidemiology of Chronic Disease

PHP 1964 – Cancer Epidemiology and Prevention

PHP 2018 – The Epidemiology of Cardio-metabolic Health

PHP 2170 – Injury as a Public Health Problem

PHP 2220C – Perinatal Epidemiology

PHP 2220E – Topics in Environmental and Occupational Epidemiology

PHP 2220H – Epidemiology, Treatment and Prevention of HIV

PHP 2440 - Introduction to Pharmacoepidemiology*

PHP 2371 - Psychosocial and Pharmacologic Treatment of Substance Use
Disorders

*Can be used as both a substantive or methods selective, but cannot count towards both.

The purpose of these selective courses is to provide additional knowledge and expertise in epidemiologic content areas, that is, related to the diagnosis of diseases and characterization of health states, distribution, and mechanisms. In addition to the above lists of approved substantive selective courses, students may propose alternative selective courses offered by other graduate departments at Brown University. For example, where relevant to a student's thesis work or career goals, doctoral students may obtain permission to count the following towards the substantive selective course requirements, as appropriate (the courses listed below are examples, other courses can be requested):

BIOL 2860 – Molecular Mechanisms of Disease

BIOL 1290 – Cancer Biology

BIOL2320 – Current Topics in Developmental Biology

NEUR 1670 – Neuropharmacology and Synaptic Transmission

ECON 1630 – Econometrics I

ECON 1370 – Race and Inequality in the United States

Students wishing to have an alternative course approved as a substantive selective should consult with their advisor. With support of the advisor, the student should then forward a copy of the course's syllabus and a brief rationale for taking the course as a substantive selective to the Curriculum Committee for review and possible approval. Requests should be submitted no later than three weeks prior to the semester that the course will be offered.

Based upon individual interests, students may take more than the minimum number of required and elective courses. Students may also register for independent study courses under the guidance of individual faculty members. These may be directly related to their work toward completion of their doctoral dissertation or may be taken early in their graduate student career as they work towards identifying a dissertation area and specific project.

Sample Curriculum

The following is a sample curriculum for the program leading to a PhD in Epidemiology:

Semester I (Fall):

PHP 2150 – Foundations in Epidemiologic Research Methods

PHP 2510 – Principles of Biostatistics and Data Analysis

1 Selective

Teaching Assistantship or Research Assistantship

Public Health 1001 (non-credit)

Online SAS training courses

Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) course (non-credit)

Semester II (Spring):

PHP 2200 – Intermediate Methods in Epidemiologic Research

PHP 2511 – Applied Regression Analysis

Teaching Assistantship or Research Assistantship

Semester III (Fall):

PHP 2090 – Research Grant Writing for Public Health

PHP 2250 – Advanced Quantitative Methods for Epidemiologic Research

1 Selective

Teaching Assistantship or Research Assistantship

Semester IV (Spring):

PHP 2130 – Human Biology for Epidemiology

PHP 2180 – Interpretation and Application of Epidemiology

1 Selective

Teaching Assistantship or Research Assistantship

Submit external funding application (e.g., NIH NSRAF31)

At end of the semester take the written qualifying exam in Epidemiology

Semester V:

1 Selective

TE for credit

Research Assistantship

Oral Dissertation Proposal Exam by end of semester

Subsequent semesters:

PHP 2990 – Independent Study/Thesis Research

Additional electives (if necessary, to complete required 13 courses)

Written Qualifying Exams

Students are required to pass a written qualifying exam, which tests their knowledge on intermediate and advanced Epidemiology. For full-time students the qualifying exam is taken at the end of the fourth semester (June). Faculty from the appropriate track will write and grade the examination. The Epidemiology comprehensive exam will cover material from all classes required for Epidemiology doctoral students and typically completed by the end of the 4th semester. Following the grading process, the faculty within each track meet to discuss each student's performance and collectively decide on a recommendation.

The recommendations will ordinarily be communicated to students within two weeks. These take four forms: high pass, full pass, conditional pass, and no pass. Students who earn at least a full pass on all portions of the required written examination are eligible to begin the dissertation process (identifying a dissertation advisor, preparing thesis proposal, etc.) Students who earn a conditional pass may also be eligible to begin the dissertation process, but may be required to remedy any stated deficiencies (e.g. through directed self-study or re-taking parts of the exam). Students who do not pass the written examination on the first attempt have one additional opportunity to earn a pass.

Those who elect to re-take the exam must do so within one year. A cumulative total of two failures (on any portion of the written examination) results in immediate termination from the doctoral program.

A sample of previous written examinations for each academic track may be obtained from the academic staff in the Department of Epidemiology.

Oral Qualifying Exam (Thesis Proposal)

The oral examination should be completed six to nine months from the time of a successful written examination. Complete the **Oral Exam Date Request Form** (see Appendix H) and **submit to the Graduate Program Director**. The chair of the oral examination will typically NOT be the Dissertation Chair. The goal of this part of the qualifying examination is to determine how well the student can define important scientific questions and devise creative and innovative approaches to answer them. The oral exam consists of two parts:

1. Written proposal. The proposal should be delivered to members of the dissertation committee two to three weeks prior to the date of the oral exam. The body of the proposal (excluding references, figures, etc.) should be about 30 double spaced pages. Examples of proposals can be requested from either the Department Manager or the Administrative Coordinator. The proposal should roughly follow the style of an NIH grant proposal, according to the following outline:
 - a. Summary of the proposal that includes the specific aims of the work to be done (1-2 pages).
 - b. Background and literature review. Describe the previous work done in the field that leads up to the scientific problem you are addressing. Raise questions about or indicate gaps in existing work that your dissertation will address. This step is crucial to establishing that your work will be original and innovative (5-7 pages).
 - c. Preliminary studies. Describe what work you have done, if any, that supports the proposed project (4-5 pages).
 - d. Proposed work (~15 pages). This section is the most important 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 for 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? What are the expected pitfalls and how might you approach them? If successful, where will your work lead in the future?

2. 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 a committee member other than the dissertation advisor. The defense begins with an oral presentation of about 30 minutes. Committee members will then direct questions to the candidate. The questioning process can take up to 90 minutes. Students should be sure to practice the presentation beforehand so that it does not exceed the 30 minute allotment. 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.

Evaluation

The chair of the oral exam will summarize the discussion and the outcome of the exam in the Oral Exam Results Form (see Appendix I) which should be provided to the chair by the student prior to the exam date. A formal letter to the student is encouraged to be written by a member of the thesis committee (usually the oral exam chair or the thesis advisor) and reviewed and agreed upon by all committee members. This letter should highlight strengths of the knowledge displayed by the student during the oral exam, along with opportunities for deepening knowledge in the coming years. This will support the student in developing in as strong a way as possible for a successful thesis, and next career steps upon completion of the thesis and PhD program.

The evaluation results are the same as for the written exam: *high pass*, *full pass*, *conditional pass* and *no pass*. Those earning pass with high pass or full pass are

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 'no pass' means the student may be directed to re- take the oral exam altogether or may be declined candidacy to the PhD degree.

Upon becoming a PhD candidate, the student must plan twice-yearly meetings with the committee to review progress with members.

Research Assistantships (RA)

For more detail on RAships please see Appendix E

Students in Epidemiology participate in RAships in a variety of on and off campus settings, including Research Centers within the School of Public Health, the Rhode Island Department of Health, and clinical departments at Brown-affiliated hospitals. A RAship is an integral part of the student's training program. The Epidemiology Graduate Program Director will identify one or more RA options for an individual student, through discussions with the student and potential RA advisors. All efforts will be made to identify RAships that are well-aligned with the student's substantive interests. Students will have the option to accept the proposed RAship, to identify an alternative that is acceptable to the Graduate Program Director, or to forgo financial support. If a student completes their coursework for the program and receives permission to finish the program remotely, they will be responsible for finding a research appointment that is compatible with their location or forgo financial support. Students must be in good academic standing to be a RA.

The RA advisor is responsible for supervising and directing the student's work during the term of the appointment. The RA advisor is responsible for coordinating, scheduling, and keeping appropriate documentation of 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.

RAship Contract

At the beginning of each semester's RAship the RA advisor and the student should discuss the expectations and responsibilities during the course of the RAship, and complete and sign a RAship contract (see Appendix H and I). Once signed by both the student and RAship advisor, the contract should be submitted to the Department Manager. The Graduate Program Director will review all RAship contracts, and once approved will sign off on the contract. Fully signed contracts will be sent to the RAship advisor and the student.

NOTE: RAship contracts must be submitted to the Department Manager before the RAship may begin. Revisions may be made after submission.

Role of the student:

The student is responsible for working on the assigned project for a maximum of 20 hours a week during the academic year. It is understood that schedules 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:

RAships typically last a minimum of 4.5 months (one academic semester) and are subject to renewal. Summer RAships are typically paired with either fall or spring semesters, and are also 20 hour/week commitments. RA advisors may want to use their

funding to top-off the stipend of students who are funded by F31 grants for the Summer semester so that the stipend matches the academic year stipend.

Students are provided, on average, four weeks of paid vacation during the calendar year – two weeks during the summer and two weeks during the winter break. Students are required to discuss winter and summer vacation plans with their RA advisor prior to finalizing plans. In addition, students are not expected to work during any of the official Brown 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. Contributing to a project as an RA as opposed to as an investigator is not grounds to necessarily 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 a RAship that is closely related to their field of research, to the point that some of their work as a RA may eventually result in a first-author published manuscript.

Awarding of industry-sponsored RAships and internships:

Industry-sponsored RAships will be awarded to students based on mutual agreement by the student, the sponsoring organization, and the Graduate Program Director. The industry sponsor should submit a description of the RAship to the Graduate Program Director for review and approval before it is made available as a means of support.

The process of awarding industry RAships follows the same 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 may be expected to defray appropriate travel expenses.

Specific guidelines for off campus RAships:

All RAships awarded to Epidemiology graduate students must be directly supervised by a full time Brown faculty member. When the supervisor is not a member of the Department, a faculty liaison, who is a Department faculty member, will be assigned to oversee the RAship broadly. In many cases this liaison can be the student's academic advisor. The Department Manager will create a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for all off campus RAships which will outline the financial terms of the RAship. The MOA will be sent to the Graduate Program Director (or Master's Program Director, if applicable), the School of Public Health financial representative, and the off campus faculty mentor and their financial authorized signatory for review and signature.

NOTE: Graduate School policy states that students may engage in paid training opportunities outside of research assistantship appointments that play important roles in preparing graduate students for careers both inside and outside of academia up to 12 hours per week. Additionally, the Graduate School recommends that students ideally avoid or minimize time spent on paid activities unrelated to their research assistantship appointments and that any student who wishes to exceed the twelve (12) hours per week limitation must seek the approval of the Graduate School. Importantly, 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.

Teaching Requirements

PhD students are required to develop experience and expertise in teaching. This is accomplished by: (a) serving as a Teaching Assistant in a course taught by departmental faculty for at least one semester, and (b) completing the [New Teaching Assistants Orientation](#) conducted by The Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning prior to the start of the Teaching Assistantship. Students must be in good academic standing to be a TA.

A Teaching Assistantship (TAship) for doctoral students is 20 hours per week. It is typically fulfilled in the third or fourth semester, and replaces the RAship for that semester. PhD students do not bear primary responsibility for the course that they serve as a TA for; rather, their role is to assist faculty both inside and outside the classroom on projects related to the instruction of a particular course as necessary. Although specific responsibilities are at the discretion of the course instructor, typical TA roles include: grading, holding office hours, developing exams, running tutorials or lab sessions, giving lectures, and facilitating class discussions. The course instructor and TA are expected to meet at the start of the semester to discuss TA expectations and specific responsibilities.

TAs should keep track of their hours on a weekly basis and submit these hours at the end of each week to the course instructor using this form: [TA Tracking Sheet](#) (Please make a personal copy of the sheet from the template). If a TA finds that they are working more than the Department specified weekly hours (e.g., 20), then the TA should meet with the course instructor as soon as possible to discuss adjustments that will be made so that the TA is not working more than the Department specified weekly hours. If the TA continues to work more than specified by the Department after meeting with the course instructor, then the TA and course instructor should reach out to the Doctoral Program Director to brainstorm additional adjustments that can be made so that the TA is staying within the Department specified hours.

Students serving as a TA/TE in a course with a required textbook may be reimbursed for the textbook or have it purchased through the instructing faculty member's Department, with the faculty member's authorization, if there are no previous textbooks available for use. However, these instructional textbooks are used year to year and will need to be returned to the teaching faculty or academic department for future TA/TE use.

TAs are identified through the following process:

1. The Department leadership (e.g., Doctoral Program Director, Department Manager) will survey faculty members in the Spring about their anticipated TA needs for the upcoming academic year.
2. Once the Department leadership determines which courses will be assigned a teaching assistant (typically the core courses and those with high enrollments), the Department leadership will:
 - a. Send a survey to the students who are slated to TA in the upcoming year, where the students will be able to indicate which course they prefer to TA. **Note:** Doctoral students who will be in their third or fourth semester during the relevant academic year and who are in good academic standing will typically be included in the list of students who are eligible to TA. Students who would prefer to TA before their third semester, must submit a written request to the Doctoral Program Director to TA early. This request must be submitted before the end of the first semester and describe the reason for the request. Students who want to TA again after they have met the teaching requirement, instead of completing an RAship, must also submit a written request to the Doctoral Program Director. This request must be submitted during the fall semester and provide a justification for the preference to TA rather than to serve as an RA (e.g., more teaching experience needed given career objectives). Decisions regarding requests to TA early or to TA again will depend on course needs, the reason for the request, and funding availability.

- b. Ask the instructors of the courses that will be assigned a teaching assistant to rank the eligible TAs in terms of who would be best equipped to support the course.
3. Based on the student and instructor rankings/preferences, the Doctoral Program Director will create the assignments while aiming to optimize fit and rankings/preferences, and then share the proposed TA assignments with the Department Chair for approval.
4. Once the Department Chair provides approval, the Department Manager will email out the TA assignments to the relevant course instructors and students

**As of AY 2021-2022, The Epidemiology Department will no longer require a TE to complete a PhD degree. Students still have the option of completing a Teaching Experience for credit.

Students who would like to have teaching experience can choose to enroll in the independent study and research course "The SPH Doctoral Teaching Experience course" (PHP2988). Students should contact the instructor they wish to have sponsor their TE for approval before registering. Similar to other independent study courses, students will register for the PHP2988 section unique to the faculty member sponsoring their TE. As with other independent studies, students need to check the "Include Independent Study and Research Courses" box in the CAB searchbar to have the course show.

The Teaching Experience (TE) independent study 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.

English Proficiency Requirement

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 through the [English for International Teaching Assistants Program](#).

Students should contact Jill Stewart, at the Center for Language Studies early to schedule an English proficiency evaluation. This office handles the confirmation of English proficiency, which is required within the first year of graduate studies. If a student's command of spoken English does not meet this proficiency, the student must enroll in the appropriate ESL course(s) recommended. The Sheridan Center also offers [English Language Workshops](#).

TA Orientation Course Offered by the [Sheridan Center](#):

[Teaching Essentials for Graduate TAs](#)

In this fully online, asynchronous, self-paced program, Graduate Teaching Assistants aim to improve their students' learning and their own experiences as teachers through a reflective exploration of their own practices and beliefs about teaching. While the program is designed for graduate TAs who are new to their roles, experienced graduate student TAs and graduate instructors may also find it useful as a continuing professional development opportunity.

Participants in the Teaching Essentials program will:

- Reflect on their teaching and learning-related values
- Learn about inclusive teaching strategies
- Set goals for their teaching and learn how to assess their progress
- Prepare to teach and plan for the first days of class
- Prepare to TA in different learning contexts, including online environments
- Learn how to provide equitable feedback and grades to students
- Identify available resources to support their teaching and their students' learning

If completing the program in full, participants can expect to spend 4-6 hours on the course. As the program is self-directed and asynchronous, participants may choose to complete this online Canvas course over multiple days or weeks at any point during the year.

The Sheridan Center offers intensive certificate programs in which participants develop and reflect on their teaching practice in order to support diverse learners. These cross-disciplinary programs are open to Brown graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty, and staff. Enrollment for all programs is limited and registration is required. Completion of The Sheridan Teaching Seminar (Certificate I) is a prerequisite for all other certificate programs. These programs are not required, but are an option available to interested students.

Grant Writing Requirement

Over their first summer, students are expected to devote 20 hours per week to their RAship (see Section 6), and 15-20 hours per week to developing their dissertation project and developing specific aims for an external fellowship or grant. Using skills they learn in PHP 2090, which they take during the 3rd semester, students are expected to continue grant writing, with the goal of submitting a grant application at the end of the third semester, or during the fourth semester (depending on deadlines for differing submission opportunities).

Academic Advising Structure

At the time of admission into the program, each student is assigned an academic faculty advisor. During the first two years of study, the academic advisor assists the student in planning for meeting degree requirements and objectives, and to assist in the process of course selection. The advisor is expected to be familiar with the student's academic background, particularly with respect to previous graduate coursework. The assignment of an academic advisor is made by the Graduate Program Director.

The process of selecting a dissertation advisor takes place after the first two years, once a student has passed the written qualifying exams. The academic advisor and research mentor serve during the first two years, while the dissertation advisor oversees the student's thesis research.

Either the academic advisor or the initial research mentor may eventually serve in the role of dissertation advisor, but this is not always the case. The process of selecting a dissertation advisor is initiated by the student, and is described further below.

Students should plan to meet with their academic advisor at least two to three times per semester. In the initial meetings with the academic advisor, students should try to plan a curricular program for up to two years. It is not necessary that this initial plan be adhered to throughout the two year period, but it gives a rough outline of courses to be taken and milestones to be met.

The advising relationship is an important one, and students should be comfortable with their advisor. It is understood that in some cases an individual student may wish to change academic advisors. This can be done any time by request to the Graduate Program Director. It is expected that if any problems or conflicts arise, students will discuss these first with their academic advisor, but may also contact the Graduate Program Director.

Selecting a Dissertation Chair/Advisor

Students enrolled in the PhD program must pass their written examination 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 advisors well in advance of completion of the written exams.

Any member of the graduate faculty with an appointment in the Department of Epidemiology may serve as a doctoral dissertation advisor. A listing of graduate faculty may be found on the faculty website.

We recommend the following guidelines when selecting a dissertation advisor:

1. Ask someone who has experience in the area you are interested in studying
2. Ask someone who is able to make a commitment to be your mentor. Clarify expectations from the beginning with this person in terms of time and substance. Students who have established ongoing relationships with their advisors as Research and/or Teaching Assistants may have more opportunity for mentoring. Your initial academic advisor may assist you in the process of doctoral advisor selection.

Your advisor provides ongoing supervision and consultation for the conceptualization, design, conduct, analysis and interpretation of the research project. Most advisors will 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.

Students in the doctoral program are required to successfully complete the written qualifying examination and the oral qualifying examination that is conducted in conjunction with the presentation and approval of their thesis proposal. Eligibility for writing a doctoral thesis (or, entering “candidacy”) is based on successfully completing a written examination and oral examination.

Composition, Selection and Function of the Dissertation Committee

Students should begin the process of selecting members for the dissertation committee as soon as the written qualifying exams have been successfully completed, or sooner. The minimum size of a doctoral committee is three faculty members. More members may be preferable to have a balance of expertise representing substantive and methodological aspects of the thesis plan. On the other hand, more than four members may become administratively complicated and challenging for the student who may feel compelled to respond to differing advice.

The committee must include two graduate faculty members from the student’s degree program, one of whom has a primary appointment in the Department of Epidemiology. The third member can be affiliated with another department, but must be a Brown faculty member. It is advisable to include a faculty member from the Department of Biostatistics or another faculty member with expertise as a quantitative methodologist.

Additional committee members from other institutions may also be included. Final composition of the committee must be communicated to the Graduate Program Director and Department Chair and approved before the oral examination of your thesis proposal (see Dissertation Committee Confirmation Form in Appendix K). Students should discuss selection of committee members with their advisors.

Although interactions with committee members will vary considerably by individual, the minimal expectation of the committee is to evaluate and provide feedback at regular intervals during the preparation of the dissertation. Thesis committee meetings should be scheduled on a regular basis (at least once per semester).

Once you have come up with a list of potential committee members, contact each one to inquire into their willingness to be on your committee. In some cases, your advisor may be in the best position to make the request of some faculty members. If the potential committee member is interested, set up a time to discuss expectations and their role as a committee member. Inform each faculty member of the desired composition of your committee and ask for referrals to other potential members if you feel that you do not have enough expertise represented.

The dissertation committee must be approved by the Graduate Program Director(s) before membership is finalized. Students should submit the Dissertation Committee Confirmation Form (see Appendix G) to the Graduate Program Director listing the names and department affiliation of each member.

Outside Reader(s)

Our graduate programs strongly encourage each student to identify an outside reader for the dissertation. The outside reader is typically selected at the same time as the dissertation committee, and the selection should be done in consultation with your advisor. An outside reader is someone external to Brown who has recognized expertise in the topic of your research. Frequently the reader will be a colleague of the dissertation advisor and/or one or more committee members.

Officially, the outside reader will function as a consultant to the dissertation committee, providing periodic feedback on the student's progress and offering suggestions for revision of manuscripts and/or proposals. The outside reader will also be asked to offer

an opinion about the quality of scholarship evident in the thesis as it develops. In some instances, there may be separate outside readers for different aspects of the dissertation, who review a subset of the thesis papers.

Importantly, the outside reader does not vote on the final acceptance of the thesis and will not provide direct official feedback regarding student progress. The committee will serve as an arbiter of the reader's suggestions and use the reader's feedback at its own discretion.

Dissertation Defense Requirements, Guidelines, and Timeline

Students are expected to defend their thesis after 8-10 semesters in the doctoral program. Here is what you need to know to plan your dissertation defense and navigate your degree completion with the department, the Graduate School, and the Registrar's Office:

- If you plan to defend during the Fall Semester, you must complete all required paperwork with the Graduate School before the first day of the Spring Semester in order to avoid being charged for Semester II. The Graduate School may grant a 30- day courtesy extension for you to complete all paperwork. If you think you might require this extra time, please contact the Department Manager.
- To graduate in May, you must defend and complete all required paperwork with the Graduate School by April 1.
- Students must meet with the Department Manager in the beginning of the semester in which they are defending to schedule a room and time.

Before your defense (at least 3-4 weeks prior):

- Visit the Graduate School's [Dissertation Guidelines](#) page for all of the information you will need to complete the process. You will find links to the EDT system as well as guidelines and samples of relevant documents there.

- Coordinate with your committee to arrange possible dates/times for your defense.
- Complete the Dissertation Defense Information Form (located in the Appendix N of your handbook) and submit to the Department Manager. Submitting this form at least two weeks prior to your scheduled defense will allow enough time for processing your paperwork before your defense.
- Committee members should receive the penultimate draft of the thesis sufficiently far in advance of the scheduled defense to allow for reading and preparation of questions; two to three weeks is recommended.

The day of your defense:

- The Graduate School will send a copy of the Thesis Signature Page to the Department Manager in advance of your defense. The Department Manager will give it to the defense committee chair in advance of the defense for the committees' signatures.
- The Department Manager will bring the Graduate School generated paperwork to the defense. There is a second necessary form for your committee to sign called the "Votes for Recommending Form" or "Aye/Nay". Your committee should sign this form and the Thesis Signature Page and return them to the Department Manager at the completion of your defense. These forms need to be signed and added to your file, before being sent to the Graduate School. Digital electronic signatures will now be accepted.
- At the conclusion of the presentation, the thesis committee will meet in private to make a final determination of the acceptability of the thesis and discuss any changes for the final version.

Following your defense —important things to do.

(Please note students who have successfully defended can now obtain their diplomas three times a year as outlined in the below Commencement section): (before start of Semester II for Fall completion OR April 1 for Spring completion):

- Complete all checklist items referenced on the [Graduate School's website](#)(#1-5 under Submission of the Final Copy). Contact Barbara Bennett at the Graduate School to determine if all steps have been completed so that she can clear you for completion.
- In addition to providing the Graduate School with the required number of copies of the PhD dissertation, the student must also provide the Department Manager and each committee member with an electronic copy of the dissertation.
- Return your department laptop and submit a completed Epidemiology Exit Survey to the Department Manager.
- Your Brown electronic services will continue until August. Check out the email forwarding and other services available to you through the [Brown Alumni Association](#).
- When the thesis is presented to the Graduate School, it must be in final form. It may not be revised in any way after it is submitted.

Commencement

Graduate degree students can obtain their degree in advance of the traditional May Commencement Ceremony. Graduate students who have completed their degree requirements during the Summer term can apply to graduate and have their degree conferred on the last Sunday in October.

Graduate students who have completed their degree requirements during the Fall term can apply to graduate and have their degree conferred on the second Sunday in February.

There is no ceremonial commencement in October or February. Graduates can pick up their diplomas at the Office of the Registrar the week after conferral. After that time diplomas will be mailed to them. October and February graduates are listed in the May

Commencement Bulletin, and are welcome to bring their diploma covers and participate in Commencement in May.

Anyone planning to receive a degree in May must, **by April 1**:

- Complete the Application to Graduate found in [Banner Web](#).
- Register with the Graduate School for Commencement (even if not planning to attend).
- Order regalia through the Brown Bookstore (if planning to attend).

To find links to the above tasks as well as all of the information you need about Commencement, please visit both the [Graduate School's Commencement](#) page and the [University's Commencement](#) page, paying particular attention to the For Graduate Students section.

Other Resources:

[Thesis Binding Services](#) are offered through the Brown University Library.

PhD Milestones Guide

The following summarizes the formal “milestones” required of all PhD students and the timeline by when these are to be completed in order to maintain a status of “good standing” within the program.

By the end of semester 2:

Complete 1st year coursework
Serve as a RA

By the end of 1st summer:

Complete Summer RAship
Work on grant proposal for PHP2090 (Research Grant Writing for Public Health)

Semesters 3 and 4:

Continue to serve as a RA
Serve as TA
Begin process of selecting research topic and dissertation advisor
Submit external fellowship application for dissertation research

By the end of semester 4:

Complete 2nd year coursework
Complete Epidemiology Written Qualifying Exam
Continue to serve RA

Semester 5:

Finalize research topic and appoint dissertation committee members
Complete PhD prospectus and oral qualifying exam
Finish any remaining course requirements
Continue to serve as RA

Semester 6:

Continue to serve as RA

Beginning of semester 8: Schedule thesis defense

Continue to serve as RA

End of semester 8:

Complete thesis defense & graduate Continue to serve as RA

Seminars, Clubs, and Forums

One of the Program's priorities is that graduate students become proficient in the written and oral communication of scientific thinking. One strategy for the support and development of communication skills is the participation in the Epidemiology Seminar Series, and the Department of Epidemiology's Journal Club and Faculty Forum.

Journal Club

The objective of the Journal Club is to provide 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 presentation skills through giving presentations and scholarly debate about topics in a more casual and comfortable setting
- Network with peers, Brown faculty members, and outside speakers

Meeting Schedule:

Epidemiology Journal Club meetings occur once per month on Tuesdays from 12:00-1:00 pm. Meetings take place at 121 South Main St. in room 247 for the Fall semester and in room 331 for the Spring. Exact dates will be determined by the Administrative Coordinator before the start of each academic year and students will be notified.

Instructor of Record:

- Every departmental journal club will have a Faculty Instructor of Record, who is required to notify the Associate Dean, Administrative Coordinator, and Department Manager of the Instructor's name prior to pre-registration.
- Primary responsibilities include: attending a meeting prior to the start of the semester with the Student Journal Club Director(s) to review guidelines and potential themes; attending each journal club meeting; reviewing the guidelines with doctoral and master's students at the first meeting of each semester;

reviewing journal club attendance; assisting in selection of articles; assisting with recruiting faculty member/area experts relating to selected themes.

- The instructor of record will be assigned a section under PHP 2950 and will be responsible for assigning a grade of Pass or Fail for the Student Journal Club Director(s) registered in their section of PHP2950. If a Student Journal Club Director(s) responsibilities go throughout the academic year, they can register under PHP 2950 in both the Fall and Spring semesters.

Attendance Policy:

- Every doctoral student in the School of Public Health is required to attend Journal Club each semester while enrolled in the program unless exempted by the Graduate Program Director. Attendance will be tracked.
- The Graduate Program Director should notify the Instructor of Record, in writing, of any exemptions being granted each semester.
- Copies of exemptions are to be filed in the student's e-record (See Appendix L for waiver form).
- Every doctoral student is required to be a discussion facilitator at least once during the academic year, this also includes the journal club student directors.
- The Administrative Coordinator will email the Instructor of Record and the Graduate Program Director if a student has missed two consecutive Journal Club sessions in a given semester. The Graduate Program Director will email the student regarding the missed Journal Club sessions.

Responsibilities

Journal Club Student Director(s):

All doctoral students must serve as Journal Club Director for one full semester, typically during their 2nd or 3rd year. The Administrative Coordinator will reach out to the students next in line to be student directors before the academic year begins. Students may serve as co-directors depending on cohort size. Doctoral students should register for Journal Club course credit (PHP2950) during the semester when they will act as the Journal Club Student Director(s). The Journal Club Student Director(s) can get course

credit for both Fall and Spring semesters, if serving for a full academic year. Doctoral student directors are responsible for:

- Meeting with the Faculty Instructor of Record to determine the theme/guiding premise of the year's journal club meetings before the Fall semester.
- Coordinating/assigning student discussion facilitators for each journal club session (including sending reminders; circulating papers in advance).
- Recording attendance for the Instructor of Record.
- Ordering food, as needed, with the assistance of the Administrative Coordinator.
- Obtaining name tags from the Administrative Coordinator and making them available to the students.
- Administering and summarizing a student evaluation via a survey of the overall course.
- Working with the Instructor of Record to recruit a faculty member/area expert from across the School and beyond for each meeting.
- When held virtually, assist the Student Discussion Facilitators during the breakout groups (see below) by joining a breakout group that the Student Discussion Facilitators are not participating in, when possible, and facilitating discussion as needed and helping to ensure balance of discussion by PhD and MPH students within the breakout groups.
- Ensuring the Student Discussion Facilitators are meeting their deadlines in choosing/approving meeting materials.
- Sending the article (published or draft, as appropriate) and discussion questions to the students and faculty representative/guest **at least one week** before the relevant Journal Club date. Materials should also be sent to the Administrative Coordinator, so they can be passed along to the MPH Epi Concentration students.
- Ensure that the guest speaker, if there is one, as well as the faculty representative(s) are introduced. Additional faculty members in attendance should also be briefly introduced, as new MPH Epi Concentration students may be in attendance.

Student Discussion Facilitators:

- In consultation with the faculty discussant, identify an article or project in-progress, **one month in advance** of their session, that is in line with the chosen theme. Historical articles should be seminal papers that considerably impacted the field. The selected article/project should not be a systematic review or a meta-analysis.
- In consultation with the faculty discussant, come up with 3-5 well thought-out questions as a starting point for discussing the article/project.
- Send the selected article/project and discussion questions to the Student Directors and the Faculty Instructor of Record **at least two weeks** before the Journal Club date. Once approved, the materials will be distributed by the student directors to the larger student group and the Administrative Coordinator.
- Introduce the paper by giving a presentation of **no more than 5-mins** at the start of the journal club that briefly highlights the paper objective(s), methods, results, and conclusions using no more than 3-4 slides. An additional slide for each prepared discussion question should be included. Begin preparing the presentation two weeks in advance of the meeting and solicit feedback from the Student directors. Review the presentation with the Faculty Instructor of Record **at least 1 week** before the Journal Club date.
- Student Discussion Facilitators should send the final presentation to the Faculty Instructor, Faculty Discussant and Student Journal Club Director(s) **at least 2 days** before their Journal Club date.
- Lead the journal club discussion in breakout groups, preferably no greater than 10 students per group. The student discussion facilitators should join separate breakout groups and be prepared to lead the discussion in the breakout group that they join which includes helping to ensure balance of discussion by PhD and MPH students.

Additional Department Specific Guidelines:

- *Student Directors* should introduce the guest speaker/faculty representatives and Student Discussion Facilitators should introduce the meeting materials. Since

MPH Epidemiology Concentrators may be attending for the first time throughout the year, student directors and discussion facilitators should also quickly introduce themselves.

- The *Instructor of Record* is responsible for ensuring that discussion remains thoughtful, friendly, and supportive throughout the duration of the journal club session and should plan to drift between the breakout groups of students as needed.
- Students attending the journal who are *not* the Student Director(s) or Student Facilitator(s) should come to the journal club with 2-3 questions and be prepared to share those questions during the breakout group discussion.
- ***We strongly encourage a diversity of topics over the school year.***

All students tend to share commonalities in being interested in Epidemiology methods training. Considering interesting methodological approaches across a diversity of applied areas (e.g. cardiovascular epidemiology, perinatal epidemiology, infectious disease epidemiology, social epidemiology, etc.) can allow for fostering training in areas of common interest, while enabling diversity of applications to the field of Epidemiology.

Faculty Forum

A faculty forum is an opportunity for students to ask open-ended questions for the faculty member in an informal, single group setting. The faculty member must be Brown affiliated. There will be no paper discussed during the faculty forum. There will be no Student Discussion Facilitators during the faculty forums. The Student Director(s) will help facilitate the discussion and introduce the faculty member.

Guest Seminar Speaker Guidelines:

When a guest seminar speaker attends Journal Club, the format will be to invite the speaker to start out with about 10 minutes of informally discussing their career path, such as how they got to where they are now, including questions from students about their career steps. This 10 minute discussion will occur as a single group. The subsequent 35 minutes will be focused on the paper presentation and breakout group

discussion of the paper. During the breakout group discussion, the Student Discussion Facilitators should inform the guest speaker that they can either join a single breakout group or drift between the various breakout groups depending on which approach that they prefer. If a guest speaker prefers, it is fine to focus on the science of the paper only, and not on their career path. Before any speaker is added to the journal club schedule, the addition must be approved by the Instructor of Record. No more than half of the non-faculty forum journal club sessions should have a guest speaker and journal club sessions with guest speakers should not be back to back on the schedule.

Program Policies and Procedures

Incident Reporting

Brown University is committed to "sustaining a campus culture in which each individual's humanity and dignity are acknowledged and institutional resources are available." Our policies are intended to provide a fair, prompt and reliable mechanism for determining whether Brown University's policies and guidelines have been violated and, if so, to provide appropriate resolution. If you need to report an incident involving discrimination, harrasment, bias, Title IX, or gender equality, please refer to the link below:

[Incident Reporting | Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity \(OIED\) | Brown University](#)

Tax Withholding Information

Doctoral student support is in the form of various types of appointments, including research assistantships, teaching assistantships, fellowships, training grant appointments, and others, and these appointments can change from semester to semester. If you have a question about which type of appointment you have, please ask the Department Manager.

For U.S. Residents, most of these appointments withhold taxes in the monthly paycheck. However, some that are denoted as fellowships are not subject to tax withholding (while taxes are not deducted monthly, they may be due at the end of the tax year.) For Non-US residents, the same tax rules apply unless you are covered by a Tax Treaty.

For more detailed information, please refer to the Graduate School, Payroll Office and the STUDENT EMPLOYEE FAQ. International students and non-resident aliens always refer to the OISSS.

Note: Tax filing varies by individual and the absence of tax withholding does not relieve the responsibility to file taxes. If you have further questions about tax withholding and your responsibilities, we recommend seeking advice from a tax professional. Brown faculty and staff cannot provide advice on taxes.

Program Progression Checklists

All PhD students are required to complete a Program Progression Checklist (see Appendix K). The checklists will be created as a Google document and shared with each student so that they can update their progress at the end of each semester. The Doctoral Program Director, Chair of the Department, and each student's academic advisor will have access to view the students' checklists. Keeping accurate progression checklists up-to-date will ensure that the Program Director and academic advisors can assist each student by making sure they take the appropriate core courses, assist in other course selections and make sure that each student is progressing through their programs on an appropriate timeline.

Grading Policy

The Department of Epidemiology expects all students in the Doctoral program to maintain a "B" average or better for the academic year. If a student's performance is poor enough (i.e., drops below a "B" average for the year), they may be asked to engage in remedial activities (e.g., additional coursework).

Students who do not maintain good academic standing may be asked to leave the program.

Student Academic Standing Evaluations

Students' academic standing (good, satisfactory, or warning) is evaluated two times per year, at the end of the fall and spring semesters. Student evaluations are completed with input from all graduate program faculty (teaching faculty, RA or TA 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. 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 expects that students and advisors meet at the very least twice per semester 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. Students are encouraged to take the initiative to schedule appointments with advisors on a recurring basis.

Individual Development Plan (IDP)

The IDP is a valuable tool that gives students the opportunity to address their short term and long term career goals. The NIH has mandated that IDP's be a regular part of training and that institutions encourage trainees to comply with this mandate. In addition, the School of Public Health is requiring all students, regardless of funding, to fill out an IDP (see Appendix C).

The Department of Epidemiology require that students complete an IDP each calendar year. The deadline for submission of the Individual Development Plan Google Form is December 1st. Before submitting your IDP, please review responses with your academic advisor. In addition to NIH reporting requirements, the Department views the IDP as an important opportunity to review progress with your advisor, set academic and research goals for the coming year, and update your academic CV.

Service Expectation

Students are expected to participate in department and school wide activities which include representation on committees, attending student orientation and recruitment events, research forums and faculty recruitment. Meeting these expectations require students to be on campus, at least for a portion of their program.

Student Leave Policy

During the course of graduate study a student may need to request a leave of absence. Applications for leaves of absence (with the exception of medical or psychological leaves) should be sent to the Graduate School at least four weeks before the start of the semester in which the leave is to be taken.

The Graduate School now offers a Parental Leave Policy which is designed to partially ameliorate the academic and professional demands on graduate student parents who are primary caregivers of newly born or adopted children.

The Graduate School provides support at the rate of the standard base stipend for the duration of the relief period. Health insurance, health service fee coverage, and dental insurance for the student are maintained.

Summary of Epidemiology Doctoral Student Funding

Upon admission by the Brown Graduate School, students are offered full academic support for up to five academic years and four summers of study. All support commitments are subject to maintaining a rating of "good academic standing" in the degree program. At the end of each semester, the Epidemiology Graduate Program solicits feedback from academic, research, and thesis advisors and based upon this feedback and student transcripts, updates the academic standing rating, typically accompanied by a letter to the student.

The department supplements the funds described in the Brown Graduate School offer. In particular, the Department has opted to provide a fixed monthly stipend for all 12 months, resulting in an increased summer stipend compared to that described by the Graduate School. (In short, doctoral students receive the same stipend for all 12 months of the year, for an annual total of approximately \$40,000).

The total support package includes 12 months of stipend support, full tuition, health insurance, and a health services fee. In addition, the Department provides additional benefits, such as a personal computer, conference fees, abstract awards, and the like.

Doctoral students are typically expected to provide 20 hours / week as a Research or Teaching assistant throughout their doctoral program. (For comparison, the 12-month stipend of approximately \$40,000 for 20 hours / week amounts to an annual full time salary of \$75,000 or more). This usually takes the form of a 20-hour Research Assistantship with two exceptions. 1) For the first semester, students are only expected to provide 15 hours / week. 2) For one semester, students fulfill a 20 hr / week Teaching Assistantship rather than a Research Assistantship.

Research Assistant positions are initially assigned by the department Graduate Program Director (GPD), based upon review of student and faculty interests and funding availability. These are never binding, with one exception described below. If the proposed assignment is not acceptable, the GPD will work with the student to seek out a different paid Research Assistantship. Students are encouraged to take an active role in identifying paid Research Assistantship opportunities and are always welcome to suggest alternatives. Switching assignments happens not infrequently, but needs to be coordinated in a manner that is not disruptive to any of those involved. The one instance when a student really does not have an opportunity to 'switch out' of a position is when no alternative paid position can be identified.

It is worth noting that the funds provided by the Graduate School cover only approximately 25-33% of total doctoral student costs – the remainder is provided by the department, primarily through faculty research funds.

Travel Fund Opportunities

Below please find listed conference funding opportunities. Conference travel funding procedures can be found in Appendix M.

Graduate School Conference Travel Fund

After travel is completed, graduate students must submit appropriate documentation [as explained on the [Graduate School's Conference Travel Reimbursement webpage](#)] to their home program's administrative coordinator for approval and electronic processing of the reimbursement request. If the documents submitted do not correspond to those guidelines, reimbursement requests will be returned for completion. Completed travel reimbursement requests should be submitted to the home program no later than 30 days after completion of travel; those submitted after 45 days will not be reimbursed.

[School of Public Health Conference Travel Fund](#)

Doctoral students, who present original work at academic conferences, can request support from both the Graduate School (see above instructions) and the School of Public Health. The School of Public Health will provide up to \$400 to cover related travel expenses not covered by the Graduate School. Students are eligible to receive these funds one time, at any time during their doctoral training period. Given funding limitations, application does not guarantee support. When requesting both Graduate School and School of Public Health support, doctoral students must:

- Complete the UFUNDS travel funding application. Where instructed, "Please indicate any other funding you expect to receive for this trip," the student should write "School of Public

Health” and the \$ amount (up to \$400) being requested of the School. • Attach necessary forms as explained on the application form. • Sign the application and obtain approvals from the Director of Graduate Program. • Save completed application form in PDF format. •

Submit the application via e-mail to graduate-travel@brown.edu (please send cc Cynthia Ferreira Cynthia_Ferreira@brown.edu and Barbara Dailey Barbara_Dailey@brown.edu for approval.

The Department of Epidemiology Abstract Award

The Department of Epidemiology holds a conference abstract competition twice a year. This competition is open to all current doctoral and master’s students in the Department of Epidemiology. Students who have submitted work to a national or international conference are encouraged to forward a copy of their abstract and confirmation of their abstract submission to the Department Manager. Students may submit multiple abstracts each cycle, but will be awarded a maximum of one prize per academic year.

Abstracts will be reviewed by a faculty panel in January (fall cycle) and June (spring cycle). Priority will be given to students who submit abstracts to epidemiology conferences (SER, ISEE).

The awarded prizes for each cycle are determined each year. Awards must be used for conference registration, accommodation, or travel.

Abstracts must be submitted by December 15th for the fall cycle and May 15th for the spring cycle.

Joukowsky Summer Research Award

The Joukowsky Summer Research Award Program was developed by the Graduate School in 2012 to provide additional funding for scholarly activities outside of Brown during the summer months. Students conducting research or traveling for other academic purposes during the summer months may be eligible for this award.

Academic purposes could include attending language programs, summer workshops, or other activities. Doctoral students applying for summer research after the first through fifth years of study are eligible for the awards. Detailed information on the Joukowsky Summer Research Award Program is in the Graduate School Handbook. Note: You do not need to seek a Graduate School signature for the form; if your request is approved, that signature will be added and a copy will be returned to you.

International Travel Fund

The International Travel Fund provides funding for graduate student conference presentations and research studies abroad. Awards range from \$200 to \$1,000.

Funding decisions are based on the distance of the international conference from the continental United States, the budget requested, and the availability of funding at the time the request is received by the Graduate School. Only one award will be made per student within an award cycle (September-August). These awards may be used in combination with other Graduate School travel awards, but are treated as funding internal to the Graduate School and therefore do not satisfy external award matching requirements that other travel awards may require. Master's students and doctoral students in years 1 through 5 of their studies are automatically eligible to apply for the international travel fund award.

Doctoral students in the sixth year are also eligible but are required to have a letter of support from the Director of Graduate Studies of the home program, in addition to the international travel fund application.

Note: Volunteering at some conferences may waive the registration fee.

Student Space and Resources

Office Space and Workspaces

The Epidemiology Department makes every effort to ensure that all graduate students are provided with adequate office space. The Department provides incoming students with office space that has an individual desk. Students who have placements off campus, but who request additional space at 121 S. Main St., will be able to use a common office or will be accommodated as space allows. Students will be contacted with their room locations at the beginning of the academic year.

There are several workspace areas with computer clusters for graduate student use: Room 243 for master's students, and Room 242 for 1st year PhD students. Student mailboxes, as well as printer and internet access are available in the computer labs and the third floor student areas.

Wireless internet is accessible throughout the building.

Laptop Computers

The Program in Public Health will provide each incoming doctoral student with their own new laptop computer for use while enrolled in the doctoral program. The laptop will be set up and maintained by the Public Health Systems Administrator. While the program will fund the initial laptop purchase, each student will be responsible for any needed repairs, replacement parts, upgrades, etc. which are not covered by the

warranty. As different components of the laptop are subject to different warranty periods, students should always check with the Public Health IT Systems Administrator for any possible component warranty before making a purchase or requesting repair. Graduate programs and/or RA supervisors may elect to assist students with needed repair costs, but that is determined individually by each program/RA supervisor. The Program will

provide a temporary “loaner” machine for a student’s use in the event that their laptop must be sent out for repair (regardless of the funding source for the repair). There is now insurance coverage on the first and second year laptops. Please see Jesse Coutu for more information.

Laptops are the property of Brown University; therefore, when a student graduates or leaves the program for any reason, the laptop must be returned to the Public Health Program. Per University Policy, “Departments are strictly prohibited from gifting or selling surplus materials directly to Brown faculty, staff, students, and other individuals. This provision is mandated in order to minimize the University’s risk exposure to product liability, sales tax exemption regulations, potential loss of commercial discounts, and potential violations of special pricing structures if deemed a reseller.”

[Epidemiology Student Resource Document](#)

This resource document contains important links to resources such as the Academic Calendar, the Course Bulletin, Reporting an Incident and how to sign up for various listservs.

General Graduate School and University Guidelines

The Brown University Graduate School has several University-wide requirements of all students enrolled in graduate programs at Brown. These guidelines and regulations apply to all students in the Public Health Graduate Programs, and both students and advisors are expected to become familiar with them. They can be found within the [Graduate School Handbook](#).

Code of Student Conduct

Brown University (“Brown” or “the University”) has developed this [Code of Student Conduct](#) (“the Code”) as a set of standards of student behavior and conduct that help maintain a campus environment where ideas are freely exchanged, University property and processes are respected, and conflicts are peacefully resolved. These objectives are further outlined in the Principles of the Brown University Community. The Code is intended to provide an educational and socially just framework to address allegations of prohibited conduct. When students at the University fail to uphold these standards by engaging in prohibited conduct, Student Conduct Procedures (“the Procedures”) are used to uphold the Code. The Code is administered by the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards.

Academic Code

[The Academic Code](#), administered through the Office of the Dean of the College, is separate from the Code of Student Conduct and governs the academic conduct of undergraduate students. The Academic Code, Graduate Student Edition, administered through the Graduate School, is likewise separate from the Code of Student Conduct and governs the academic conduct of graduate students. The academic conduct of medical students is governed by the Academic Code with additional expectations outlined in the Medical Student Handbook. Behavioral conduct of medical students is likewise governed by the Code of Student Conduct with additional expectations outlined in the Medical Student Handbook. Cases involving alleged violations of the Academic Code are heard by the Standing Committee on the Academic Code, a standing committee of the faculty, administered by the Dean of the College, the Dean of the Graduate School and, for purpose of appeals, the Medical Committee on Academic Standing."

Conflict of Interest (COI)

The [Brown University Conflict of Interest and Commitment Policy](#) and its related guidelines apply to all members of the Brown community. It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Brown community to read the University's Conflict of Interest and Commitment Policy and its related guidelines and to disclose potential or actual conflicts as they arise to their supervisor or assigned senior administrator.

A conflict of interest may take many forms but arises when a member of the Brown community might be able to use the authority of their Brown position to:

- A. Influence the University's business decisions in ways to give improper advantage or financial benefit to oneself, a family member or associate, or
- B. Obtain for oneself, a family member, or an associate a financial benefit beyond the compensation they are authorized to receive for performing their University responsibilities.

Appendix List:

Research Ethics and Compliance Training (CITI)

Course Waiver Request Form

IDP - Insert

Template to Help Conceptualize and Design Thesis of Dissertation Topic Papers

RAship Contract Letters

Dissertation Committee Confirmation Form

Oral Exam Date Request Form

Oral Exam Results Form

Dissertation Defense Information Form

PhD Program Progression Checklist

Journal Club Waiver Request Form

Conference Travel Funding Procedures

Appendix A - Research Ethics and Compliance Training (CITI)

Research Ethics and Compliance Training (CITI)

All graduate and master's students who are engaged in human subjects research and who have contact with research participants and/or their research data and identifiers must take CITI training and receive a CITI certificate. The initial certification is good for three years and can be renewed three times.

Instructions for new users are:

1. Go to the CITI home page: <https://about.citiprogram.org/en/homepage/>.
2. Click "Register" and fill in steps 1-7. In Step 1, choose Brown University as your institution. Continue with the registration process filling in all of the appropriate personal information.
3. Search the institutional courses available to Brown. Be sure to click the "View Courses" button connected to Brown University. Click on "Learner Tools" and "Add a Course" for the "CITI Course Enrollment Procedure." Please read the instructions and continue to scroll down to the "CITI Course Enrollment Questions."
4. Answering Questions 1-7 will register you for training courses. You do not need to answer all seven questions. Please note that you may register for as many courses as you like, but not all courses may be required for your research.
5. Brown has created three Initial Education customized tracks to ensure that the education you receive is tailored to your research. Completion of one of the following modules is necessary to satisfy Brown's requirement for initial human subjects training. You are required to take only one of the modules listed below but may elect to take more modules if you choose.
6. Please complete the track that most closely aligns with your research or discipline.
7. Once you have chosen the appropriate Group, scroll to the bottom of the page and click "Submit." This will bring you to the main page where you can begin the correct course. You can save your progress, log out of CITI, and re-enter the course as many times as you wish.

Appendix B - Course Waiver Request Form

Course Waiver Request Form

Students should use this form to request permission to waive a required course. Generally, only required introductory courses can be waived (e.g.: PHP2510, PHP2040), and then only when a student can demonstrate that they have satisfactorily completed an equivalent course at Brown or at another institution in the past. Students seeking permission should obtain signatures first from their advisor, second from the course instructor, and lastly, from the program director. The course instructor may ask the student to take a past final exam from the course for which a waiver is being requested. Students should propose a suitable alternate activity in place of the waived course. Suitable activities may include: serving as a TA for the waived course, taking an alternate course, and an independent study. Completed forms should be returned to the Department Manager.

Student Name: _____

Degree Program and Year: _____

Course for which waiver is requested (provide course number and title): _____

Have you previously taken an equivalent course at Brown or at a different institution? _____

If so, list the institution, course name, course number, year taken and your grade in the course. Attach a course syllabus. _____

What course/activity do you propose to do in lieu of this course (eg: alternate course, TA this course)?

Required Signatures:

Academic Advisor: _____

Course Instructor: _____

Program Director: _____

Name/Signature/Date

Appendix C - Example of Epidemiology Individual Development Plan (IDP)

Example:

Department of Epidemiology Individual Development Plan (IDP)

The IDP is a valuable tool that gives students the opportunity to address their short term and long term career goals. The NIH has mandated that IDP's be a regular part of training and that institutions encourage trainees to comply with this mandate. In addition, the School of Public Health (SPH) is requiring all students, regardless of funding, to fill out an IDP.

The Department of Epidemiology requests that students complete an IDP each calendar year. The deadline for submission of the IDP is December 1st.

Before submitting your IDP, please review responses with your academic advisor. In addition to NIH reporting requirements, the Department views the IDP as an important opportunity to review progress with your advisor, set academic and research goals for the coming year, and update your academic CV.

We thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Your email address will be recorded when you submit this form.

* **Required**

1. Last name *

2. First name *

3. Banner ID *

4. Your department/Graduate Program *

Mark only one oval.

- Behavioral and Social Sciences
- Biostatistics
- Epidemiology
- Health Services and Research

Please give a brief overview of your research project and major accomplishments in the past year.

5. list your publications this year.

Include: Title, all authors, Name of Journal, Year of Publication, Volume, Page #'s. If available, please give PMID #

6. Please list any honors and awards you received this past year.

Include any fellowships, grants written and applied for, professional society awards, travel awards (external)

7. Please list any professional meetings you attended.

8. New areas of research or technical expertise acquired in the past year.

9. Please describe any teaching activity.

TA, Sheridan Center, etc.

10. Please list committee or other service activity.

11. Any other professional activities or activities with professional relevance that you'd like to list.

Community activities, volunteer activities, etc. - should have relevance to your professional goals.

Plans for Next Academic Year

Your goals and objectives for the coming year.

12. Your research project goals

Brief Paragraph

13. Anticipated publications (indicate projected titles)

14. Anticipated meeting or workshop attendance

15. Fellowship or other funding applications planned

16. Other Professional Training

(Course work, teaching activity)

17. Please discuss your long term goals

18. Identify target dates for the duration of your graduate/postdoctoral training

19. Define specific skills and strengths that you need to develop (based on discussions with your mentor) to help you achieve the long term goals you identified above

20. Define the approaches to obtain the specific skills and strengths described in the previous question together with anticipated time frames

Examples include courses, technical skills, teaching, supervision, conferences, workshops, etc.

21. Please check below that you have reviewed this statement and that you have discussed this with your advisor *

Check all that apply.

- Yes, I have reviewed this statement and am submitting my complete statement.
- I have discussed my IDP and plans with my mentor

22. My mentor's name *

- Send me a copy of my responses.

**Appendix D - Template to Help Conceptualize and Design Thesis or Dissertation
Topic Papers:**

Thesis Title:	
Brief Background:	
Research Question:	
Data Source (e.g., Women's Health Initiative):	
Estimated Sample Size:	
Source Population (Persons, place, & time):	
Primary Exposure(s):	
Primary Outcome(s):	
Potential Confounders and/or Covariates (age, sex, race, and SES):	
Potential Modifiers (e.g., sex or race):	
Analytic Methods (e.g., logistic or linear regression):	
Effect Measures to be Estimated (e.g., relative risk of disease among those with exposure compared to those without):	

Appendix E - RAship Contract



BROWN
School of Public Health

DEPARTMENT OF EPIDEMIOLOGY

Dear _____ and STUDENT,

We are delighted that you will be working together this term through a research assistantship (RAship). In order to enhance clarity and set expectations for both the advisor and student, it can be helpful to clearly outline elements of the RAship at the beginning of each term. The purpose of this agreement letter is to outline RAship goals, and ensure that all parties understand expectations involved in the RAship.

- The student is responsible for working on the assigned project for 20* hours per week during the coming term, and not beyond this term unless the RAship is renewed. *15 hours per/week for a first year PhD student in the first semester
- It is understood that voluntary work on the part of the interested student may continue past this term if they are able to, given other commitments, but is not required as part of the RAship.
- The advisor and student work together to ensure that RA responsibilities are being met.
- The RA advisor is responsible for supervising and directing the student's work during the term of the appointment.
- The advisor also will be solicited for formal feedback as part of the twice-yearly evaluation of students.

We hope that this agreement helps foster conditions for a productive and enjoyable research experience!

Responsibilities and Expectations of Student's RAship (describe relevant details, such as hours, frequency of meetings, nature of work, products to be produced, benchmarks and timeline):

The RAship for the semester begins on _____ and ends on _____.

The RA is expected to lead filling out this form, and confirming/further developing responsibilities and expectations with the RAship advisor. If you have any questions, please contact the Department Manager, Brittany Leclerc (brittany_leclerc@brown.edu).

Names and signatures:

Student: _____

Faculty Member: _____

Graduate Program Director: _____

Appendix G - Dissertation Committee Confirmation Form



BROWN
Public Health

Doctoral Programs in
Biostatistics, Behavioral & Social Health
Sciences, Epidemiology and
Health Services Research

Dissertation Committee Confirmation Form

(Consult Student Handbook for Details/Requirements)

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Department: _____

Proposed Topic and Committee Members (three required; additional space provided):

Dissertation Title: _____

Dissertation Advisor: _____ - Signature
Type or Print Name

Committee Member: _____ - Signature
Type or Print Name

Committee Member: _____ - Signature
Type or Print Name

Committee Member: _____ - Signature
Type or Print Name

Committee Member: _____

(Check if member is External Reader)

_____ - Signature
Type or Print Name

Obtain Graduate Program Director's Signature:

Graduate Program Director Signature Date

Public Health ♦ 121 S. Main Street ♦ Providence, RI 02912

Appendix H - Oral Exam Date Request Form



BROWN
Public Health

Doctoral Programs in
Biostatistics, Behavioral & Social Health
Sciences, Epidemiology and
Health Services Research

Oral Exam Date Request Form

(Consult Student Handbook for Details/Requirements)

Student Name: _____ Date: _____
Department: _____
Dissertation Title: _____

Committee Members (Type or Print Names):

Oral Exam Chair: _____
Dissertation Advisor: _____
Committee Member: _____
Committee Member: _____
Committee Member: _____
 (Check if External Reader) _____

Schedule Oral Exam and Submit Dissertation Proposal

(Exam should be scheduled 2-3 weeks in advance, and should be completed six to nine months from the time of a successful written examination)

Proposed Oral Exam Date: _____ Oral Exam Location: _____
(Contact Administrative Coordinator)

Proposal has been provided to committee members?

Obtain Graduate Program Director's Signature:

Graduate Program Director Signature

Date

Distribution: Provide copies to the Program Director and Administrative Coordinator

Public Health ♦ 121 S. Main Street ♦ Providence, RI 02912

Appendix I - Oral Exam Results Form



BROWN
Public Health

Doctoral Programs in
Biostatistics, Behavioral & Social Health
Sciences, Epidemiology and
Health Services Research

Oral Exam Results Form

Student Portion

Student Name: _____ Date of Oral Exam: _____

Department: _____

Dissertation Title: _____

Committee Members (Type or Print Names):

_____ Dissertation Advisor _____ Committee Member

_____ Committee Member _____ Committee Member

Oral Exam Chair Portion

(Please give copies to the Graduate Program Director, Administrative Coordinator, and student)

Outcome:

- Student Passed (Date Passed: _____)
- Student Conditionally Passed Student Did Not Pass
- Request to Change Academic Advisor (New Advisor's Name: _____)

Overview of What Happened During the Oral Exam:

(If student conditionally passed, what must the student do in order to pass?)

Oral Exam Chair's Signature:

_____ Print Name _____ Signature _____ Date

Public Health ♦ 121 S. Main Street ♦ Providence, RI 02912

Appendix J - Dissertation Defense Information Form



BROWN
Graduate School *Forms*

Brown University
Box 1867
Providence, RI 02912
tel: 401 863-2600
fax: 401 863-7341
Graduate_School@brown.edu

DISSERTATION DEFENSE INFORMATION

STUDENT NAME: _____ SIS ID NUMBER: SISW

DEPARTMENT: _____

PREVIOUS DEGREES

DEGREE _____ INSTITUTION _____ DATE AWARDED _____

DEGREE _____ INSTITUTION _____ DATE AWARDED _____

DEGREE _____ INSTITUTION _____ DATE AWARDED _____

DEFENSE DETAILS DATE _____ TIME _____

BUILDING _____ ROOM _____

EXACT TITLE OF DISSERTATION

COMMITTEE

DIRECTOR _____ DEPARTMENT _____

READER _____ DEPARTMENT _____

READER _____ DEPARTMENT _____

READER _____ DEPARTMENT _____

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

DATE PASSED _____

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

_____ DATE PASSED _____

_____ DATE PASSED _____

_____ DATE PASSED _____

DEPARTMENTAL TEACHING REQUIREMENT

SATISFIED NOT REQUIRED

SUPERVISED RESEARCH REQUIREMENT

SATISFIED NOT REQUIRED

Director of Graduate Study _____

Date _____

Appendix L - Journal Club Waiver



OFFICE OF THE DEAN

Melissa Clark, PhD
Associate Dean of School for Academic Affairs
Professor of Health Services, Policy
and Practice

Journal Club Waiver Form

Every doctoral student in the School of Public Health is required to attend Journal Club each semester while enrolled in the program unless exempted by the student's Graduate Program Director. However, the Graduate Program Director should notify the Instructor of Record, in writing, of any exemptions being granted each semester. Please fill out the fields below in order for you to receive exception from this departmental requirement. Journal Club waiver forms are to be filed in the department student's file or e-record.

Student Name:

(First) _____ (Last) _____

Please provide a few words, explaining the reason you would like to obtain a waiver from this requirement:

Student Signature

The student above is exempt from participating in Journal Club for (provide year) _____
(fall or spring semester) _____.

Graduate Program Director

(First) _____ (Last) _____

Graduate Program Director Signature

Appendix M - Conference Travel Funding Procedures

Graduate School Funding ([all graduate students](#)):

Graduate students who present at academic conferences can apply to the Graduate School for up to \$650 to cover related travel expenses. Given funding limitations, application does not guarantee support.

Eligible graduate students will be reimbursed for a maximum of one conference per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30), as determined by the end date of travel.

Reimbursement will not be granted for merely attending a conference.

[CLICK HERE](#) for Graduate School Conference Travel information and the link to the Graduate School's "Conference travel funding application." All application must be submitted online using the [UFUNDS online module](#). Please scan and upload conference description and appropriate documentation to UFUNDS. Conference travel related questions should be submitted to graduate-travel@brown.edu.

[School of Public Health Funding \(doctoral students\)](#):

Doctoral students, who present original work at academic conferences, can request support from both the Graduate School (see above instructions) and the School of Public Health. The School of Public Health will provide up to \$400 to cover related travel expenses not covered by the Graduate School. Students are eligible to receive these funds one time, at any time during their doctoral training period. Given funding limitations, application does not guarantee support. When requesting both Graduate School and School of Public Health support, doctoral students must:

- Complete the online [UFUNDS Application](#). Where instructed, "Please indicate any other funding you expect to receive for this trip," the student should write "School of Public Health" and the \$ amount (up to \$400) being requested of the School.
- Attach confirmation of invitation to present research at a conference program with name and presentation title.

- Sixth year students should also attach a letter of support from the Director of Graduate Studies for their program or submit the DGS Travel Approval form (see appendix).
- Submit a copy of the approved UFUNDS application via email to Barbara Dailey (Barbara_dailey@brown.edu).
- If a doctoral student is only requesting SPH support, please explain in an email to Barbara Dailey why you are not applying for Grad School funds for this trip.

Conference Travel Reimbursement Instructions (all graduate students):

After travel is completed, graduate students must submit appropriate documentation [as explained on the Graduate School's [Conference Travel Reimbursement](#) webpage] to their home program's administrative coordinator for approval and electronic processing of the reimbursement request. If the documents submitted do not correspond to those guidelines, reimbursement requests will be returned for completion.

Completed travel reimbursement requests should be submitted to the home program no later than 30 days after completion of travel; those submitted after 45 days will not be reimbursed.

[Joukowsky Summer Research Award](#) (all graduate students):

[The Joukowsky Summer Research Award](#) was developed by the Graduate School to provide additional funding for scholarly activities outside of Brown during the summer months. Students conducting research or traveling for other academic purposes during the summer months (May – August) may be eligible for this award. Awards are provided from a minimum of \$500 up to a maximum of \$1,500 per summer. The application period is January 1 through the last day of February. The awards are highly competitive as funds are limited, and will be based upon academic merit and projected impact on the research trajectory or academic training. Proposals will be reviewed by the Graduate School and award notifications will be sent to applicants by April 15. Research awards will be disbursed in May or June by special request or by travel reimbursement upon return from summer research studies.

All applications must be submitted using the [UFUNDS online module](#). Joukowsky research travel related questions should be submitted via email to graduate-travel@brown.edu.

Other Research Travel Opportunities:

- [Global Mobility Research Fellowship](#)
- [International Travel Fund](#)
- [Student Research Grants in Judaic Studies](#)
- [CFAR Trainee Support Awards](#)

Graduate students are required to register their international travel with [International SOS](#). Students should take advantage of International SOS travel advice and services.